

Proverbs 10: 6 -11

6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, But **violence covers the mouth of the wicked.**

A *righteous head* (vs.) violent mouth

7 The memory of the righteous is blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot.

B *good memory* (vs.) infamy of wicked

8 The wise in heart will receive commands, But *a prating fool will fall.*

C *wise heart* (vs.) fool prates

9 He who walks with integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will become known.

B' *secure walk* (vs.) infamy of wicked

10 He who winks with the eye causes trouble, But *a prating fool will fall.*

C' evil eye (vs.) fool prates

11 The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, But **violence covers the mouth of the wicked.**

A' *righteous mouth* (vs.) violent mouth

emphasis simply on results / outcomes

v.6 blessings (vs.) violence

v.7 blessed (vs.) rot

v.8 will receive (vs.) will fall

emphasis on actions that produce results

v.9 integrity produces security (vs.) perversion produces infamy

v.10 winking eye causes trouble (*and*) rambling mouth causes to stumble

v.11 righteous mouth gives life (vs.) wicked mouth gives death (violence)

Verses 6 – 8 emphasis the facts of what results come upon the wicked and righteous. It does not stress what they actually have done to receive those results. In verse 6, the facts are that “blessings” come upon the righteous and “violence” covers the wicked’s mouth. In verse 7, the facts are that people have a “blessed” memory of the righteous, while the wicked’s name will “rot”. Verse 8 seems to be a transitional verse. The indicative results in this verse are actions. The wise “receive commands”. The fool “will fall.” The rest of this passage will include the actions that produce different results for the righteous and the wicked.

Verse 9 – 10 carry a heavy emphasis on what causes blessings verse violence, a good memory verses a rotten name, a receptive heart verses a rambling mouth. The phrases “*prating fool*” and “*violence covering the mouth*” are repeated in this section; yet now we know why violence covers the fool and why he will fall. His walk and his ways were perverted. (v.9) His eyes were deceitfully winking and causing trouble. (v.10) And thus his mouth was not a well of life, but only a source of violent death.

The phrase “*violence covers the mouth of the wicked*” is equivocal. It can work in two ways. Violence will cover his mouth as a *judgment* that will come, (v.6, see Pr.1:31) And this judgment reflects the violent covering over the well-spring of his mouth. His mouth caused violence (v.11), and his judgment comes in the form of violence (v.6) He reaps what he sows.

## Hatred & Poverty vs. Love & Wealth

12 **Hatred** stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

13 Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding, But a rod is for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.

14 Wise people *store* up knowledge, But the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.

15 The rich man's wealth is his strong city; The destruction of the poor is their poverty.

16 The *labor* of the righteous leads to life, The wages of the wicked to sin.

17 He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, But he who refuses correction goes astray.

18 Whoever hides **hatred** has lying lips, And whoever spreads slander is a fool.

a **hatred** (vs.) *love*

b *wisdom* (vs.) **discipline**

c *knowledge* (vs.) **destruction**

d *wealth* (vs.) **poverty**

c' *life* (vs.) **sin**

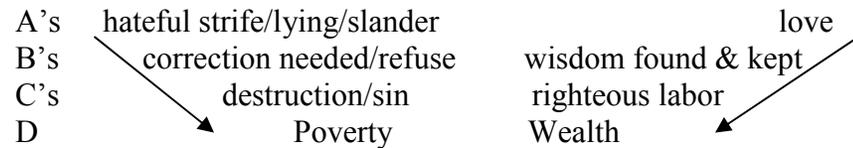
b' *instruction* (vs.) **correction**

a' **hatred** (and) **slander**

### *Uniting Themes Together*

|                |  |   |
|----------------|--|---|
| A's. (v.12,18) | Hatred stirs strife<br>Hatred uses lying lips, spreads slander | Love covers all sins<br>Correction needed<br>Correction refused |
| B's. (v.13,17) | Finding wisdom<br>Keeping wisdom                               | Correction needed<br>Correction refused                         |
| C's. (v.14,16) | Storing knowledge<br>Labor of life                             | Mouth near destruction<br>Sinful wages                          |
| D. (v.15)      | Wealth: strong city  | Poverty: destruction  |

### *Contrasting Deeds Spiral Down to Different Results*



Interpreting these verses in isolation from one another appears troublesome; especially when it speaks of one's "wealth" and "poverty" in verse 15. When each verse is understood in light of the large context, each verse appears to make more sense. The poverty and destruction warned about in verse 15 results from the seeds of hatred and sinful wages mentioned in other parts of the passage. The wealth of a strong city result from the seeds of love and wisdom sown in a man's life.

## Wise Words & Desires vs. Foolish Words & Fears

- 19 In the multitude of **words** sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his **lips** is wise.
- 20 The **tongue** of the righteous is choice silver; The heart of the wicked is worth little.
- a 21 The **lips** of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of wisdom. a **many words** (vs.) *wise lips*
- b 22 The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it. b *righteous blessed (and) no sorrow*
- c 23 To do evil is like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom. c **wicked fun** (vs.) *understanding man*
- d 24 The fear of the wicked will come upon him, And the desire of the righteous will be granted. d **wicked fears** (vs.) *righteous desires*
- e 25 When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has an everlasting foundation. e **wicked ends** (vs.) *righteous everlasting*
- f 26 As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So is the lazy man to those who send him. f **Lazy Man**
- e' 27 The fear of the LORD prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be shortened. e' *prolonged days* (vs.) **wicked short days**
- d' 28 The hope of the righteous will be gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish. d' *righteous hope* (vs.) **wicked's hope perishes**
- c' 29 The way of the LORD is strength for the upright, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity. c' *righteous strength* (vs.) **wicked destroyed**
- b' 30 The righteous will never be removed, But the wicked will not inhabit the earth. b' *righteous unmovable* (vs.) **wicked removed**
- a' 31 The **mouth** of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse **tongue** will be cut out. a' *righteous mouth & lips* (vs.) **wicked tongue cut**
- 32 The **lips** of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the **mouth** of the wicked what is perverse.
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**A's. Words:** lips, tongues, and mouths of wisdom verses perversity (v.19-21 and 31-32)

- Words of men have different rewards

**B's. Rewards:** God's blessing vs. judgment (v.22 and 30)

- v. 22 *The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds **no sorrow** with it.*
- v. 30 *The righteous will **never be removed**, But the wicked will not inhabit the earth.*

- Rewards differ according to works

**C's. Works:** Rejoicing and working of evil vs. Strength and wisdom of upright (v.23 and 29)

- v. 23 *To do evil is like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has **wisdom**.*
- v. 29 *The way of the LORD is **strength** for the upright, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.*

- Works of men express different expectations

**D's. Expectations:** Hopes of the righteous vs. the wicked (v.24 and 28)

- v. 24 *The fear of the wicked will come upon him, And the **desire of the righteous** will be granted.*
- v. 28 *The **hope of the righteous** will be gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish.*

- Expectations have different durations

**E's. Duration:** Short days of the wicked vs. Long days of the righteous (v.25 and 27)

- v. 25 *When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has an **everlasting foundation**.*
- v. 27 *The fear of the LORD **prolongs days**, But the years of the wicked will be shortened.*

- Duration of a man is often determined by whether or not he was lazy.

**F. Laziness:** (v. 26)

- v. 26 *As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So is the lazy man to those who send him.*

## Proverbs 11

1 Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, But a just weight is His delight.

*A Balance of Scales*    **dishonest scales** (vs.) *just weight*

2 When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

*B Deliverance of the Righteous*

a **shame** (vs.) *wisdom*

3 The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the perversity of **the unfaithful** will destroy them.

b *guidance* (vs.) **destruction**

4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But *righteousness delivers* from death.

c **wrath** (vs.) *deliverance*

5 The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.

d *direction* (vs.) **falling**

6 The *righteousness of the upright will deliver* them, But **the unfaithful** will be caught by their lust.

c' *deliverance* (vs.) **being caught**

7 When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes.

b' **wicked dies** (and) **expectations perish**

8 The *righteous is delivered* from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.

a *deliverance from trouble* (vs.) **suffering trouble**

*B' Fruit of the righteous*

28 He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will **flourish like foliage**.

a **failure** (vs.) *flourishing plants*

29 He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, And the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.

b **inheriting wind** (vs.) *ruling over fools*

30 The fruit of the **righteous is a tree of life**, And he who wins souls is wise.

a *fruit of righteousness* (and) *wisdom*

31 If the righteous will be recompensed on the earth, How much more the ungodly and the sinner.    *A' Balance of Justice*    *recompense of righteous* (and) **wicked**

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A's Justice: Scales of Man and God (v.1, 31)

v. 1 Dishonest scales are an **abomination to the LORD**, But a just weight is *His delight*.

v. 31 If the *righteous will be recompensed* on the earth, How much more **the ungodly and the sinner**.

- Since the "righteous will be recompensed", he will have deliverance.

B Deliverance of the Righteous (v.2-8)

a's **Foundations of Life**

v. 2 When pride comes, **then comes shame**; But with the *humble is wisdom*.

v. 8 The *righteous is delivered* from trouble, And **it comes to the wicked** instead.

- Pride produces shame & trouble, yet with humility the righteous are delivered from both. Different foundations, different roads.

b's **Roads of Life**

v. 3 The integrity of the upright will **guide them**, But the perversity of the unfaithful *will destroy them*.

v. 7 When a wicked man dies, *his expectation will perish*, And the hope of the **unjust perishes**.

- Integrity guides the upright, yet unfaithful men are destroyed along with their expectations. Different roads, different riches.

c's **Riches of Life**

v. 4 **Riches** do not profit in **the day of wrath**, But *righteousness delivers* from death.

v. 6 The righteousness of the *upright will deliver them*, But the **unfaithful will be caught** by their **lust**.

- Lustful riches of the unfaithful will not deliver them, yet the righteous are rich in deliverance. Different riches, different results

d **Results of One's Life**

v. 5 The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.

- The blameless will have direction, while the wicked will fall. Different results, because of different fruits.

B' Fruit of the Righteous (28 – 30)

a's v. 28 He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will **flourish like foliage**.

v. 30 The fruit of the **righteous is a tree of life**, And he who wins souls is wise.

**Fruit of Life: winning souls**

b. v. 29 He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, And the fool will be servant to the wise of heart. **Fruitless life: family troubler & slave**

## Proverbs 11:9-15 & 23 – 27

### Citizen Relations & Words

- 9 The hypocrite with his mouth destroys **his neighbor**, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.  
10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.  
11 By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.  
12 He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.  
13 A talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.  
14 Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.  
15 He who is surety for a **stranger** will suffer, But one who hates being surety is secure.

- a **hypocrite destroys neighbor** vs. *deliverance*  
b *city rejoices over righteous* vs. **wicked**  
c *city is blessed* vs. **cursed**  
d **bad neighbors** vs. *good neighbors*  
c' **talkative neighbor** vs. *trustworthy neighbor*  
b' **citizens fall** vs. *citizens secure*  
a' **surety of stranger suffers** vs. *security*

### Citizen Desires & Commerce

- 23 The **desire of the righteous** is only good, But the **expectation of the wicked** is wrath.  
24 There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty.  
25 The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.  
26 The people will curse him who withholds grain, But blessing will be on the head of him who sells it.  
27 He who **earnestly seeks good** finds favor, But trouble will come to **him who seeks evil**.

- a *good desires* vs. **wicked expectations**  
b **scattering** vs. *hoarding*  
c *generosity and prosperity*  
b' *hoarding* vs. **providing**  
a' *seeking good* vs. **seeking evil**

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These are the two sections of chapter 11 that give wise sayings concerning cities, citizens, and commerce. As this chapter is diagramed in the other handout, this is a study of the purple “C” sections. This chapter is encompassed with the balancing scales of men and God (“A” Sections - v.1,31), and also concludes the end of this study. The God who sees all will deliver the righteous and reward them with their fruit (“B” Sections – v.2-8, 28-30). The blessings of the righteous affect not only themselves, but as this study will now demonstrate, their own commonwealth, cities, and countries. No man is an island, and the survival of cities depends upon its wise citizens.

### **Neighbors and Strangers of the City**

- 9 The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.  
15 He who is surety for a stranger will suffer, But one who hates being surety is secure.

\* How they relate with each other determines a city's joy and security.

### **The City and Its Leaders**

- 10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the **wicked perish**, there is jubilation.  
14 Where there is **no counsel, the people fall**; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

\* Good counsel, or leadership, provide safety and justice in the city.

### **The Mouth of Citizens in the City**

- 11 By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the **mouth of the wicked**.  
13 **A talebearer** reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

\* “Loose lips sink ships”. Same with the city, especially its leaders.

### **Wisdom of Friendship & Peace**

- 12 He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

\* Friendly neighbors, who do not gossip or slander, preserves cities.

### **Citizens Have Different Desires and Ends**

- 23 The desire of the righteous is only good, But the **expectation of the wicked is wrath**.  
27 He who earnestly seeks good finds favor, But trouble will come to **him who seeks evil**.

\* Different desires have different ends, and produce different businesses.

### **Citizens Who Hoard vs. Provide**

- 24 There is **one who scatters**, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty.  
26 The people will curse him who withholds grain, But blessing will be on **the head of him who sells it**.

\* The hoarder will be impoverished & cursed, the seller blessed & rich.

### **God Recompenses Providers**

- 25 The generous soul will be made rich, And he who waters will also be watered himself.

\* A man will reap what he “scatters” (v.24) and sows among the city.

## Lady Wisdom vs. Lady Folly

Prov. 11: 16 - 22

16 A **gracious woman** retains honor, But ruthless men retain riches.

a *gracious lady* (vs.) **ruthless man**

17 The merciful man does good for his own soul, But he who is cruel troubles his own flesh.

b *mercy* (vs.) **cruelty**

18 The wicked man does deceptive work, But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward.

c **deceptive work** (vs.) *righteous work*

19 As righteousness leads to life, So he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death.

d *life* (vs.) **death**

20 Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD, But the blameless in their ways are His delight.

c' **abomination of God** (vs.) *delight*

21 Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished; But the posterity of the righteous will be delivered.

b' **punishment** vs. *deliverance*

22 As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, So is a lovely **woman who lacks discretion**.

a **swine's snout** (and) **foolish lady**

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This passage is the central section of chapter 11, as previous handouts have demonstrated. The passage captures the theme of this chapter, as well as the entire book of proverbs. The chapter has primarily dealt with civil relations and the consequences of such relationship for an entire community. The way of wisdom, or of folly, determine the outcome of one's journey, and the stability of the city. Life and death are the two outcomes mentioned throughout Proverbs, and especially for the city in this chapter. (v.11)

### I. The Two Woman

16 A **gracious woman** retains honor, But ruthless men retain riches.

*gracious lady*

22 As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, So is a lovely **woman who lacks discretion**.

**foolish lady**

gracious woman: Prov. 1:20-33, 31:10-31, 12:4a; Esther 7, Abigail (I Sam.25)

woman of no discretion: Prov.7:6-27, 9:13-18, 12:4b Jezebel

### II. The Two Roads

17 The *merciful man does good for his own soul*, But he **who is cruel troubles his own flesh**.

*mercy* (vs.) **cruelty**

21 Though they join forces, the **wicked will not go unpunished**; But the *posterity of the righteous will be delivered*.

**punishment** vs. *deliverance*

road of mercy leads to one's deliverance, and for his children: 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment

road of cruelty leads to self-destruction, no matter how many: Ps.2:2, Acts 4:27

### III. The Two Seeds

18 The **wicked man does deceptive work**, But he *who sows righteousness will have a sure reward*.

**deceptive work** (vs.) *righteous work*

20 Those who are of a **perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD**, But *the blameless in their ways are His delight*.

**abomination of God** (vs.) *delight*

seeds of deception and perverse work are hated by God: Absalom, Balak/Balaam, Ananias & Sapphira, Pharisees

seeds of righteousness and blameless way are blessed by God: Zacharias (Lk.1:6) Gal. 5

### IV. The Two Destinations

19 As righteousness leads to *life*, So he who pursues evil pursues it to his own **death**.

*life* (vs.) **death**

The seeds, the roads, and the two women of Proverbs will cause a man to inherit life or death. Deut. 30:15-20 Rom. 8:6-17

## Substance of Righteous & Wicked Counselors

Proverbs 12: 5 – 15

- a 5 The thoughts of the righteous are right. But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.  
b 6 The words of the wicked are, “Lie in wait for blood,” But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.  
c 7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more, But the house of the righteous will stand.  
d 8 A man will be commended according to his wisdom, But he who is of a perverse heart will be despised.  
e 9 Better is the one who is slighted but has a servant, Than he who honors himself but lacks bread.  
f 10 A righteous man regards the life of his animal, But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.  
e’ 11 He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, But he who follows frivolity is devoid of understanding.  
d’ 12 The wicked covet the catch of evil men, But the root of the righteous yields fruit.  
c’ 13 The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will come through trouble.  
b’ 14 A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth, And the recompense of a man’s hands will be rendered to him.  
a’ 15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.

- a right thoughts (vs.) deceitful counsel  
b wicked words (vs.) mouth of deliverance  
c wicked overthrown (vs.) righteous stand  
d commendation received (vs.) perverse heart  
e man with helper (vs.) man without bread  
f compassion (vs.) cruelty  
e’ worker with bread (vs.) empty of understanding  
d’ wicked desires (vs.) righteous fruit  
c’ wicked ensnared (vs.) righteous persevere  
b’ fruit of mouth (and) recompense of hands  
a’ “right” in fool’s eyes (vs.) heeding counsel

Last week in Proverbs 12: 2-4 & 24-27, we were taught to consider the sources of our counsel. A man’s stability in marriage and work ethic are good indicators of whether such a person is a wise or foolish source for counsel. In this passage we’ll see the substance of one’s counselor. Considering the source and substance of one’s counselor is fundamental in growing in wisdom and continuing on the path of righteousness.

### I. Perceptions

- a 5 The thoughts of the righteous are right, But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.  
a’ 15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.

- a right thoughts (vs.) deceitful counsel  
a’ “right” in fool’s eyes (vs.) heeding counsel

Counselors have different perceptions. The fool only thinks he is right, thus his counsel will be deceitful because he is self-deceived. Heed the thoughts of the righteous. (Moses with Jethro vs. Jezebel with Ahab; David with Abigail {I Sam.25:33} vs. Jonadab with Amnon {II Sam.13}; see Ps.52)

### II. Words

- b 6 The words of the wicked are, “Lie in wait for blood,” But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.  
b’ 14 A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth, And the recompense of a man’s hands will be rendered to him.

- b wicked words (vs.) mouth of deliverance  
b’ fruit of mouth (and) recompense of hands

Counselors have different words to offer. Thus the recompense of their words and hands are very different. The mouth of upright yields deliverance and good fruit. Yet the words of the wicked lead to the act of shedding blood. Thus the recompense of their hands will rendered to them. Words have weight.

### III. Results

- c 7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more, But the house of the righteous will stand.  
c’ 13 The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will come through trouble.

- c wicked overthrown (vs.) righteous stand  
c’ wicked ensnared (vs.) righteous persevere

Counselors manifest different results in life. The wicked are overthrown and ensnared, yet ironically their own lips laid the trap. Their end is destruction. Yet, the righteous endure. They will stand, and will come through trouble. Receiving counsel from one who perseveres is very wise. {II Kgs. 2:9}

### IV. Fruits

- d 8 A man will be commended according to his wisdom, But he who is of a perverse heart will be despised.  
d’ 12 The wicked covet the catch of evil men, But the root of the righteous yields fruit.

- d commendation received (vs.) perverse heart  
d’ wicked desires (vs.) righteous fruit

Counselors who have commendable fruit should be heeded. Fruits of the Spirit receive such commendation. (Pr.31:31) Whereas, the wicked’s heart is very covetous. And in addition to that, they only covet evil. A man’s desires and fruit often distinguish the substance of his counsel. {I Kgs. 12:8}

### V. Food

- e 9 Better is the one who is slighted but has a servant, Than he who honors himself but lacks bread.  
e’ 11 He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, But he who follows frivolity is devoid of understanding.

- e man with helper (vs.) man without bread  
e’ worker with bread (vs.) empty of understanding

Counselors who are diligent and can work with others would have good substance in their words. That person may be slighted by others, but he works with a servant and has bread to eat. Whereas the wicked is selfish and never takes anything seriously. He is both empty of understanding and bread. (10:13,26:19)

### VI. Compassion

- f 10 A righteous man regards the life of his animal, But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

- f compassion (vs.) cruelty

The character trait that this passage emphasizes is compassion. A compassionate man will have good substance of words. Whereas the wicked counselor has no tender mercy. Jonah 4:11; Matt. 11:29; Num.22:28

## Substance of Righteous & Wicked Counsel

Proverbs 11:16-23

- |    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| a  | 16 A <b>fool's wrath is known at once</b> , But a <i>prudent man covers shame</i> .                   | a  | fool's anger is produced (vs.) wise man covers shame    |
| b  | 17 He who speaks truth declares righteousness, But a false witness, deceit.                           | b  | truth declares righteousness (vs.) falsehood deceit     |
| c  | 18 There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health. | c  | foolish speech: painful (vs.) wise tongue: healthy      |
| d  | 19 The truthful lip shall be established forever, But a lying tongue is but for a moment.             | d  | truthful lips (vs.) lying tongue fade away              |
| d' | 20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy.                 | d  | deceitful heart (vs.) joyful counsel                    |
| c' | 21 No grave trouble will overtake the righteous, But the wicked shall be filled with evil.            | c' | righteous not overthrown (vs.) wicked filled with evil  |
| b' | 22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.          | b' | lying: abomination of Lord (vs.) truth: delight of Lord |
| a' | 23 A <i>prudent man conceals knowledge</i> , But the heart of <b>fools proclaims foolishness</b> .    | a' | wise man conceals knowledge (vs.) fool proclaims folly  |
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As we have observed in previous studies, this chapter desires us to find quality counselors and counsel. It is difficult continuing on the “way of righteousness” and thus the counsel of others is necessary for the Christian to continue his pilgrimage to the celestial city. The problem is that Lady Folly continually sends her messengers of Satan. In the previous passage we learned to distinguish between the substance of righteous and wicked counselors. Today this passage teaches us to even have a more discerning ear. We should be trained in distinguishing between the substance of one's words and counsel.

### I. Controlled Words

- a 16 A **fool's wrath is known at once**, But a *prudent man covers shame*  
a' 23 A *prudent man conceals knowledge*, But the heart of **fools proclaims foolishness**  
+ Words of outburst are usefully blatantly foolish. These verses contrast “concealing” and “proclaiming”. The wise man conceals both knowledge and shame, This could mean knowledge of privileged information (11:13), or even fruitful knowledge that is good for others to hear (23:23) Proclaiming unsolicited knowledge to others is usually repudiated by the hearer. (see Matt.7:6, *yet ironically* in Jesus' day the swine/Gentile/dog gladly received the holy crumbs: Mk. 7:2-30) Listen to the words of the man from whom you have *to ask* for knowledge. His words are usually good, and you will be more willing to receive his advice because you asked for it. Such a man can be trusted because any “shame” you reveal to him will be “covered”. (16b)

### II. Truthful Words

- b 17 He *who speaks truth* declares righteousness, But a **false witness, deceit**  
b' 22 **Lying lips** are an abomination to the LORD, But those *who deal truthfully* are His delight.  
+ Jesus said “he who has ears to hear let him hear” (Mark 7:16) Such it is with falsehood and truth; we need the ears to hear the difference between a lie and the truth, which is a work of God's grace. We are easily deceived and gullible to various words. Thus any detection of deceit or falsehood in a man's words, his counsel should be spurned by us. Don't let good suspicion sleep at wisdom's gate even when there appears to be no ill will. (See *Paradise Lost*, Book iii. Line 686)

### III. Healthy Words

- c 18 There is one **who speaks like the piercings of a sword**, But the tongue of *the wise promotes health*.  
c' 21 **No grave trouble** will overtake the righteous, But the wicked shall be **filled with evil**.  
+ “Sticks and stones may break my bones”...but words pierce the soul! The wrong words will bring calamity upon a person's life, recompensing the wicked with much evil. There is a parallel with “health” and “no grave trouble” overtaking the righteous. Listening to controlled, truthful words will bring health to the soul.

### IV. Peaceful Words

- d 19 *The truthful lip* shall be established forever, But a **lying tongue** is but for a moment.  
d' 20 **Deceit is in the heart** of those who devise evil, But *counselors of peace* have joy.  
+ One of the greatest indicators of distinguishing between falsehood and truth is whether the words promote peace between people. When peace is the goal, listen to such words. \* Notice how this entire section concerns the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment. See handout.

## Good Sources of Counsel

Proverbs 12:1-4, 24-28

1 Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid.

a 2 A good man obtains favor from the LORD, But a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.

b 3 A man is not established by wickedness, But the root of the righteous cannot be moved.

a' 4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who causes shame is like rottenness in his bones.

a 24 The hand of the diligent will rule, But the **lazy man** will be put to forced labor.

b 25 Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad.

b' 26 The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.

a' 27 The **lazy man** does not roast what he took in hunting, But diligence is man's precious possession.

28 In the way of righteousness is life, And in its pathway there is no death.

### A. Responses to Instruction

lover of instruction (vs.) hater of correction

### B. Sources of Instruction: Stable & Unstable Man

a God's favor (vs.) God's condemnation

b wicked unstable (vs.) righteous unmovable

a God's gift: good wife (vs.) bad wife (Pr.18:22 wife: God's favor)

### B' Sources of Instruction: Lazy & Diligent Man

a diligent hand (vs.) lazy man

b worry & depression (vs.) word of gladness

b' righteous friends (vs.) wicked ways

a' lazy man (vs.) diligent man

### A' Result of Good Instruction

life in righteousness (and) no death

Proverbs has persistently encouraged us to pursue wisdom and to seek good counsel. But where is good counsel found? And how do we know if we should follow a person's advice? The voices of Lady Wisdom and Lady Folly are both heard in the public square. (Pr.1,7) Yet, Folly's voice and approach is much more enticing. Therefore Solomon knows we must be able to distinguish between good and bad counsel in order to continue in the path of life.

This chapter answers this crucial question in a very practical manner. First, it begins by identifying that there are lovers and haters of instruction. (v.1) It concludes by expressing the desired result for us: the pathway of life, in which there is no death. (v.28) But finding this pathway is not easy. Instruction comes from different *sources* and thus has a difference of *substance*. Solomon wants us to first consider the source of the instruction we hear. And then we should consider the substance of our counselors and their counsel. This particular study teaches us to consider the source.

### A Man's Marriage: Section B parts a & a'

2 A good man obtains favor from the LORD, But a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.

God's favor (vs.) God's condemnation

4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who causes shame is like rottenness in his bones.

God's gift: good wife (vs.) bad wife (Pr.18:22 wife: God's favor)

+ Considering the structure of this passage, a good wife identifies God's favor. A bad wife identifies God's displeasure, and can even bring judgment on wickedness.

A man's marriage affects his stability and the counsel he gives. Thus, "*A man is not established by wickedness, But the root of the righteous cannot be moved.*" (v.3)

### A Man's Work Ethic: Section B' parts a & a'

24 The hand of the diligent will rule, But the **lazy man** will be put to forced labor.

diligent hand (vs.) lazy man

27 The **lazy man** does not roast what he took in hunting, But diligence is man's precious possession.

lazy man (vs.) diligent man

+ A lazy man is certainly not a good source of counsel. His words will only encourage slothfulness. The words of a diligent man should always be heeded.

### A Man's Friends: Section B' parts b & b'

25 Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad.

worry & depression (vs.) word of gladness

26 The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.

righteous friends (vs.) wicked ways

+ A man should choose his wife (v.2-4) and his friends very carefully. (v.26) Good friends and a wife provide good words. (v.25) The way of the wicked does not have good friends, nor a good wife. Thus anxiety will fill their heart, and they will be lead astray.

When we hear the advice of men we should consider the source. Consider their marriage, their work ethic, and their friends. Their words will often reflect their personality and surroundings. Continuing on the pathway of life often depends on the source from which we receive instruction.

## The Paradox of Riches & Poverty

### Proverbs 13: 1-8

- A 1 A wise son heeds his father's instruction, But a scoffer **does not listen to rebuke**. *heed instruction* (vs.) **doesn't listen**
- B 2 A man shall eat well by the fruit of his mouth, But the soul of the **unfaithful feeds on violence**. *fruit of words* (vs.) **feeding on violence**  
3 He who guards his mouth preserves his life, But he who opens wide **his lips shall have destruction**. *guards mouth* (vs.) **wide lips: destruction**
- C 4 The soul of a lazy man desires, and **has nothing**; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich. **has nothing** (vs.) *riches*
- B' 5 A righteous man hates lying, But a wicked man is **loathsome and comes to shame**. *hate lying* (vs.) **shame comes upon wicked**  
6 Righteousness guards him whose way is blameless, But **wickedness overthrows the sinner**. *guards way* (vs.) **wickedness overthrows**
- A' 7 There is one who makes himself rich, **yet has nothing**; And one who makes himself poor, *yet has great riches*. **has nothing** (vs.) *riches*  
8 The ransom of a man's life is his riches, But **the poor does not hear rebuke**. *riches* (vs.) **doesn't listen** (final section includes beginning & middle themes)
- 

This structure of this passage is more complicated than others. Notice that the B sections have two verses in each section. The B sections both emphasize a person's mouth: fruit of it, guarding it, feeding on violence, wide lips, and lying. Both sections also emphasize the guarding of the righteous: guarding of his mouth (active) and the righteousness that guards him (passive). (v.3,6)

This passage begins with the issue of listening to instruction or rebuke. Neither the "scoffer", nor the "poor" listen to rebuke. (v.1,8) Yet notice that in the final A' section, it also repeats a phrase from the central C section. The man who "has nothing" and the rich man are mentioned in the C section. Yet all of this is repeated in the final A' section in an inverted way. In verse 7 (A' section) the rich man "has nothing", yet the poor man "has great riches". (v.7) Therefore, both riches or poverty may both have blessings or curses. Whether money or poverty is a blessing or a curse depends on a deeper foundational issue. Such an fundamental key with help unlock an accurate interpretation of this passage - which is also summarizing chapters 10-11.

### I. Words & Riches

- A 1 A wise son heeds his father's instruction, But a scoffer **does not listen to rebuke**. *heed instruction* (vs.) **doesn't listen**
- A' 7 There is one who makes himself rich, **yet has nothing**; And one who makes himself poor, *yet has great riches*. **has nothing** (vs.) *riches*  
8 The ransom of a man's life is his riches, But **the poor does not hear rebuke**. *riches* (vs.) **doesn't hear**
- Neither the scoffer nor the poor listen to rebuke. (v.1,8) Considering this parallel, both are in the wrong. (This is contrary to Matt. Henry's interpretation that "the poor" are blessed by not "hearing" troubles/rebukes brought upon them by riches.) Thus, the poor is being condemned in verse 8 and the rich man is being blessed. His ransom is his riches; he is saved from certain troubles because of his riches. It does not seem to mean his riches invite that trouble. Verse 7 is the inverse of verse 8. This person is rich, yet has nothing: no friends, no God, no spiritual wealth. Whereas this poor man is rich: riches of friends, God, and heavenly treasures.

### II. Words & Fruit

- B 2 A man shall eat well by the fruit of his mouth, But the soul of the **unfaithful feeds on violence**. *fruit of words* (vs.) **feeding on violence**  
3 He who guards his mouth preserves his life, But he who opens wide **his lips shall have destruction**. *guards mouth* (vs.) **wide lips: destruction**
- B' 5 A righteous man hates lying, But a wicked man is **loathsome and comes to shame**. *hate lying* (vs.) **shame comes upon wicked**  
6 Righteousness guards him whose way is blameless, But **wickedness overthrows the sinner**. *guards way* (vs.) **wickedness overthrows**
- Feed on violence (2b), open wide your lips (3b), and you will be a loathsome shame (5b) by which your own wickedness will overthrow you. (6b)  
Guard your mouth and righteousness will guard you. (3a,6a) You will feed yourself with the fruit of your mouth (2a), therefore hate lying. (5a)

### III. Laziness & Diligence

- C 4 The soul of a lazy man desires, and **has nothing**; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich. **has nothing** (vs.) *riches*
- This lazy man is truly poor: both spiritually and materially. He has nothing with which to ransom his life during trouble, nor spiritual wealth. This diligent man is rich. He has wealth that will be with him in times of trouble (v.8a) and he has the "great riches" mentioned in verse 7b. Laziness vs. diligence is the key to this passage.

## Summarizing Civilian Duties & Counselors

Proverbs 13: 9-18

This passage continues to review the themes of the last two chapters. Chapters 11 & 12 focused on the duties of citizens (11), and the duty of seeking counselors along the path of righteousness. (12) This first section reviews some subject matter of chapter 11.

### **Light & Honesty** v.9-11

**a** 9 The *light of the righteous rejoices*, But the **lamp of the wicked will be put out**.

*rejoicing* (vs.) **wicked put out**

**b** 10 By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised is wisdom.

**strife** (vs.) *wisdom*

**a'** 11 Wealth gained **by dishonesty will be diminished**, But he who gathers *by labor will increase*.

**dishonesty diminished** (vs.) *increase of goods*

Compare these verses with 11:2-8, 23-27. In 11:2-8 the righteous have “*humility*”, “*guidance*” and “*deliverance*”; while the wicked’s hope perishes, bringing trouble upon them including the “*day of wrath*”. Proverbs 13:9 summarizes 11:2-8. The righteous has a rejoicing “*light*” which gives guidance, direction, and deliverance. (see 11:3a,5a,6a,8a) Whereas the wicked’s light is put out. Their pride brings an end to their expectations. (11:2,7)

Verse 11 summarizes 11:23-27. Dishonest wealth never profits in the long run; just as someone will end up poor who withholds more than is right. (11:24,26) Whereas the righteous is a honest laborer. He and his goods will increase. The welfare of cities and towns depend on the light and honesty of the righteous citizens.

### **Life & Reward** v.12-14

**a** 12 Hope deferred makes the **heart sick**, But when the desire comes, it is a *tree of life*.

**sick** (vs.) *life*

**b** 13 He who despises the word will be destroyed, But he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.

**destruction** (vs.) *rewards*

**a** 14 The law of the wise is a *fountain of life*, To turn one away from the **snare of death**.

*life* (vs.) **death**

Compare these verses with 12:1, 24-28. That chapter pointed out the importance of good counsel in order to stay on the pathway of life. The anxiety and depression mentioned 12:25 is summarized as a sick heart in 13:12. The lazy man’s hope is “deferred”. He does not arrive at the “*tree of life*”. Neither will he drink from that “*fountain of life*”. (v.14) {The book of Proverbs is adamantly concerned with ‘perseverance in the faith’} Reward vs. destruction are the two results of chapter 12 (and the book of Proverbs), yet counselors, their words, and ways will often determine one’s result.

### **Honor & Health** v.15-18

**a** 15 Good understanding *gains favor*, But the way of **the unfaithful is hard**.

**favor gained** (vs.) *hard life*

**b** 16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool lays open his folly.

**good actions** (vs.) *open folly*

**b'** 17 A wicked messenger falls into trouble, But a faithful ambassador brings health.

*fall into trouble* (vs.) **good health**

**a'** 18 **Poverty and shame will come** to him who disdains correction, But he who regards a rebuke *will be honored*.

*shameful life* (vs.) **honor received**

Compare these verses with 12:2-23. God “*favor*” rest on good counselors (12:2-4) and they bring health.(12:18b) It is just the opposite with the wicked.

Thoughts on how these passages relation with New Testament stories:

**Rich Fool:** light was put out that night. **Pride:** Pharisees & Temple rulers vs. Council of Acts 15. **Dishonest gain:** Temple rulers, moneychangers.

**Deferred hope:** Rich Young Ruler, Judas, Laodicean church. **Despising the word:** Israel against Jesus, Temple Rulers at Stephen’s death

**Fearing the commandment:** Jesus in Mark 7:6-13, Paul in Gal.2:5-6 & I Cor. 7:19 **Fountain of life:** Woman at the well & John 7:38

**Ambassador of health:** II Cor. 5:20, Titus in II Cor. 7:6, Barnabas & Saul in Acts13:27-30 **Poverty & Shame:** Herod Antipas refused correction in Mark 6:18, thus was exiled and impoverished. Synagogue ruler beaten after rejecting Paul’s words **Rebuke & Honor:** Gal.2, Paul rebuked Peter, he was still honored as an Apostle. Peter still honored Paul, II Peter 3:15 Jesus rebukes 7 churches in Revelation, expecting to honor them with a crown of life.

## Discipline & Wealth Proverbs 13:19-25

- a 19 A desire accomplished is *sweet to the soul*, But it is an **abomination to fools** to depart from evil.  
b 20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.  
c 21 Evil pursues sinners, But to the righteous, good shall be repaid.  
d 22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.  
c' 23 Much food is in the fallow ground of the poor, And for lack of justice there is waste.  
b' 24 He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.  
a' 25 The righteous eats to the *satisfying of his soul*, But the stomach of **the wicked shall be in want**.

*sweet to the soul* (vs.) **fools cling to evil**  
*wise friends* (vs.) **foolish friends**  
**justice on sinners** (vs.) *justice to righteous*  
*inheritance* (and) **wealth**  
**lack of food** (and) **lack of justice**  
**no discipline** (vs.) loving discipline  
*satisfying to the soul* (vs.) **wicked in want**

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### A. Rewards of Work

- 19 A desire accomplished is *sweet to the soul*, But it is an **abomination to fools** to depart from evil.  
25 The righteous eats to the *satisfying of his soul*, But the stomach of **the wicked shall be in want**.

*sweet to the soul* (vs.) **fools cling to evil**  
*satisfying to the soul* (vs.) **wicked in want**

Here the soul tastes the sweetness of an accomplishment. This man's hope was *not* deferred. (v.12) Also the food he eats is satisfying. He has worked. He is not lazy. There is a sense on dignity and satisfaction when one completes his work. (Eccl.3:12-13) Yet, it is evil to a fool to depart from evil, and with this they are lazy. Their stomach shall be in want.

### B. Results of Discipline

- 20 *He who walks with wise* men will be wise, But the **companion of fools** will be destroyed.  
24 **He who spares his rod** hates his son, But he who loves him *disciplines him promptly*.

*wise friends* (vs.) **foolish friends**  
**no discipline** (vs.) *loving discipline*

See Proverbs 1. The King begins with verbal discipline toward his son. He warns his son about friends and influences. Oftentimes the discipline from parents and the friends of a children are related. With no discipline the son will certainly choose fools for friends. The rod of discipline is more likely to cause a son to walk with the wise. What happens in the home greatly affects what happens outside.

### C. Poetic Justice

- 21 **Evil pursues sinners**, But to the righteous, *good shall be repaid*.  
23 Much food is in the **fallow ground of the poor**, And for **lack of justice** there is waste.

**justice on sinners** (vs.) *justice to righteous*  
**lack of food or much food**(and) **lack of justice**

There is justice in this life...to a point. You can not plant bad seed your whole life and eat good fruit. God will not be mocked. Eventually evil catches up with sinner, and good catches up with the righteous.

This word for "*fallow ground*" is used in Hosea 10:12, Jer.4:3. If it refers to unplowed land, then it refers to their laziness, and loss of potential. There would have been much food, had they tilled the land. If the word means the land has been tilled, then it is affirming the poor man's work ethic. He's poor, but he has a lot of food. The little he has will produce much with discipline and hard work.

### D. Godly Concern

- 22 A good man *leaves an inheritance* to his children's children, But the **wealth of the sinner** is stored up for the righteous. *inheritance* (and) **wealth**

This verse is not so much about money, as much as it is about *the concern*. The sinner is unconcerned with who will come after him. He stores up everything for himself. Yet as Matt. Henry says, "God, in his providence, often brings into their hands that which wicked people had laid up for themselves." Sometimes there is irony and justice all at the same time. And God's providence continues laughing on.

Yet, the godly has concern beyond himself. He has forethought for the generations after him.

## Observations of Proverbs 14

1. Verses 1-8 appear to explain the theme of verse 1. One lady builds her house, the other lady destroys her house. Notice there is a self-construction and a self-destruction. Lady Wisdom builds. Lady Folly destroys. Verses 2 – 8 explain various ways in which one's own construction and destruction may take place. Yet we see that, according to the outline given, this passage is stressing the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment. Whether one bears a true or false witness will determine whether they will build the "house" of their life, or destroy it.
2. In a similar fashion, verses 9 – 27 began with a theme: the mockery of fools and the favor of the upright. The passage will escalate to that very theme in verse 24 of this section. In verse 24 – 27 the fool is mocked, or at least, crowned with folly. Whereas the wise one is crowned with "riches". And continuing with the theme of verses 1 – 8, the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment is also mentioned toward the end of this passage. (v.25) In both these sections the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment is emphasized.  
You will notice that there is a difference in the way I have structured verses 9-27, from other sections in Proverbs. There did not seem to be a chiasmic structure emphasizing a central point. Instead these little sections appeared to be building upon each other. Notice the following explanation: A man's laughing heart man "end" in grief, which means he will be "filled with his own ways." (v.13,14) With imprudent steps the "fool rages", which means he is "quick-tempered". Then the man who hates his poor neighbor, is actually the one who "sins". (v.20,21) Then in all labor there is profit, which leads to the riches of a wise man's crown. (v.23-24)
3. You will notice that verses 28-35 begin and end with a king's honor and favor. Most of the verses in between simply repeat, or review, various sayings from the second section. And especially, verse 33, it emphasizes the *first* few statements of each little section from verses 16 – 26. This final section seems to be a simple review of

Here I will put verse 2-8 and structure spirals toward the center:

- 2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But he who is **perverse in his ways** despises Him.
- 3 In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.
- 4 Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; But much increase comes by the strength of an ox.
- 5 A faithful witness does not lie, But a false witness **will utter lies**. ----- >9<sup>th</sup> commandment
- A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it, But knowledge is **easy to him who understands**.
- 7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you **do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge**.
- 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, But the folly of fools is **deceit**.

### *Ways of the Perverse and Prudent*

- 2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But he who is **perverse in his ways** despises Him.
- 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, But the folly of fools is **deceit**.

### *Lips of Wisdom and Foolishness*

- 3 In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.
- 7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you **do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge**.

### *Sinful Laziness versus Godly Ease*

- 4 Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; But much increase comes by the strength of an ox.
- A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it, But knowledge is **easy to him who understands**.

### *The Seriousness of the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment*

- 5 A faithful witness does not lie, But a false witness **will utter lies**.            These points determine if one builds or destroys their "house", life.

## The Journey into Divine Mockery or Favor

9 **Fools mock** at sin, But among the *upright there is favor*.

10 The heart *knows its own bitterness*, And a **stranger does not share its joy**.

11 The **house of the wicked** will be overthrown, But *the tent of the upright will flourish*.

12 There is **a way that seems right** to a man, But **its end** is the way of **death**.

13 Even *in laughter the heart may sorrow*, And **the end** of mirth may be **grief**.

**Feelings & Endings**

**Link:** GRIEF / SORROW – SATISFY

14 The backslider in heart will be **filled with his own ways**, But a good man *will be satisfied from above*.

15 The **simple believes every word**, But the prudent *considers well his steps*.

16 A wise man fears and *departs from evil*, But a **fool rages** and is **self-confident**.

**Steps of Confidence**

**Link:** RAGE / DEPART – HATRED OF EVIL

17 A **quick-tempered** man acts foolishly, And a man of *wicked intentions is hated*.

18 The **simple inherit folly**, But the prudent are *crowned with knowledge*.

19 The evil will **bow before the good**, And the *wicked at the gates of the righteous*.

20 The **poor man is hated even by his own neighbor**, But *the rich has many friends*.

**Rewards & Humiliation**

**Link:** HATRED / RICH WITH MERCY

21 **He who despises his neighbor sins**; But he who has *mercy on the poor*, happy is he.

22 Do they not **go astray who devise evil**? But mercy and truth belong to *those who devise good*.

23 In *all labor there is profit*, But **idle chatter** leads only to **poverty**.

**Helping Poor & Becoming Poor**

**Link:** POVERTY / PROFITABLE CROWN OF WISDOM

24 The *crown of the wise is their riches*, But the **foolishness of fools is folly**.

25 A *true witness delivers souls*, But **a deceitful witness speaks lies**.

26 In the *fear of the LORD* there is strong confidence, And *His children* will have a place of *refuge*.

27 The *fear of the LORD* is a fountain of life, To *turn one away from the snares* of death.

**Favor & Mockery**

9<sup>th</sup> commandment

God's favor is manifested, Fools crowned w/ folly (mocked)

This passage is tied together like links on a chain. Above I've mentioned the subjects that each section addresses: Feelings & Endings, Steps of Confidence, Rewards & Humiliation, Helping Poor & Becoming Poor, Favor & Mockery. Each of these sections are linked together with both Foolish Links and Righteous Links.

### Foolish Links:

The foolish links are not simply transitional, they are progressive. The fool has grief, then he rages. His rage turns into hatred. Such hatred ensues into the despair of poverty. In the end the fool suffers the mockery of God. This ending of a fool was hinted at in verse 9: "Fools mock at sin". They have the first laugh, but God will have the last laugh when the fool is crowned – so to speak – with folly. Their children have no refuge, and snares of death will catch them. (v.26-27)

### Righteous Links:

The righteous links are also progressive. The upright man may have sorrow when he laughs, but he will be satisfied from above. He also departs from evil, which means he has a righteous hatred of a man with wicked intentions. The upright rich man with many friends also has mercy on the poor. Then he has much profit from his labor and is crowned with riches. In the end he has the favor of God, he is a true witness, and his children have a place of refuge.

If my 'righteous links' are accurate, notice that the righteous man starts off lonely. His heart knows its own bitterness. Though he laughs he has much sorrow. When he has joy, the stranger does not share in it. But in the midst of his sorrow, there is a promise that his tent/house will flourish. All the while, the fool thinks his way is right; yet his house will be overthrown. (v.10-13)

At this point the righteous only has satisfaction "from above", the Spirit's work. (see John 3) He watches his steps and departs from evil. (14-16) And thus he has a holy hatred of anyone with wicked intentions. Thus he becomes a king of knowledge, wearing the crown. The wicked bow before him, and he has friends. (17-20) He has mercy on the poor, devises good, and all his labor is not without profit. (v.21-23) In the end, he is also the king of wisdom with wealth, he delivers/ saves with his truth. Once he was lonely, now he has children. (Heb.2:13) Once he was humiliated with sorrow and bitterness, now he reigns with knowledge and wisdom.

## A King's Honor & Favor: Summarizing Points

Proverbs 14: 28 – 35

28 In a multitude of people is a *king's honor*, But in the lack of people is the **downfall of a prince**.

29 He who is *slow to wrath* has great understanding, But he who is **impulsive exalts folly**.

30 *A sound heart* is life to the body, But **envy** is rottenness to the bones.

31 He who **oppresses the poor** reproaches his Maker, But he who honors Him has *mercy on the needy*.

32 The **wicked is banished** in his wickedness, But the righteous has *a refuge in his death*.

33 *Wisdom rests in the heart* of him who has understanding, But what is in the **heart of fools** is made known.

34 *Righteousness* exalts a nation, But sin is **a reproach** to any people.

35 The *king's favor* is toward a wise servant, But his wrath is **against him who causes shame**.

Summarizing Passages:

v. 16,17

v. 13,14

v. 20,21

v. 24,26

v. 10a,14a,17a,21a,24b

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This passage is encompassed by the King's honor and favor. It begins with the honor he receives from his people and it ends with the favor given by him. The outer verses begin with the *righteous* and end with emphasizing the **wicked**. Yet the center verses change the order. They begin with the **wicked** and end with the *righteous*. Many of these verses speak of a ruler or a king, and thus help to interpret other verses. The emphasis of these verses, not only summarize this chapter, but they also give wisdom about a king's authority and his kingdom.

### I. Honor & Favor of the King

28 In a multitude of people is a *king's honor*, But in the lack of people is the **downfall of a prince**.

35 The *king's favor* is toward a wise servant, But his wrath is **against him who causes shame**.

The more people a king has under him, the more honor is due unto him. It is a shame for a person to claim to be king, with no one under him to rule. This is one reason Christ is to be highly honored. He will never have "lack of people". This is the whole doctrinal point of "Limited Atonement", or "Definite Atonement". Jesus definitely atoned for all chosen people. There will be an innumerable host saved, and thus Jesus' death was not in vain. After the travail of His soul, he will be "satisfied". (Is. 53:11) Yet, to continue in his favor of his visible church, we must be a "wise servant". If we cause shame we will experience his wrath. (v.35) This is a severe warning toward any who forsake the covenant into which they were baptize. Apostates do not persevere in the faith, cause shame upon their Lord, and will be judged by the King's wrath. Whereas the wise and faithful servant perseveres with the covenant community, keeps oil for his lamp, and is ready for the Lord (Mt. 25)

### II. Kingly Blessing vs. Reproach

29 He who is *slow to wrath* has great understanding, But he who is **impulsive exalts folly**.

34 *Righteousness* exalts a nation, But **sin is a reproach** to any people.

Putting these verses in context we can understand them in light of ruling kings. A king's righteousness exalts a nation, and when he is slow to anger he has good understanding. Yet if he is impulsive he will "*exalt folly*", and his sin is a "*reproach*" to all the people under him; whatever their social status. The public sins of kings are more heinous and aggravating due to their eminence over others. (L.C.#151) The nation of Jesus (the church) is truly blessed because our king is righteous. (Jer.33:16)

### III. Kingly Wisdom vs. Envy

30 *A sound heart* is life to the body, But **envy** is rottenness to the bones.

33 *Wisdom rests in the heart* of him who has understanding, But what is **in the heart of fools** is made known.

Here we see that envy is the enemy of wisdom. Envy will rot a man's bones, and it will be become known. No one ever harms another person without first envying or grieving at another person's gain or possession. It begins in the heart and breaks forth into words and actions. This is all a contrast to the sound heart where wisdom resides.

### IV. Righteous Rule vs. Oppression

31 He who **oppresses the poor** reproaches his Maker, But he who honors Him has *mercy on the needy*.

32 The **wicked is banished** in his wickedness, But the righteous has *a refuge in his death*.

Kings are notorious for oppressing the poor under them. Yet, such a king will be "banished". An earthly king who honors the King over him will have mercy on the needy. For such a ruler there is a refuge in his death. This concluding remark summarizes the point of this chapter. (v.26) Those with true wisdom have a refuge.

## Words of Life in Proverbs 15

I was unable to observe any pattern used to structure the verses of chapter 15. Therefore, we will study this chapter by addressing the topics mentioned. The first and most pervasive topic is the words we speak or hear. There are a total of 14 verses in chapter 15 (42%) that have to do with speaking and listening to words. The following sections contain a list of those 14 verses:

### I. Words in Relation to Anger

- 1 A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
- 2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.
- 4 A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
- 18 A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger allays contention.
- 23 A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!

- v.1 The *way* we answer, the softness, of our words is powerful. Questions are good at diverting anger.
- v.2 “*Rightly*” a key word. Knowledge spoken *wrongly* becomes foolishness. I Cor. 8:11, 13:1-2, 14:6-10
- v.4 Wholesome words are a “tree of life” and bring healing. Pr.3:18, 11:30, Ez.47:12, Rev.22:2
- v.18 Stirring up strife is anti-Christian. Rom.16:17-18, Titus 3:9-11, “*slow to anger*” James 1:19
- v.23 The phrase “timing is everything” applies to words. “Due season” is the goal for our words.

### II. Words in Relation to Counsel

- 7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the fool does not do so.
- 22 Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.
- 26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD, but the words of the pure are pleasant.
- 28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.
- 31 The ear that hears the rebukes of life will abide among the wise.
- 32 He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.
- 33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.

- v.7 Knowledge is found on the lips of wise men. Notice the difference of “lips” and “heart”.
- v.22 Counsel of another is necessary for godly “plans” to grow. This is why we have a plurality of elders.
- v.26 Notice the difference in “thoughts” and “words”. God is omniscient, know the secrets of the heart. Rm.2:16
- v.28 Good answers are thoughtful, not rash. Pr. 14:29
- v.31,32 We must be willing to listen, if counsel is to be profitable.
- v.33 If the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the listening to instruction is the evidence of that fear.

### III. Words in Relation to God and Man

- 29 The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.
- 30 The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and a good report makes the bones healthy.

- v.29 This is not denying the omnipresence of God. Wicked are “far from” God and cut off from his fellowship  
Yet, the prayer of the righteous, even though silent are heard by Him. I Sam. 1:13 James 5:16
- v.30 Matt. 7:22-23, I Sam. 14:27-29 See Christ by faith bring joy to the heart. Contrast the healthy bone here to the broken spirit in v.4

## Fruit of The Heart

### Proverbs 15

#### Correction of Men

- 5 A fool despises his father's instruction, but he who receives correction is prudent.  
10 Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way, and he who hates correction will die.  
12 A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise.  
20 A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother.

The essential hallmark of a fool in the book of Proverbs is that he rejects all forms of correction. The words of God, parents, the church, the government, (which are all parental in nature) are rejected by the fool. Of course, inversely, the hallmark of the wise man is that he listens to correction. In Isaiah 1:2-9, God nearly beat his people to death, yet even then they would not be corrected. This is what happens to a reprobate heart. God strikes them with mighty blow, yet it does not soften their heart, but rather hardens it. Whereas the elect of God are soften when they experience various trials. (II Cor.12:7-9, James 1:2-4, Heb.12:3-11)

The desired effect of every correction is to change a person's heart. When heart are softened, the Devil has been beaten out of them. In the next section we see that the hearts of men are filled with emotion.

#### Hearts of Men

- 13 A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.  
14 The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.  
15 All the days of the afflicted are evil, but he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast.

First notice the "merry" and "sorrowful" heart. The cheerful countenance is the fruit of a merry heart, as well as the broken spirit (depression) being the fruit of a sorrowful heart. External events will inevitably make their impression upon our hearts. But sometimes it is the *person's heart* that is causing either the cheer or the depression. "*Rejoicing in trials*" is the result of a godly merry heart. King Saul's depression was a result of a wicked sorrowful heart. Not always, but sometimes, fruits of the Holy Spirit are evidenced by a person's cheerful countenance. Thus, v.15, and Ecclesiastes 8:15 encourages the continual feast of a merry heart. In the days of evil affliction, in a round-about world, the godly seek to "*eat, drink, and be merry*".

Whereas the fool does not feed on the sustenance of God's provision and the work of his hands. The fool "*feeds on foolishness*." His feast is on the wickedness of men. All the correction given to him earlier was for naught. Eventually his heart will starve, for he neither does he feed on the word of God. His heart will sorrow with self-wickedness. The fruits of it will be a broken spirit - *not* unto repentance - but unto the pains of death and hell. (Phil.3:18-19)

#### Houses of Men

- 27 He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house, but he who hates bribes will live.  
6 In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, but in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.

Merry hearts produce merry homes. Thus the house of the righteous is rich, though he may have little money. Whereas the wicked with much revenue, resulting from his greedy heart, has an impoverished house of trouble. One implication of these verses is that bribes have impoverished the wicked man's house.

#### Paths of Men

- 19 The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is a highway.  
24 The way of life winds upward for the wise, that he may turn away from hell below.  
21 Folly is joy to him who is destitute of discernment, but a man of understanding walks uprightly.

Lazy men make life hard on themselves.  
The upward road is also narrow.  
Different roads manifest different hearts.

## The LORD's Judgmental Knowledge & Presence

Proverbs 15

### I. The LORD's eyes and presence

3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.

11 Hell and Destruction are before the LORD; so how much more the hearts of the sons of men.

Matthew Henry comments on verse 3 saying that God's eye both discerns and distinguishes in this passage:

"1. An eye to discern all, not only from which nothing can be concealed, but by which every thing is actually inspected ..... Angels are full of eyes (Rev. iv. 8), but God is all eye. It denotes not only his omniscience, that he sees all, but his universal providence, that he upholds and governs all. 2. An eye to distinguish both persons and actions."

The wicked deny this, yet God sees. (Gen. 31:12 Ps.94:7, Ez. 8:12, 9:9; Jer.13:27, 23:13,14; Hos.6:10)

The righteous are seen by God. (Gen.7:1, 31:12; II Kgs. 20:5 -Hezekiah's tears; Is. 57:18)

Hebrews 4:11-16 uses this doctrine to drive us to the point of disperse (v.13), and then refreshes us with the ascension and session of Christ's mercy. (v.14)

God sees and knows all things, because God *is there*. Acts 17:28

Hell is *not* the absence of God, but the presence of God in all of his fury. (Jonathan Edwards)

Rom.9:22 It is *His* wrath.

II Thess 1:9 teaches where the destruction will come *from*. It will come from God's presence.

### II. The LORD's judgment in the present time

8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight.

9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but He loves him who follows righteousness.

26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD, but the words of the pure are pleasant.

29 The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.

The wicked's "sacrifice", "way", and "thoughts" are all abominations to the Lord. God is there, but he is "far from" them in the sense they are his enemies. Notice that even the wicked make religious sacrifices. (Gen.4:3-5, Eccl.5:1, see Is.1:10-20) God's present disapproval is a present judgment upon the wicked, *even* if they do not sense it or feel it. (John 3:18)

God renders a 'judgment of approval' in the present tense toward his people. He rightly hears their prayers, loves them, and the good words are pleasant to Him. We must realize that God has an approving judgment upon His people, while at the same time a judgment of abomination upon the wicked.

Of course, His approval of us is because we are in the One he approves of: "the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him, not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unreprouvable in God's sight; but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections." WCF 16:6

### III. The LORD's judgment in the future tense

25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud, but He will establish the boundary of the widow.

The proud and the widow, the wicked and the righteous, they will all be judged by God. This is bad for the "proud" and good for the "widow". It will be a final reckoning that will make everything right, and turn the wrong world upside down and inside out. In the present tense Jesus judicially pronounced that the widow gave more than all the rich Pharisees. (Mk.12:43) In the future, God's judgment will establish her boundary of land. In other words, she will inherit the earth. (Mt.5:5) Likewise, through justification, God pronounces His judicial approval of us in Christ, securing the reward of our inheritance which will be given to us in the final and future judgment. (Rom.14:10-13, II Tim.4:8, Eph.1:13-14)

### III. Living With the Lord's "Already" and "Not Yet" Judgment

33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.

16 Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure with trouble.

17 Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a fatted calf with hatred.

The fear of the LORD is both instructive and invaluable. It gives peace and fear, comfort in distress, and concern when He disapproves. (I John3:20-21) It is better than a great treasure, which is worthless in purchasing love along with the fatted calf. Having God's approval *now* is better than having the entire world without it. When God makes His approval public in the future, *then* we will have the world!

## The Providence of God

<sup>1</sup> *The preparations of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.*

<sup>33</sup> *The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.*

man's responsibility & God's providence

man's responsibility & God's providence

In the King James Version, verse 1 is translated slightly differently: "*The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.*" This translation says that *both* the preparations and the answer is from the Lord. While this is certainly true, I prefer the translation of the NKJV and the other modern translations. The preparations belong to man's responsibility, but the answer of the tongue is according to God's providence. This translation corresponds with verse 33. Man is responsibility for casting the lot into the lap (not for gambling, but for decision making). And when that quarter falls on either heads or tails, it fell according to God's providence. The following are several points that I want to make concerning these two verses.

### 1. Both Are True: One Is Not More Important Than The Other

Man's responsibility (**MR**) and God's providence (**GP**) are equally true and should be treated as such. To say that one is more important than the other is wrong, and even more damaging it is lived out in such a manner. Neglecting MR, a person would like reckless and immoral. Neglecting GP, a person would live in a state of anxiety, fear, and ultimately without any faith in God.

### 2. The Relationship Between MR and GP: A Complete Mystery

We can not, and we are not suppose to, understand how this works. You speak *your* words, and yet the words you speak are *from God's* providence. You are responsible to make the right decision, yet when you flip the coin, the "*decision is from the LORD.*" We are responsible for every action and will give an account of it, yet every action we do is according to God's providence. This is a deep mystery that should cause us to worship God even more.

### 3. The Biblical Reason for MR and GP: Justice & Victory

Since both of these are true, then we know two things will also be true on the Day of Judgment. 1) All men will be held accountable. God will judge every man's thoughts, words, gestures, and actions. Man is solely responsible. 2) God will win the victory over all evil. God's providence governs the thoughts, words, gestures, and actions of every creature. Nothing is "out of control". If MR and GP were not 100% true, 100% of the time, then neither would man be held accountable, nor would God's victory be certain. King Sin and Death would have the eternal rule over God's creation, and Adam could not be held responsible for allowing their tyranny into the world. Even worse, God would be the one to blame since it was not Adam's fault; and worst of all, God would not be God, since King Sin and Death are more powerful! All of this would be logical conclusions if both MR and GP were not equally true.

### 4. The Gospel of Jesus is Rooted in MR and GP: Guilty Man & The Sacrificing Father

Peter condemned the men of Jerusalem for crucifying Christ. (Acts 2:36) They were guilty of His blood (along with all humanity). Yet, God used their guilty act to cleanse their guilty! They shed the blood of Christ, and that same blood cleanses their sin, granting them eternal life. (Act 2:37,38) God sacrificed His Son through the evil of men. And he used the sacrifice to cleanse His creation from evil. Even more, he used His Son's death to accomplish new life and a new creation. Words fail to explain the beauty, wisdom, and divine thought in planning the Gospel!

### 5. Ethics & Apologetics: The Life We Live & The Faith We Defend

MR & GP teach us even more the necessity of Proverbs. What we *should* do is often a matter of wisdom. Whether we should wait and trust God's providence, or whether we should make a decision and go – all of this require wisdom to do what is right. But even the "right" decision is filled with many consequential problems. Thus this should cause us to live a life of prayer. We should pray for God's wisdom in making decisions, and pray for the strength to live with decisions we make. Such is the life filled with MR & GP.

And the very life we live, defends the very Faith we profess. The God who over ruled the wicked decisions of men in the crucifixion, certain overrules the bad decisions we make. King Grace ruled over the evil of the cross. King Grace rules over our failures even now. Such is the Faith that proclaims MR & GP.

## The Sprinkling of Justice: Proverbs 16:2-9

- a<sup>2</sup> *All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits.*
- b<sup>3</sup> *Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.*
- c<sup>4</sup> *The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom.*
- d<sup>5</sup> *Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.*
- d'<sup>6</sup> *In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.*
- c'<sup>7</sup> *When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.*
- b'<sup>8</sup> *Better is a little with righteousness, Than vast revenues without justice.*
- a'<sup>9</sup> *A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.*

- a God's justice over ways of men
- b **Committing** works unto the Lord
- c *Destruction* upon evil men
- d Judgment upon the proud, their multitudes
- d' Forgiveness upon iniquity
- c' *Peace* with evil enemies
- b' **Receiving** "little" with righteousness
- a' God's guidance over way of men

I've entitled this study *The Sprinkling of Justice* because these verses concern God's justice for His people primary in this life. One verse speaks about the justice to come upon the wicked on the Judgment Day. (v.4) But all the other verses speak about God's judicial actions before then, within this life. Since God's justice does not fully come in this life I have referred to it as a sprinkling. There are little drops of justice that are experienced in this life, the rest will be applied on the Day of Judgment.

Notice first of all the pervasive use to the phrase "the LORD". It is used in every verse of this section, except verse 8. The term is capitalized because it is specifically referring to the personal name of the God of the Hebrews. The letters are YHWH, which is spoken as "Jehovah". By stressing the LORD God in this chapter, and section, we see that it is concerned with God's covenant people. Thus these teachings should be specifically applied to Christians today.

### A. The LORD's Knowledge & Guidance

- a<sup>2</sup> *All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits.*
- a'<sup>9</sup> *A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.*

God's justice over ways of men

God's guidance over way of men

Whether our decisions are right or wrong, we justify them. We purify them "in our own eyes", excusing ourselves. This is especially true for unregenerate people. They live in a world of all-excusing self-delusions. To them their ways are "pure", but God keeps a detailed record and weighs their soul. (Dan.5:27, Is.26:7) We've heard it said, "Man makes his plans, and God laughs." Similarly, verse 9 teaches that we have plans, but God directs our steps. He "weighs" and He "directs".

### B. The LORD's Judicial Blessings

- b<sup>3</sup> *Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.*
- b'<sup>8</sup> *Better is a little with righteousness, Than vast revenues without justice.*

**Committing** works unto the Lord

**Receiving** "little" with righteousness

Here we dedicate our works to the glory of the Lord, and trust that our godly "thoughts will be established." (Ps.37:4) Yet, sometimes God gives us blessings where we do not expect, or blesses us abundantly though we have little. There is a heavy irony in verse 8, as there is with the entire Christian life. What is it? (IICor.4:7)

### C. The LORD's Judicial Plan & Protection

- c<sup>4</sup> *The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom.*
- c'<sup>7</sup> *When a man's ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

*Destruction* upon evil men

*Peace* with evil enemies

Yes, there is a purpose for the wicked, though God did not create their wickedness. All things are made to glorify Him. They will glorify God's wrath. (Rom.9:22) Yet until that dreadful day, God has a way of protecting his people. Those who would be our enemies, are peaceful toward us. This is a true fruit of the Holy Spirit! Notice this irony here in verse 7. If they live in peace with us, are they still our enemies? The church is beset with enemies on every side, especially Christians in the work place. Working to please the Lord is the greatest defense we have against those who would otherwise slander, steal, hurt, and destroy our name.

### D. The LORD's Judicial Wrath & Forgiveness

- d<sup>5</sup> *Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.* Judgment upon the proud, their multitudes
- d'<sup>6</sup> *In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.* Forgiveness upon iniquity

God works judgment for His people by punishing the proud. And through atonement, that wrath comes upon a Scapegoat on behalf of His people. Thus God judicially forgives His people through Christ's sacrifice. With all this, new life is given to us, giving wisdom so that "one departs from evil." (Rom.6) Notice there is an aspect of human responsibility when we pray for God to "deliver us from evil." Deliverance may come through the "watchfulness" He gives, enabling us to depart. L.C.#195

## The Judgment of Kings (Proverbs 16:10-15)

### I. The Seriousness of the King's Word

v. 10 *Divination is on the lips of the king; His mouth must not transgress in judgment.*

This word for “divination” is used in a wicked sense in other passages. (Ez.13:6,23; I Sam.15:23) In these contexts it refers to witchcraft and it is strictly forbidden in the Bible. (Dt.18:10) Yet, the forbidden sense of this word may not be the meaning in 16:10. It could refer to an oracle, even a oracle of God. Therefore in light of the seriousness of his words, he must take heed. It is incumbent upon him to not transgress the law when making judgments, or pronouncing judgments. Literally: “...in judgment he must not transgress with his mouth”. Here we see the seriousness of rulers, or of those responsible over others. Their words pronounce judgments that others are called to follow. This aspect of the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment applies to all rulers in family, church, and the commonwealth (government or business). All those responsible over others have a higher law that judges their own words. Think of how this proverb applies to God's rule as king. When he pronounces us as justified, how is it not a transgression when we are still sinful? Where's the righteousness in that judgment of our king?

### II. The Lord's Judgment

v. 11 *Honest weights and scales are the LORD's; All the weights in the bag are His work.*

Literally: “Balance and scales of righteousness are the LORD's; His work is all the weights in the bag” The word for “righteousness” or “honest” in this verse is the same word for “judgment” in verse 10. (MISHPAT) This verse seems to be teaching two things. 1) The righteous scales that we use correctly render God's judgments. 2) The ways and works of the Lord are justice and measured. If all the weights were not in the bag of a store clerk, or trader, then the purchaser would have to put more money on the scales to balance them out. God is righteous. When He tells us whether our actions are good or bad, what the reward or punishment will be, he does not hide weights in His pocket giving us an unjust decision. In fact, He can not.

### III. The King's Foundation

v. 12 *It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, For a throne is established by righteousness.*

Here kings is used in the plural. Any king who commit wickedness is working to de-throne himself. He becomes the enemy of his own kingdom. His unrighteousness undoes his own throne. This “abomination” is two-fold as well. 1) It is an abomination to the Lord. 2) It is an abomination to the kingship. It erodes the fabric of his own identity and integrity. His subordinates will find him king-less because of his wickedness. As this applies to the kings of earth it is certainly a given, and an assumption, of the Lord King. Think of how this applies to God's righteousness in Romans 1:16.

### IV. The Love of Kings

v. 13 *Righteous lips are the delight of kings, And they love him who speaks what is right.*

Literally: “The delight of kings are righteous lips, and he who speaks straight they love.” This word for “righteous” lips is the same word for “righteousness” in verse 12. (TSEDEQ) Kings love the man who speaks straight. There may be an intentional nuance, or difference in the words “straight” and “judgment”. The king is the one who is to speak “in judgment” (MISHPAT v.10,11). His throne is established by “righteousness” (TSEDEQ v.12,13) Now the man whom the king loves speaks “straight” (YASHAR). This is a less kingly term for it is referring to the one who is not a king, but loved by the king. When translated into Greek, it is the root for the word “orthodox” or “orthodontist”. Straight doctrine and straight teeth helps to illustrate this man who speaks straight. His is not crooked with his words, nor heretical. He is straight and truthful.

### V. The King's Wrath

v. 14 *As messengers of death is the king's wrath, But a wise man will appease it.*

Literally: “The wrath of a king is like messengers of death, but a man of wisdom will propitiate/atone/cover it.” This is a sacrificial used here for “appease”. How much of this refers to the Angel/messenger of death in the Exodus, and the wise Man who propitiates, in Whom we have wisdom. Even for earthly kings, atoning their wrath requires a lot of wisdom; how much more the wrath of God? Thus, only God and satisfy God.

### VI. The King's Light

v. 15 *In the light of the king's face is life, And his favor is like a cloud of the latter rain.*

This may mean life for the one under him, when the king's face brightens. His favor is provisional like rain upon the crops. (Num.6:24-26)

- a <sup>10</sup> Divination is on the lips of the king; His mouth must not transgress in judgment.  
 b <sup>11</sup> Honest weights and scales are the LORD's; All the weights in the bag are His work.  
 a' <sup>12</sup> It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, For a throne is established by righteousness.  
 b' <sup>13</sup> Righteous lips are the delight of kings, And they love him who speaks what is right.  
 a'' <sup>14</sup> As messengers of death is the king's wrath, But a wise man will appease it.  
 b'' <sup>15</sup> In the light of the king's face is life, And his favor is like a cloud of the latter rain.

- a wicked judgment (or) king's words  
 b good judgment  
 a' wicked judgment  
 b' good judgment  
 a'' judgment of death  
 b'' judgment of life

### Proverbs 16: 16 – 32

#### The Theme of Wisdom

<sup>16</sup> How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.

#### Topics:

getting wisdom & understanding

#### A. The Way of Pride vs. Humility

- a <sup>17</sup> The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who keeps his way preserves his soul.  
 b <sup>18</sup> Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.  
 b' <sup>19</sup> Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.  
 a' <sup>20</sup> He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he.

- a departing from **evil**  
 b judgment upon pride  
 b' advantage of humility  
 a' finding **good**

#### B. The Wise in Heart & Lips

- a' <sup>21</sup> The wise in heart will be called prudent, And sweetness of the lips increases learning.  
 b <sup>22</sup> Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. But the correction of fools is folly.  
 a' <sup>23</sup> The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips.  
<sup>24</sup> Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.

- a' **heart and lips** of prudence  
 b understanding vs. folly  
 a' **heart and lips** of learning  
 pleasant **words** give health

#### C. The Way of Death

<sup>25</sup> There is a way that seems right to a man, But **its end is the way of death.**

right way vs. death way

#### D. The Diligence of Laboring for Yourself

<sup>26</sup> The person who labors, labors for himself, For his hungry mouth drives him on.

labor for self

#### C' The Way that is Not Good

- <sup>27</sup> An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire.  
<sup>28</sup> A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.  
<sup>29</sup> A violent man entices his neighbor, And **leads him in a way that is not good.**  
<sup>30</sup> He winks his eye to devise perverse things; He purses his lips and brings about evil.

- digging for evil (lips)  
 spreading strife  
 leading in an evil way  
 eyes & lips lead to evil (lips)

#### B' The Glory of the Elderly

<sup>31</sup> The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, If it is found in the way of righteousness.

age with wisdom

#### A' The Way of Anger vs. Self-control

<sup>32</sup> He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

the strength of self-control

<sup>16</sup> *How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.*

Here is the resounding theme of Proverbs. Wisdom is infinitely more valuable than money. See 3:13-16, 8:10,18,19; 22:1 The theme of this section seems to be that the attainment of wisdom is the result of one's personal hunger and pursuit of it. (v.26) First, we see that wisdom is only to be had by humility.

<sup>17</sup> *The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who keeps his way preserves his soul.*

<sup>18</sup> *Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.*

<sup>19</sup> *Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.*

<sup>20</sup> *He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he.*

As illustrated on the first page, these verses are arranged so that we see God's judgment on the proud and grace given to the humble. Verses 17 and 20 enclose this section with departing from evil and finding good. When this happens his soul is persevered and he is happy. (17b,20b) Verses 18 and 19 highlight the difference in pride and humility. Pride is the great antithesis of wisdom, and the epitome Lady Folly throughout the book. (8:13, 11:2, 16:5, 21:24, 29:23)

<sup>21</sup> *The wise in heart will be called prudent, And sweetness of the lips increases learning.*

<sup>22</sup> *Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. But the correction of fools is folly.*

<sup>23</sup> *The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips.*

<sup>24</sup> *Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.*

Notice that these verses are enclosed with the emphasis on one's heart and lips. (21,23,24) Lips are sweet and give health when they possess wisdom. Proverbs often comments on the physical features of a person's face and contexts it with their heart. How they handle their eyes, lips, mouth, and heart indicates whether they are wise or foolish. (15:7, 22:11, 24:2, 26:23) Central in these few verses is the folly of correcting fools. This may not mean that it is sinful do correct fools, but merely futile and worthless. (17:10, 26:4; Matt. 7:6)

<sup>25</sup> *There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

Fools are always blinded or in denial of the road they are on. They are very near-sighted. There is a mirage of righteousness before them. Their sin deceives them, and they are blinded to the hell awaiting them. (5:3-5; 14:12) Oftentimes the right way leading to life, *appears* to be wrong especially in the eyes of the world. Noah looks like a fool when he built the ark, but he was not the fool when the floods came.

<sup>26</sup> *The person who labors, labors for himself, For his hungry mouth drives him on.*

When you labor are wisdom do not do it just to please others, or to benefit them. Many labor for wisdom, find it, and are frustrated when others do not see any value in it. We love to share what we have learned with others, but many times others do not care that we want to share. The only thing that motivates us is our hungry mouth. This is not to encourage sinful selfishness, but a good work ethic for the sake of personal maturity. (see Matt. 5:6)

<sup>27</sup> *An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire.*

<sup>28</sup> *A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.*

<sup>29</sup> *A violent man entices his neighbor, And leads him in a way that is not good.*

<sup>30</sup> *He winks his eye to devise perverse things; He purses his lips and brings about evil.*

Here are various descriptions of a fool. He is ungodly, perverse, violent, and he winks with his eye! (6:13, 10:10) Watch out for his eyes and lips. How he uses them will tell you what is in his heart. And how we used our eyes and lips will determine whether we are being wise or foolish.

<sup>31</sup> *The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, If it is found in the way of righteousness.*

Age does not always mean that a person is wise. There are many old fools in the world. But an aged man that has found his way in righteousness is a crown of glory. His silver head is heavy with wisdom. The fool is the young man who ignores this man's advice. (20:29, 30:17)

<sup>32</sup> *He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.*

Here is a very evident fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Gal.5:23) Self-control is God-like because even God controls His wrath and anger. Most often anger merely expresses one's foolish heart. (15:18, 19:11, 22:24, 29:22; Eccl. 7:9)

## Riddles of Wisdom: Part I

Proverbs 17: 1-14

### Themes in the verses:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | 1 Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife.<br>2 A wise servant will rule over a son who causes shame, and will share an inheritance among the brothers. | A peaceful house<br>The brothers and servant within the house                                |
| 2 | 3 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests the hearts.<br>4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips; a liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.                | God purifies the heart<br>A wicked heart listens for evil                                    |
| 3 | 5 He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker; he who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.<br>6 Children's children are the crown of old men, and the glory of children is their father.   | Mocking your poor neighbor; reproaching God<br>A father's children                           |
| 4 | 7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, much less lying lips to a prince.<br>8 A present is a precious stone in the eyes of its possessor; wherever he turns, he prospers.                 | The speech of a prince<br>Cherishing a precious stone & prospering                           |
| 5 | 9 He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates friends.<br>10 Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool.                         | To speak, or not to speak<br>Effective words verses worthless blows/beatings                 |
| 6 | 11 An evil man seeks only rebellion; therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him.<br>12 Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, rather than a fool in his folly.                      | A cruel messenger attacks the rebellious<br>A bear attack is better than the attack of folly |
| 7 | 13 Whoever rewards evil for good, evil will not depart from his house.<br>14 The beginning of strife is like releasing water; therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts.                 | Injustice implants evil in a house<br>Strife & contention spread out like water              |

The first seven riddles in this chapter are numbered above. And below are the possible questions they intend for us to contemplate and answer with wisdom.

- Riddle # 1     **Patient Quietness**  
How do servants obtain an inheritance within the family? How does “*quietness*” in verse 1 relate to the coming “*rule*” of the servant in verse 2?
- Riddle # 2     **The Listening Test**  
How does God test our hearts? When we hear the “*false lips*” and a “*spiteful tongue*” in verse 4, how does it relate to the Lord’s test in verse 3?
- Riddle # 3     **Children of God & Man**  
If the glory of children is their father, then who is the glorious Father of the poor? How does mocking the poor of God relate to the children of men?
- Riddle # 4     **The Jewel of Speech**  
What precious stone, or jewel, is a present that causes one to prosper? Does verse 7 give us a clue of what this “precious stone” is in verse 8?
- Riddle # 5     **Timing of Words**  
Who should you rebuke? When do you rebuke a wise man (v.10), or cover his transgression (9)? How do we know when to “*cover*” or “*rebuke*”?
- Riddle # 6     **The Cruelty of Folly**  
Who is the cruel messenger? The fool’s folly (v.12) or the judgment that comes on the fool (v.11)?
- Riddle # 7     **The Fruit of Injustice**  
What can cause strife and contention (v.14) quicker than when we reward evil for good (v.13)? Not much.

## Riddles of Wisdom: Part II

Proverbs 17: 15 – 28

- 1 <sup>15</sup> He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD. injustice of judgment  
<sup>16</sup> Why is there in the hand of a fool the purchase price of wisdom, since he has no heart for it? injustice of ability with no desire
- 2 <sup>17</sup> A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. friends and brothers  
<sup>18</sup> A man devoid of understanding shakes hands in a pledge, and becomes surety for his friend. endangering friendship
- 3 <sup>19</sup> He who loves transgression loves strife, and he who exalts his gate seeks destruction. lover of strife & self  
<sup>20</sup> He who has a deceitful heart finds no good, and he who has a perverse tongue falls into evil. deceitful heart & perverse tongue
- 4 <sup>21</sup> He who begets a scoffer does so to his sorrow, and the father of a fool has no joy. sorrowful father  
<sup>22</sup> A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones. happy heart
- 5 <sup>23</sup> A wicked man accepts a bribe behind the back to pervert the ways of justice. bribe (in back) perverts justice  
<sup>24</sup> Wisdom is in the sight of him who has understanding, but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth. wisdom (in front) is seen by the wise
- 6 <sup>25</sup> A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her who bore him. parental injustice  
<sup>26</sup> Also, to punish the righteous is not good, nor to strike princes for their uprightness. civil injustice
- 7 <sup>27</sup> He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. a quiet wise man  
<sup>28</sup> Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; when he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive. a quiet fool

There are 14 riddles in this chapter; seven in the last study, seven in this one. It is tempting to play with the numbers here: the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter (7+10) of Proverbs contains 14 riddles (7+7). The numbers 7 and 10 are of numbers of completeness and totality. All of these riddle focus on either words, matters of justice in society and family, or the fruits of sin and righteousness. These themes help to summarize nearly everything mentioned in Proverbs.

Riddle #1 **Injustices of Men** If inflicting injustice upon men is an abomination to God, then having the *ability* to obtain wisdom, yet *no desire* to do so, is certainly also an abomination. Do we see an injustice when people have no desire to obtain the wisdom they could easily have?

Riddle #2 **Challenges of Friends** Obviously good friends will always be there for us, yet during adversity brothers even more reliable. Yet, would could even endanger the relationship between brothers. When one unwisely becomes a surety beyond the means of his own ability, friendship are in trouble.

Riddle #3 **Results of Deceit, Perversity, & Pride** One's gates were elevated according to the vanity of the owner. Irony: the exalted gate made for defense brings destruction. The one who protects himself behind such a gate, what brings his own destruction? (v.20)

Riddle #4 **Sorrowful & Joyful Hearts** If a scoffing rebellious son brings sorrow to his father, then what makes a father have a merry heart.(v.22) A godly son?

Riddle #5 **The Sight of Justice** Sure, justice is not partial. But is it blind? Wisdom is clearly seen by the wise, but the fool couldn't see it in front of him. Yet, he's the same one who will take a bribe behind his back – blinding him from justice and wisdom.

Riddle #6 **Injustices of Family & Society** Superiors of parents and civil rulers sometimes face the same fate: their inferiors "*strike*" their uprightness. Verse 26 implies that verse 25 is speaking of godly parents, whose good discipline did not work on the foolish son. (see 17:10)

Riddle #7 **Wise Man's Words** Think about this: is a man really a fool who holds his peace? A fool could possibly keep quote for a while. However, Solomon may be using verse 28 as a pun, or word play. It appears to be a riddle explaining verse 27. The "fool" who holds his peace *is* the man of understanding. We can see Solomon, with a smile on his face, telling his son this riddle. Too bad his son was a fool. (I Kings 12:8)

## The Foolish Hermit

Proverbs 18:1-2

“A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; he rages against all wise judgment.”

“A fool has no delight in understanding, but in expressing his own heart.”

### I. Similarities of these verses:

#### 1. Self-centeredness:

Isolated man seeks “*his own desire*”. → pursuit of selfishness

Foolish man express “*his own heart*”. → fruit of selfishness

#### 2. Hostility:

Isolated man “*rages against all wise judgment*”. → actively hostile

Foolish man “*has not delight in understanding*”. → passively hostile

Wise judgment is avoided by both of these men at all cost. In this passage the fool is the hermit, and the hermit is the fool. Like Prov.17:16, it can be said that this fool had the purchase price of wisdom, yet choose not to use it.

### II. Scriptural Examples of Foolish Hermits:

1. Adam & Eve, before they repented, vainly isolated themselves from God with the fig leaves.
2. Uzziah isolated himself from the priest who tried to forbid him from burning incense. (II Chr.26:16)
3. David isolated himself from his soldiers before he saw Bathsheba bathing. (II Sam.11:1)
4. Absalom isolated himself in Geshur from God’s people after he murdered Amnon. (IISam.13:38)
5. King Zedekiah of Judah sought to isolated himself from Nebuchadnezzar’s godly rule. (Jer.38:14-28)  
(Ez.17:11-21)

### III. Practical Thoughts and Applications of these verses:

1. Part of hell is isolation. In addition to the wrath of God, one suffers isolation from any fellowship with God. There will be no friendship or community in hell. No company will alleviate one’s misery. Though hell may be full, everyone therein will suffer isolation. Such is the desire of a fool in this life; and God will fully give over a fool to those desires in the eternal death to come. A fool’s isolation in this life is the beginning of God’s wrath. (Rom.1:18-32)

2. Isolation is a temptation. Elijah ran to Mt. Sinai thinking he was the only left who was faithful. (I Kg.19) Yet, God had preserved an additional 7,000 in Israel.

3. Pursue God’s people and their friendship. Paul longed for God’s people while being isolated in prison. (Phil.1:3-5) He introduced most of his epistles with a desire to see them. (Rom.1:8-15)

4. Isolation is a way people cut themselves off from God’s covenant community. (Heb.10:25; John 15:4)

5. Isolation is always an act of pride. It may be a feeling of unworthiness, an act of stubbornness, or arrogance. Either way, it is contrary to God’s created order, and could render the severity of eternal consequences.

## The Names and Friends of Mr. Wicked

Proverbs 18:3-9

In this passage there is only one verse that points out the works and words of wisdom. Other than verse 4, all other verses emphasize various aspects of foolishness or wickedness. The first is the companions who come with the wicked.

### I. Wicked's Companions

<sup>3</sup> *When the wicked comes, contempt comes also; and with dishonor comes reproach.*

Contempt and Reproach are the close friends and companions of Wicked and Dishonor. These friends follow close behind Mr. Wicked and Mr. Dishonor. In this way the whirlwind of God's mockery catches up to them speedily. (Prov.1:26-27)

### II. Mouth of Wisdom

<sup>4</sup> *The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook.*

This verse seems to be a clear allusion to Gen.2:6. Because of the deep waters under the earth "a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground." The wise man is similar to the world in its original creation. Wise man, who is made of earth, have deep waters of wisdom with which they water the world around them. The new creation in Christ causes our mortal bodies to flow out "rivers of living water" (John 7:39). As baptism symbolizes, the waters of heaven are poured into our hearts. (Gen.1:6-7; Rev.4:6)

### III. Wicked Judgment

<sup>5</sup> *It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, or to overthrow the righteous in judgment.*

This is an outright abomination to God. Judgment is inherently for the vindication of the righteous. To favor the wicked, or overthrow the righteous, is a destruction of judgment itself. This is the essence of why Jesus' resurrection was not simply a good outcome, but a *necessary* outcome. In His death the world did "overthrow the righteous". Thus it was necessary for the world to be overthrown in His resurrection.

### IV. Mouth of Fools – Self Destruction

<sup>6</sup> *A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calls **for blows**.*

<sup>7</sup> *A fool's mouth is **his destruction**, and his lips are the snare of his soul.*

The structure of these two verses shows us that "contention" is "the snare" that a fool sets for himself. And "his destruction" comes from the "blows" produced by his own mouth. It is an act of unintentional suicide. His mouth calls forth his friends Contempt and Reproach (v.3). They "comfort" him in his self-inflicted destruction. Since the words of a fool inflicts destruction upon himself, how much more will his words bring destruction upon his hearers!

### V. Words of Fools – Share Destruction

<sup>8</sup> *The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body.*

The inmost body is the same location of the wise man's deep waters. Listening to gossip poisons Wisdom's Water Well. Such words taste like little candy, but they go all the way down, perverting words of justice and contaminating wisdom. *A listener of gossip is guilty of gossip.*

L.C. # 144: What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?

"...a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging tale-bearers..."

L.C. # 145: What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?

"...unnecessary discovering of infirmities; raising false rumors, receiving and countenancing evil reports...neglecting such things as are of good report, and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering what we can in others, such things as procure an ill name."

### VI. Laziness – The Fool's Brother

<sup>9</sup> *He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.*

Earlier we saw that a fool destroyed himself with his own words. Here we see his brother is Slothful. Oftentimes Mr. Slothful and Mr. Mouth are the same person. Their destruction is often shared with their hearers.

## A True Poverty That Spirals Into Apostasy (Prov.19:1-4, 25-29)

### A. Liars, Sinners, and Fools in a World of the Rich and Poor

- <sup>1</sup> Better is the poor who walks in his integrity, than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.  
<sup>2</sup> Also it is not good for a soul to be without knowledge, and he sins who hastens with his feet.  
<sup>3</sup> The foolishness of a man twists his way, and his heart frets against the LORD.  
<sup>4</sup> Wealth makes many friends, but the poor is separated from his friend.

- A. Poor Man better than Perverse Lips  
B. Soul without knowledge / sinner hastens with feet  
B' Foolish twist his way / heart strives with God  
A' Poor Man loses friends, Wealth makes friends

### A' Scoffers, Punishment, and Shamefulness in a World of Justice and Injustice

- <sup>25</sup> Strike a scoffer, and the simple will become wary; rebuke one who has understanding, and he will discern knowledge.  
<sup>26</sup> He who mistreats his father and chases away his mother is a son who causes shame and brings reproach.  
<sup>27</sup> Cease listening to instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.  
<sup>28</sup> A disreputable witness scorns justice, and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.  
<sup>29</sup> Judgments are prepared for scoffers, and beatings for the backs of fools.

- A. Scoffer is beaten to warn the simple  
B. Shame & reproach, by wicked son  
C. Ceasing listening – become foolish  
B' Injustice & iniquity, by wicked mouth  
A' Scoffers are judged & Fools are beaten

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This chapter exposes us to a world of extremities. As we look at each section, we'll notice that one condition of man can be either bitter or sweet, good or bad, depending on the circumstance. First is the issue of poverty.

### I. The Bitter-Sweet of Poverty and Wealth

- <sup>1</sup> Better is the poor who walks in his integrity, than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.  
<sup>4</sup> Wealth makes many friends, but the poor is separated from his friend.

Poverty is certainly not a desirable condition. Yet the one with perverse lips, or lying lips, is more impoverished than the poor man. In Proverbs there is none anymore poor or pitiful than the fool. As with individuals, so it is with churches, they may be poor but the Lord see their wealth. (Rev. 2:9) If verses 1 & 4 are to be interpreted as part of a single structure then the fool with perverse lips in verse 1 may be connected with the wealthy man in verse 4. Too often in this world the one with wealth also has perverse lips, and such a man can easily surround himself with many ungodly friends. Whereas the poor man who walks in his integrity may find himself "separated from his friend" (v.4). However, verse 4, may be hinting to a deeper meaning in comparison with verse 1. If integrity (v.1) makes a man spiritually more wealthy than a fool, then verse 4 may be saying that the wealth of integrity makes many friends. Whereas, the fool with perverse lips – he is actually the poor man because he is separated from his friend. The interpretation depends on whether you interpret wealth as one's integrity, or merely one's money. Maybe Solomon wants us to think of both.

### II. The Perverse One Perverting His Way – Could He Be The One Who Is Poor?

- <sup>2</sup> Also it is not good for a soul to be without knowledge, and he sins who hastens with his feet.  
<sup>3</sup> The foolishness of a man twists his way, and his heart frets against the LORD.

Verse 2 begins with "also". This may show that it is elaborating upon the one with perverse lips in verse 1. He is without knowledge and he hastens with his feet. This corresponds to his way being twisted in verse 3. And of course being without knowledge, he frets or becomes angry against the Lord. (Same word used for Uzziah when he became angry II Chr.26:19.) Concerning anger, see Prov.19:19. Considering the flow of this passage, it may highlight the spiritual interpretation of verse 4. This fool is perverse, without knowledge, hastens with his feet, twists his way, and is angry at God. What becomes of him? He may be the very one who has now "true wealth" and is the poor man separated from friends. Verse 4 may be the ironic conclusion of man who impoverished of any integrity.

### III. Justice In This Life

- <sup>25</sup> Strike a scoffer, and the simple will become wary; rebuke one who has understanding, and he will discern knowledge.  
<sup>29</sup> Judgments are prepared for scoffers, and beatings for the backs of fools.

### IV. Injustice In This Life

- <sup>26</sup> He who mistreats his father and chases away his mother is a son who causes shame and brings reproach. (I Tim.5:4-8, 5<sup>th</sup> commandment)  
<sup>28</sup> A disreputable witness scorns justice, and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

### V. Listening vs. Apostasy

- <sup>27</sup> Cease listening to instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge. (Some stray for a time and then find repentance. Some stray and never return.)  
(These verses have a continual digression: perverse lips, no knowledge, quick feet, twisted way, anger, scoffer, mistreatment of parents, liar, and apostate from knowledge)

(Who becomes the scoffer, shameful son, and liar: could it be the one who stops listening?)

## Stewardship of Your Possessions and Yourself

Proverbs 19: 5 – 24

### I. Giving vs. Mooching

#### **B. Curses & Blessings: The Liar and The Poor versus Gifts and Friends**

<sup>5</sup> A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies will not escape.

<sup>6</sup> Many entreat the favor of the nobility, and every man is **a friend to one who gives gifts**.

<sup>7</sup> All the brothers of the poor hate him; how much more do his friends go far from him!

He may pursue them with words, yet they abandon him.

<sup>8</sup> He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he **who keeps understanding will find good**.

<sup>9</sup> A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies shall perish.

A. False witness will be punished

B. Mr. Giver of Gifts has friends

C. Poor Man is hated; has no friends

C' Poor Man is abandoned by friends

B' Wise man finds good (i.e. he should give gifts)

A' False witness will be punished

Today we will look at these passages in light of the overall structure we have seen in a previous study. The B-Sections relate to one another as it leads us to meditate on various judgments and blessings that come upon various people in this life. Notice how the verses 5 and 9 form a bracket around the first B-section. Liars will “not escape” and they “shall perish” (v.5,9). This can be seen as a curse or judgment that will come upon those who live in violation to the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment.

Verses 6 and 8 focus on someone’s favor and finding good. As this structure suggests, there is a corresponding relationship between these verses. In verse 6, the favor of nobility is sought for, especially in the giving of gifts. If you want the favor of a king, do not come before him empty handed. Only a fool come to a nobleman, without a gift, expecting to have his favor. This is not sinful, but appropriate just as the Magi did with their gifts after the birth of Christ. Appreciating the structure of this passage, we can see that verse 8 merely affirms the wisdom of bearing gifts. The one who loves his own soul, who will find good, he is the same one who will come before nobles bearing gifts. The noble, or king, may render good to him; and wisdom instructed not to come before the king empty-handed.

This sets up a contrast with the poor man in verse 7. Notice that verse 7 has two parts. Brothers hate him and friends stay away from him in the first part of the verse. In the second part, the poor man pursues them. The poor man does not have the means by which to bring gifts, and in verse 7 it appears that he poor man has resorted to begging. He is a nuisance to his brothers because he keeps asking for money. Whatever friends he had are long gone. He pursues “with words”, but everyone keep their distance from the poor man. The assumptions we bring to this text will determine whether we see this a sin of slothfulness on the part of the poor, or a sin of greed and gluttony on the part of his family and friends. Considering that this text is enclosed with a judgment on liars, I am inclined to interpret verse 7 as a judgment on the slothful beggars who become an aggravation to others. Their empty-handedness is a contrast to the wisdom of giving gifts mentioned in verses 6-8. Yet, of course, if we want to spiritualize this man’s poverty, we can see that this poor man’s position will be blessed by Christ who said “Blessed on the poor” (Lk.6:20). But in the world of everyday life, none of us can stand to be around someone who incessantly asks for handouts and who is known as an empty-handed mooch.

## II. Laziness and Sundry Paths in Life

### B' Judgments & Blessings: The Lazy, The Careless, The Wrathful versus The Listener and The Merciful

<sup>15</sup> Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger.

<sup>16</sup> He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, but he who is careless of his ways **will die**.

<sup>17</sup> He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, and He will pay back what he has given.

<sup>18</sup> Chasten your son while there is hope, and do not set *your heart* on his destruction.

<sup>19</sup> A man of great wrath will suffer punishment; for if you rescue him, you will have to do it again.

<sup>20</sup> Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days.

<sup>21</sup> There are many plans in a *man's heart*, nevertheless the LORD's counsel—that will stand.

<sup>22</sup> What is desired in a man is kindness, and a poor man is better than a liar.

<sup>23</sup> The fear of the LORD **leads to life**, and he who has it will abide in satisfaction; he will not be visited with evil. **B'** Life to man who fears the LORD

<sup>24</sup> A lazy man buries his hand in the bowl, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

**A.** Lazy man will hunger

**B.** Death to the careless man

**C.** Lend to the poor, God will pay you back

**D.** Heart desires destruction - without discipline

**E.** Judgment on the wrathful (repeat offender)

**E'** Blessings on the listener (mature wisdom)

**D'** Heart of man has plans vs. God's counsel

**C'** Better to be poor, than a liar

**B'** Life to man who fears the LORD

**A'** Lazy man will not feed himself

Laziness is mentioned in verses 15 & 24. First he is in a “deep-sleep”, which is a type of death, thus he suffers hunger. Then even when he has food to eat, or the means to get it, he is too lazy to feed himself. (This may shed light on the poor beggar of verse 7.) Next in verse 16 and 22 the two paths of death and life are contrasted. The Lord's “commandment” and the “fear of the Lord” leads to life, otherwise there is death to be had.

Then in verses 17 and 22 the “poor man” addressed again. In verse 17, God blesses the one who has compassion on the poor. This kind man is alluded to in verse 22 saying “What is desired in a man is kindness”. However verse 22 exalts the poor man as better than a liar. Verse 22 highlights the bracketing and central themes of the first B-section (v.5-9). The poor man, though he may be seen as an empty handed beggar, he is better than the liar of verses 5 and 9. Also, verses 17 and 22 could be used to alter our ethical interpretation of verse 7. The poor man may be a mooch, an empty-handed beggar with no friends or family, and the reality is that no one like being around him. Yet, verse 17 and 22 challenge us to go the extra *painful* mile. Lend to the poor and trust that God will pay you back, while at the same time acknowledge that it is better to have a poor man around you than a liar!

Verses 18 and 21 focuses on instruction, twice mentioning the “heart” of a man. Verse 18 implies that your heart desires your son's destruction if you do not chasten him with discipline. This is a contrast to the many plans of a man's heart (v.21) which are for his own good and good of his children. Yet, the mystery is no matter how much we fulfill our responsibility of discipline for good plans, it is the Lord's counsel – His decree – that will unfold in the lives of our posterity. This is *not* an excuse for lazy parenting but rather an acknowledgment of both our responsibility and God's sovereignty.

Finally, in the central section we see a contrast between the Angry Man and Listening Man. Angry Men are repeat offenders, like ticking time bombs ready to explode over and over. Wisdom says to stay away from him. (22:24-25) Whereas, the one who listens to counsel and instruction will be known as a wise man in his old age. *Age does not guarantee wisdom*. Wisdom comes to those who are diligent (contra. 15,17) obedient (see 16,22), kind (see 17,23), receptive to discipline (see 18,21), and has self-control (contra. v.19).

### C. The King: Approach Him With Discretion - As You Should With All of Life: Yourself, Children, Wife, and Riches

<sup>10</sup> Luxury is not fitting for a fool, much less for a servant to rule over princes.

<sup>11</sup> The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to **overlook a transgression**.

<sup>12</sup> The king's wrath is like the roaring of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass.

<sup>13</sup> A foolish son is the ruin of his father, and the **contentions of a wife** are a continual dripping.

<sup>14</sup> Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD.

**A.** Inappropriateness: Luxury for fools & Servant over princes

**B.** Glorious Discretion: Slow to anger; Overlooking offenses

**C.** King's anger & King's favor

**B'** Destructive Indiscretion: Foolish son; Contentious wife

**A'** Blessedness: Riches from family & Prudent wife/helper

Verses 10 and 14 contrast the issues of one's possessions. Giving possessions or positions to the wrong people are inappropriate (v.10). Whereas possessions received from parents, and a wife received from the Lord is a blessed gift. Verses 11 and 13 appear to contrast “discretion” that slows a man's anger versus the foolish son. Also it appears to encourage a man to “overlook a transgression” of his wife's “contentions”. Though she may be difficult, remember to have discretion that slows your anger. Finally remember that even a king can be found wrathful or favorable. He may roar like a lion or be refreshing like the morning dew. His response will determine whether you have lived wisely before Him, bringing gifts of thankful praise, showing compassion to difficult people; or whether you were a foolish son.

**Proverbs 22:1-16**

One of the requirements of the ninth commandment taught in our Larger Catechism is the “love and care of our own good name.” Here in this section of Proverbs we will learn various instructions in “persevering and promoting” our own good name. Let’s notice some observations and implications about verse 1 before we examine how we are acquire a good name.

Pr. 22:1 *A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold.*

1. It is not sinful to desire a good name or reputation.
2. It is a false dichotomy if we are forced to choose between caring for own good name, or giving glory to God. We give God glory *by* having a love and care for our own good name. And we do not ascribe “the praise of any good we either are, have or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves or another other creature. L.C. # 105

Example: Notice that the Larger Catechism teaches that one of the requirements of superiors to inferiors is that they are to live conduct themselves “by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honour to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them.” L.C. #129

Therefore a superior who preserves his good name is preserving that authority that God has put upon him. Giving God praise and caring for our good name is consistent.

3. A good name is priceless. Money can not buy a good name, and the love of money can destroy a good name (I Tim.6:10).
4. A good name is like having a good wife, though a man is responsible to preserve and protect them both, both are a gift from God (Pr.18:22).
5. A good name is like any other gift from God. It is to used rightly, and never to become an idol or a source of pride.
6. What people think about you is *important*. For this reason we are to stay away from appearances of evil, and even pursue the appearance of good. (L.C #99.6)
7. What people think about you is *important*, but does not determine whether your name is good. Some people may hate your name, simply because it *is* good.
8. Most people are more concerned with choosing or having great riches, rather than a good name. They will kill their name to have what will never replace a good name.
9. A good name is only good if it is identified with God’s Good Name. God’s Name is placed upon us in baptism, because all baptized persons “have given up their names unto Christ” (L.C.#167). Therefore, concerning God’s name, any baptized person who is “ashamed of it, or a shame to it” (L.C. #113) will not preserve or promoted their own good name.
10. Choosing a good name for ourselves because of The Name placed upon us is a summary the life of faith and repentance in Christ.

The next page contains the next several proverbs, though which we will consider how each advises us in choosing a lifestyle of procuring a good name. Also, notice who many of these proverbs concern money.

Verses:

<sup>2</sup> *The rich and the poor have this in common, the LORD is the maker of them all.*

**Humility:** God's providence has made some to be poor and some to be rich. Therefore the poor should not covet and the rich should not be proud. Both should be humble and pursue a good name

Themes:  
**rich & poor**

<sup>3</sup> *A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.*

**Foresight:** What path am I on? What seeds am I planting, of which fruit I will have to eat? What dues do I have to pay now to reap the fruits of righteousness later? The fool will never ask these questions

prudence

<sup>4</sup> *By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life.*

**Rewards:** Those who choose money over a good name may be rewarded with money. But those who choose humility and the fear of God, will be rewarded in more ways than one.

**true riches**

<sup>5</sup> *Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards his soul will be far from them.*

**On Guard:** Persevering in the faith requires a guarding of one's own soul.

perverse pathway

<sup>6</sup> *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

**Discipline:** Receive it yourself, and hand it down when it is your turn to give it.

child training

**a.** <sup>7</sup> *The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*

**b.** <sup>8</sup> *He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, and the rod of his anger will fail.*

**a'** <sup>9</sup> *He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.*

**Money & Anger:** Concern the myriad of ways these three proverbs relate to one another!

**rich & poor: beware of borrowing**

anger

**rich & poor: be generous to the poor**

<sup>10</sup> *Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; yes, strife and reproach will cease.*

**Not a friend:** A scoffer is not your friend, period! And do not be-friend him. Pray for him, but do not claim him as a friend. Do you want your name to become "Scoffer"?

scoffer

<sup>11</sup> *He who loves purity of heart and has grace on his lips, the king will be his friend.*

<sup>12</sup> *The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, but He overthrows the words of the faithless.*

**Speech:** Desire purity and good words. Those of high regard will know your name.

king's friend

word of the faithless

<sup>13</sup> *The lazy man says, "There is a lion outside! I shall be slain in the streets!"*

**No Excuses:** Work hard at whatever you do. Excuses are for lazy irresponsible people.

lazy

<sup>14</sup> *The mouth of an immoral woman is a deep pit; he who is abhorred by the LORD will fall there.*

**Fear Judgment:** Consider immorality, in and of itself, to be a judgment of God.

<sup>15</sup> *Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him.*

<sup>16</sup> *He who oppresses the poor to increase his riches, and he who gives to the rich, will surely come to poverty.*

**No Favoritism:** Never favor a person based on their financial condition.

immorality

discipline (see v.6)

**rich & poor**

## Proverbs 22: 17 – 29

17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge;

<sup>18</sup> For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you (*in your belly*); let them all be fixed upon your lips, b. *Eat words* on the wise

<sup>19</sup> **So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed you today, even you.**

<sup>20</sup> Have I not written to you excellent things of counsels and knowledge,

<sup>21</sup> That I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth,  
that you may answer words of truth to those who send to you?

a. **Listen** to words of the wise

b. *Eat words* on the wise

c. Trust in the Lord

b' *Written words* of excellence

a' **Answer** with words of truth

v.17 “the words of the wise” speak of any wise person, then the last part of the verse focus on “my knowledge”

v.18 The phrase “within you” is literally “in your belly”. (See Ez. 3;1-3.) The words of the wise on to be “in your belly”, which implies that they are to be eaten. Notice they are to be “upon you lips”, which further illustrates the digestion of God’s word. What our belly has eaten with come out of our lips.

v.19 The structure of this passage suggest that this is the central verse, and it is very fitting. The essence of wisdom is to cause us to trust in the Lord.

v.20 The correlation between verses 18 & 20 (b. & b’) suggest that we are to keep the written word in our belly. This is teaching us to memorize and mediate upon the word of God.

v.21 Notice how the passage begins with *listening* and progresses to *answering*. The king’s son is instructed to listen that he will mature one day to answer with the words of truth.

### 1. Robbing the Poor (8<sup>th</sup> commandment)

<sup>22</sup> Do not rob the poor because he is poor, nor oppress the afflicted at the gate;

<sup>23</sup> for the LORD will plead their cause, and plunder the soul of those who plunder them.

v. 22 – “the gate” was the place of court, or trial. The rich and powerful could easily pervert justice and oppress the poor in court and thus even robbing from them. But verse 23 threatens that the Lord will defend the poor, vindicate them, and destroy those who oppress the poor. See Ex. 22:25-27, Amos 2:6-8, Dt. 24:12-14, Lk. 18:1-8

### 2. Befriending the Hothead (6 commandment – “sinful anger” is forbidden; L.C. 136)

<sup>24</sup> Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go,

<sup>25</sup> lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul.

v. 24-25. Notice that anger is contagious (v.24) and lethal (v.25). By having a hotheaded friend, his ways are learned. The angry man molds a person into his own image. It is a contrast to being made in the image of God, who is patience and longsuffering. “By associating with the hothead, one becomes fatally involved even before he becomes aware of it himself. *For your life* shows that the trap is lethal. The metaphor is ironic. One avoids traps to save one’s life, not fetches them to kill oneself” (Bruce Waltke).

### 3. Becoming a Surety, Especially If You Are Poor (8<sup>th</sup> commandment – “avoiding suretiship” is required; L.C.141)

<sup>26</sup> Do not be one of those who shakes hands in a pledge, one of those who is surety for debts;

<sup>27</sup> If you have nothing with which to pay, why should he take away your bed from under you?

See Prov.6:1-5

#### **4. Stealing Property / Moving Landmarks** (8<sup>th</sup> commandment: “removing landmarks” is forbidden. L.C.142)

<sup>28</sup> Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set.

Compare with 23:10. Fathers set boundary markers to mark out one’s inheritance of the land. Moving a boundary marker meant that you would steal someone else’s land of inheritance. (Dt. 19:14, 27:17; Job 24:2. See Pr.15:25 & 23:10 for the Lord boundary provision for the widow and orphan). See I Kings 21:4 and the words of Naboth to Ahab. Widows and orphans of the church are included in the inheritance of eternal life. Not caring for them is an act of disowning them as heirs of God’s kingdom. Thus the scripture mandates that the church should care for her widows and orphans (I Tim.5:3-8; James 1:27).

#### **5. The Diligent Excel**

<sup>29</sup> Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before unknown men.

Joseph, Daniel, Jeremiah, and David are all men who were faithful with a few things, even in the face of much opposition, and later were promoted to stand before kings; or to become a king like in the cases of Joseph and David. See Matt. 25:14-30. Those who are faithful with a few things became rulers over many things. Such is the story of the Lord’s church. We are called to be faithful in this life. Later we will be promoted to rule over angels. (I Cor. 6:2-3)

## WARNING OF THINGS THAT ARE NOT AS THEY APPEAR

### Food: Warning of being a Gluttonous Guest / He is not your friend

23:1 When you sit down to eat with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you; <sup>2</sup> and put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite. <sup>3</sup> Do not desire his delicacies, for they are deceptive food.

### Riches: Warning; they fly away / Wealth is not a security

<sup>4</sup> Do not overwork to be rich; because of your own understanding, cease! <sup>5</sup> Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven.

### Food: Warning of a Stingy Host / He is

<sup>6</sup> Do not eat the bread of a miser, nor desire his delicacies; <sup>7</sup> for as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “Eat and drink!” he says to you, but his heart is not with you. <sup>8</sup> The morsel you have eaten, you will vomit up, and waste your pleasant words.

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### Offering Wisdom

<sup>9</sup> Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

### Dishonoring The Fatherless

<sup>10</sup> Do not remove the ancient landmark, nor enter the fields of the fatherless; <sup>11</sup> for their Redeemer is mighty; He will plead their cause against you.

### Your Heart

<sup>12</sup> Apply your heart to instruction, and your ears to words of knowledge.

### Discipline

<sup>13</sup> Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. <sup>14</sup> You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell.

### Your Heart

<sup>15</sup> My son, if your heart is wise, my heart will rejoice—indeed, I myself; <sup>16</sup> Yes, my inmost being will rejoice when your lips speak right things.

<sup>17</sup> Do not let your heart envy sinners, but be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day; <sup>18</sup> for surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off. <sup>19</sup> Hear, my son, and be wise; and guide your heart in the way.

### Food: Drunkard, Glutton

<sup>20</sup> Do not mix with winebibbers, or with gluttonous eaters of meat; <sup>21</sup> for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.

### Honoring Your Father

<sup>22</sup> Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

### Selling Truth

<sup>23</sup> Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

### Happy Father

<sup>24</sup> The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, and he who begets a wise child will delight in him. <sup>25</sup> Let your father and your mother be glad, and let her who bore you rejoice.

### Your Heart

<sup>26</sup> My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways. <sup>27</sup> For a harlot is a deep pit, and a seductress is a narrow well. <sup>28</sup> She also lies in wait as for a victim, and increases the unfaithful among men.

### Wine: The Drunkard

<sup>29</sup> Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? <sup>30</sup> Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. <sup>31</sup> Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; <sup>32</sup> at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. <sup>33</sup> Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. <sup>34</sup> Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?"

4 sections on eating & drinking:

In the Bible, godliness or ungodliness is often determined by how a person handles food: whether honorable or abusive.

- Glutton warning - "The official may not be testing the young, but he will take note of the glutton, detest him, and wreck his career."  
Bad manners before a ruler.
- Miser / stingy -
- Glutton friends -
- Drunkard man -

Ungodliness: Notice how food ( or meal time) is connected with some of the most evil people.

- Adam & Eve – ate wrong food
- Cain – offered simply “fruit of the ground” – maybe not his first fruits
- Ishmael mocked Isaac – at a feast (21:8)
- Esau – despised his birthright for a pot of red stew
- Joseph’s brothers – after they throw Joseph in the well, they eat a meal –before they sold him 37:25
- wilderness experience – “*when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full*” ex.16:3
- golden calf - “the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play”
- Sisera – drank milk, right before Jael ran the stake through his head
- Levite concubine
- Eli’s sons – stole the food from the Lord
- Saul’s 2<sup>nd</sup> sin – forbid his people to eat until evening. (in a sense Saul muzzled the ox, while it tread out the grain) soldiers fought / no food
- Nabal – did not share his food with David
- Amnon – asked for food, then rapes his sister
- Absalom – kills Amnon at a feast
- Ez. God invites animals to feast on his enemies (Gog & Magog)
- Haman is invited to a feast – before he is hanged
- rich man & Lazarus table
- Mark - Herod serves the head of J.B. at the party. Jesus feeds 5,000
- table of demons
- Harlot of Rev. (Jeru) drunk with the blood saints

## Godliness

Noah made wine & found rest

Melchizedek brought out bread & wine after Abraham rested from his war, for rescuing Lot

Daniel - did not eat the kings food.

David - ate the showbread from the tabernacle

– sacrificed the food that his soldiers brought

Jesus - John 6.

Lord's supper

friends

## The Fool

Proverbs 25:28 – 26:12

According to Bruce Waltke, commenting on Proverbs 25:28 – 26:28, there are “seven morally inferior types of people: the undisciplined (15:28), the fool (26:1-12), the sluggard (vv. 12-16), the busybody (v.17), the mischief maker (vv.18-19), the slanderer (vv. 20-22), and the son’s personal enemy (vv.23-28). Seven symbolizes completeness. If *midheh* (= “overthrown”) in 26:28 refers to the wall thrust down, the section is framed by an *inclusio* that pictures the ruin of the inferior types of people to the breached wall, escalated from loss of defense (see 25:28) to utter ruin (26:28).” p. 343 *The Book of Proverbs*

### The Undisciplined (25:28)

25:28 *Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.*

Though this proverb focuses on an undisciplined person, or one with no self-control, he is also identified as a fool in other proverbs (12:16). A city always needs a wall to defend itself. The one with no self-control destroys his own protective wall, thus destroying himself.

**The Fool (26:1-12)** Notice that the word “fool” occurs in each of the following verses except verse 2, which implies the fools curse.

#### 1. What Is Fitting For A Fool ?

<sup>26:1</sup> *As snow in summer and rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool.*

honor unfittingly given to a fool

<sup>2</sup> *Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause shall not alight.*

curse unfittingly given to the innocent

<sup>3</sup> *A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the fool’s back.*

rod fittingly given to a fool

#### 2. How Do You Respond To A Fool ?

<sup>4</sup> *Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him.*

time for silence – so you do not contract his sin (anger, malice, greed)

<sup>5</sup> *Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.*

time for rebuke – so you correct him (child discipline, some enemies)

#### 3. What Does A Fool Communicate ?

<sup>6</sup> *He who sends a message by the **hand** of a fool cuts off his own **feet** and drinks violence.*

Foolish messenger causes strife. Notice the “hand” & “feet”

<sup>7</sup> *Like the **legs** of the lame that hang limp is a proverb in the **mouth** of fools.*

If a fool had wisdom, could he even speak it appropriately?

<sup>8</sup> *Like one who binds a stone in a sling is he who gives honor to a fool.*

Honoring a fool invites violence, just like a stone in a sling.

#### 4. Does A Fool Have An Awareness Of His Words ?

<sup>9</sup> *Like a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard is a proverb in the mouth of fools.*

Drunkards are numb to their pain (23:25); the fool is numb to the pain of his great “proverbs”.

#### 5. How Does God Honor A Fool ?

<sup>10</sup> *The great God who formed everything gives the fool his hire and the transgressor his wages.* Providential consequences & Eternal retribution (Rm.6:23)

#### 6. Does A Fool Repent ?

<sup>11</sup> *As a dog returns to his own vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.*

Unrepentance is the essence of all folly (II Pet.2:22). The “repeat”, or “relapsing after repentance” (L.C.#151), only increases the heinousness of one’s folly.

#### 7. How Does Fool See Himself ?

<sup>12</sup> *Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

Notice the blatant sarcasm here. It reads *as if* the man who is wise in his own eyes is distinct from the fool. However, he is the worst fool of all.