Wisdom From the Master

A Topical Study of the Proverbs

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Lesson One: Introduction to Proverbs

Everyone knows the value of good advice. Listening to those who are wiser than we are gives us the benefit of their hard-won experience. Growing up, getting along with others and holding a job would all be impossible without guidance from folks who have been there before. The Book of Proverbs gives us that kind of help.

But the book is more than a collection of “tips and tricks.” It passes on a core of knowledge and experience that God says we must have if we are to live successfully. These proverbs are not merely old sayings that concern people in far off lands, but universal principles that apply to all people of all times. They speak to modern problems as much as to ancient ones because they all concern human nature and God’s ways. Human nature has not changed since Solomon’s time, neither has God’s. Only the landscape around us has changed.

Author and Date of Proverbs
King Solomon wrote many proverbs, more than those which have survived to this day. The title of the book of Proverbs (1:1) and two collections of maxims within it (10:1, 25:1) identify him as their author. First Kings confirms this by attributing three thousand proverbs and more than a thousand songs to him (1 Kings 4:32). In fact, the writer of Kings boasted that Solomon’s wisdom exceeded that of all the wise men in the East and in Egypt (1 Kings 4:30). Solomon’s interests and research covered nearly every aspect of knowledge, from zoology and botany to grammar and theology. To think of wisdom in Israel was to think of Solomon, who was granted wisdom by God’s gracious gift.

Although Solomon was the main writer of the Book of Proverbs (10:1-22:16), some proverbs were written by other authors, and some of Solomon’s were not added to the book until after his death. Agur wrote chapter 30 and Lemuel wrote 31:1-9. Moreover, it is not clear whether Solomon wrote the first nine chapters; they may have been contributed by someone else as an introduction to the book. Proverbs 25:1 tells us that a group of assistants to King Hezekiah (who reigned about 729-699 B.C.) compiled and added the proverbs of Solomon contained in chapters 25-29. The Book of Proverbs as we know it may have been completed during Hezekiah’s time, but we cannot be certain, because we have no information about Agur (chapter 30) or Lemuel (31:1-9) besides their names.

Poetry
Proverbs is cast in Hebrew poetry, a rich pattern of rhetoric that shares with poetry in many cultures a special use of words for effect, sound and sense, vivid imagery, and concise language. In contrast to other types of poetry, Hebrew poets—from
the psalmists to the authors of the proverbs—use parallelism, the repetition of related thoughts. A common type of parallelism is **synonymous parallelism**, in which a second line restates the first line in slightly different terms:

\[
A \text{ good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,}
Loving favor than silver or gold. \quad (22:1)
\]

Both lines say nearly the same thing; but the restatement drives the point home. The pattern is "A is so; so is B."

**Contrasting or Antithetical parallelism** is also quite common in Proverbs. Here the second line expresses the thought negatively, again reinforcing the positive idea:

\[
A \text{ prudent man foresees evil and hides himself,}
But the simple pass on and are punished. \quad (22:3)
\]

This proverb contrasts the prudent person with the simple person. The antithesis goes both ways. Each line amplifies and explains the other.

In another type of parallelism the second line completes the thought of the first line. This is called **complementing or climactic parallelism**. An example is:

\[
The \text{ rich and the poor have this in common,}
The \text{ Lord is the maker of them all. } \quad (22:2)
\]

The two lines are incomplete without each other.

Finally, many of the proverbs are based on comparisons between two parallel lines. These are the **comparing or “better than” proverbs**:

\[
\text{Better is a little with righteousness,}
\text{ Than vast revenues without justice. } \quad (16:8).
\]

All of these examples illustrate the heart of Hebrew poetry: parallelism. Each verse sharpens and heightens the thought by use of restatement, comparison and building to a climax. These subtle devices draw us in and cause us to see and understand the point of each proverb more clearly.

**Purpose and Theme**
The prologue states the book’s purpose and theme (1:1-7): it is to give a course of instruction in wisdom, preparation for life, and the ways of life in God’s world. Many topics, such as riches, success, and social relations appear in other collections of wisdom literature that have survived from the ancient Middle East, but they are treated differently. Israel’s contribution to wisdom literature was to place all wisdom in the context of faith in the Lord. The words, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (1:7) set the record straight, so to speak. This is the foundation on which all other wise sayings stand. It is the Book of Proverbs central
idea: Fear of the Lord motivates us to obey God’s commandments, and obedience to them constitutes true wisdom.

Structure
Proverbs are general rules. There are exceptions. Therefore we must not argue that the proverb could not be true in a literal sense just because we can think of exceptions. An example of this is Proverbs 22:6:

“Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.”

This proverb is a general truth, but there are numerous exceptions to the rule. This does not mean the Word of God is not perfect, it is just the nature of this type of literature. These are general rules of life. A “proverb” is a brief saying in the place of many words (PRO “for” VERBA “Words”). The genius of the proverb lies in its shrewd concentration of a truth so that it catches on and becomes easier to remember.

Instead of studying the Book of Proverbs in a chronological verse by verse format, this study will study this book in a topical form. The benefit of this kind of study will be that we can look at all the proverbs on a particular subject at the same time.

Why Proverbs?
Proverbs are special to us because they are found in the word of God. Besides that they are the key to a happy and fulfilled life in God’s world. Solomon recognized this when God approached him in the beginning of his reign:

2 Chronicles 1:7-12 On that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, “Ask! What shall I give you?” And Solomon said to God: “You have shown great mercy to David my father, and have made me king in his place. Now, O LORD God, let Your promise to David my father be established, for You have made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?” Then God said to Solomon: “Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king— wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings have had who were before you, nor shall any after you have the like.”

Solomon recognized the importance of wisdom over any blessing that God can give. Because of this, he focused on how best to teach others around him to be wise. Notice how Solomon begins this book.
Chapter 1
1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:
2 To know wisdom and instruction, To perceive the words of understanding,
3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, Justice, judgment, and equity;
4 To give prudence to the simple, To the young man knowledge and discretion—
5 A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,
6 To understand a proverb and an enigma, The words of the wise and their riddles.
7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Chapter 25
1. These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied:

Chapter 31
1 The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him:
2 What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows?

Special Focus  What is the Best Way to Study the Proverbs?

Chronologically

• This is the way the Holy Spirit sent us the Book
• One chapter can be read each day for a month and the book will be completed
• Has given power, education and comfort through the Ages

Topically

• Helps us to see the fullness of teaching on a particular subject
• Easier to teach in a Bible Class format
• Combines the wisdom of different authors and perspectives
QUESTIONS

1. What are the different types of parallelisms found in Hebrew poetry?

2. Why was the Book of Proverbs written?

3. Are Proverbs always true? Why or why not?

4. According to Proverbs 1:7, what is the ultimate source of wisdom?

5. Who wrote the majority of the proverbs?

   Thought Questions:

6. Why do you think the Book of Proverbs has had such a special place in people’s hearts through the ages?

7. What do you think qualified Solomon to write this book?

8. What are the advantages of studying Proverbs in a topical format?

9. What are the advantages of studying Proverbs in a chronological (the order it is written) format?

10. What do you plan to gain by your involvement in this study?

Daily Readings:

Day One: Chapter One
Day Two: Chapter Two
Day Three: Chapter Three
Day Four: Chapter Four
Day Five: Chapter Five
Day Six: Chapter Six
Lesson Two: Family Relationships

The Bible tells us that marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. Hebrews 13:4. It has been said that the power of society and the success of the church relies in many ways on the success of the family. It is such a shame that many marriages are broken and many parents and children do not know how to relate to one another in the proper way. God’s Book of wisdom touches on some timeless principles for finding domestic success!

Keys for a Successful Marriage

Find satisfaction in your spouse
Chapter 5
15 Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.
16 Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets?
17 Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you.
18 Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth.
19 As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love.

Chapter 27
8 Like a bird that wanders from its nest Is a man who wanders from his place.

Avoid unnecessary quarrels
Chapter 15
17 Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, Than a fatted calf with hatred.

Chapter 17
1 Better is a dry morsel with quietness, Than a house full of feasting with strife.

Chapter 19
13 A foolish son is the ruin of his father, And the contentions of a wife are a continual dripping.

Chapter 21
9 Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.
Better to dwell in the wilderness, Than with a contentious and angry woman.

Chapter 25
24 It is better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Chapter 27
15 A continual dripping on a very rainy day And a contentious woman are alike;
16 Whoever restrains her restrains the wind, And grasps oil with his right hand.

Marry the right person
Chapter 18
22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.

Chapter 19
14 Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from the LORD.

Live by God’s plan
Chapter 24
3 Through wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established;
4 By knowledge the rooms are filled With all precious and pleasant riches.

Keys for Successful Family Living

A Father...

Teaches his son
Chapter 3
1 My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands;
2 For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you.
3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart,
4 And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man.
5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
8 It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.
11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction;
12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.
21 My son, let them not depart from your eyes— Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
22 So they will be life to your soul And grace to your neck.
23 Then you will walk safely in your way, And your foot will not stumble.
24 When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

Chapter 7
1 My son, keep my words, And treasure my commands within you.
2 Keep my commands and live, And my law as the apple of your eye.
3 Bind them on your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,” And call understanding your nearest kin,
5 That they may keep you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words.

Chapter 24
3 Through wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established;
4 By knowledge the rooms are filled With all precious and pleasant riches.

Corrects his son
Chapter 3
11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction;
12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.

Chapter 13
24 He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

Chapter 19
18 Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction.

Chapter 20
30 Blows that hurt cleanse away evil, As do stripes the inner depths of the heart.

Chapter 23
13 Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die.
24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who begets a wise child will delight in him.

Is affected by his children
Chapter 10
1 The proverbs of Solomon: A wise son makes a glad father, But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

Chapter 17
2 A wise servant will rule over a son who causes shame, And will share an inheritance among the brothers.
A foolish son is a grief to his father, And bitterness to her who bore him.

Chapter 23
15 My son, if your heart is wise, My heart will rejoice—indeed, I myself;
16 Yes, my inmost being will rejoice When your lips speak right things.

Chapter 24
21 My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those given to change;
22 For their calamity will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin those two can bring?

Chapter 27
11 My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, That I may answer him who reproaches me.

A Mother...

Teaches her children
Chapter 6
20 My son, keep your father’s command, And do not forsake the law of your mother.
21 Bind them continually upon your heart; Tie them around your neck.
22 When you roam, they will lead you; When you sleep, they will keep you; And when you awake, they will speak with you.
23 For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life,

Loves her children
Chapter 22
6 Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.
15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Is affected by her children
Chapter 15
20 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.

Chapter 19
13 A foolish son is the ruin of his father, And the contentions of a wife are a continual dripping.
26 He who mistreats his father and chases away his mother Is a son who causes shame and brings reproach.
27 Cease listening to instruction, my son, And you will stray from the words of knowledge.
Chapter 23  
22 Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old.  
24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who begets a wise child will delight in him.  
25 Let your father and your mother be glad, And let her who bore you rejoice.

Chapter 29  
15 The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.  
17 Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.

A Child...  

Learns from his parents  
Chapter 1  
8 My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother;  
9 For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, And chains about your neck.

Chapter 4  
10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, And the years of your life will be many.  
11 I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths.  
12 When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, And when you run, you will not stumble.  
13 Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.  
20 My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings.  
21 Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart;  
22 For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh.  
23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.  
24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.  
25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you.  
26 Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established.  
27 Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.

Accepts correction  
Chapter 20  
11 Even a child is known by his deeds, Whether what he does is pure and right.  
20 Whoever curses his father or his mother, His lamp will be put out in deep darkness.
Chapter 13
1 A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

Affects his parents
Chapter 15
5 A fool despises his father’s instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent.
20 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.

Chapter 20
7 The righteous man walks in his integrity; His children are blessed after him.
11 Even a child is known by his deeds, Whether what he does is pure and right.

Chapter 28
24 Whoever robs his father or his mother, And says, “It is no transgression,” The same is companion to a destroyer.

Chapter 30
17 The eye that mocks his father, And scorns obedience to his mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it.
Special Focus: The Importance of Discipline

This is true of children of any era: they will lack respect because it is not demanded of them. It is the nature of a child to be curious, test the limits, grow evermore to be independent, and yes, even to be rebellious. It is especially true today since modern parents have been convinced that limiting their children in any way is bad. Failing to set limits for children is failing in a parent’s basic responsibility. Failing to administer punishment when those limits are violated is neglect.

Physical neglect is just as wrong, but reasonable people do not have to be convinced of that fact. There are always extremes. Some want to throw out the baby with the bath water. Because some parents discipline wrongly or too harshly or are just plain abusive does not make good and needed correction wrong!

If I fail to correct my child and discipline him, I have neglected him. He will grow up to be a miserable person and a menace to others. Our children need to know there are consequences to their actions. They need to learn about tolerance and mercy, but we have forgotten justice and respect.

How will a child learn respect for authority? By first honoring father and mother (Ephesians 6:1-2). Don’t hope or ask for it, demand it! Live before them so as to deserve it, respect is earned not bought. (The video game people won't like this.) A child also needs to know that a parent's words of warning will be backed up by physical correction if need be. This must be planned, thought out, and discussed with the child. Proverbs 22:15 says "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him." The key to moderation and balance is found in Proverbs 23:13-14. "Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell." One who would injure or harm a child with punishment is in error and should themselves be punished. One who will not correct a child also needs to be corrected.

Children do not always accept or understand logical reasoning. A swat on the bottom each of us could understand as a child! There are other forms of good and corrective punishment, but when a child is defiant and flagrantly refuses to comply with a parent's verbal correction it is time for physical correction. Once again, not abuse, but loving discipline. I saw a good bumper sticker that said, "they took spanking out of the schools and our jails filled up". Is it any wonder? When children do not learn respect for authority, then they will become adults who do not respect authority.

God, our Father is the great example. "For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives... Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?" (Hebrews 12:6&9)

Do you love your children? Do not fail to provide for them. Do not fail to correct them in a manner appropriate for each situation. Do not fail in loving them.
QUESTIONS:

1. What are three things a father does in his family?

2. What are three things a mother does in her family?

3. What are three things a child does in his family?

4. What is a contentious wife compared to in the Book of Proverbs?

5. What is the result of a failure to discipline children according to the book of Proverbs?

Thought Questions

6. Why do you think the Bible teaches so much on the subject of the family?

7. Why do you think so many families are encountering difficulties today?

8. What word of advice would you give to a young father today?

9. What word of advice would you give to a young mother today?

10. What word of advice would you give to a teenager who is struggling with her parents?

Daily Readings:

Day One: Chapter Seven
Day Two: Chapter Eight
Day Three: Chapter Nine
Day Four: Chapter Ten
Day Five: Chapter Eleven
Day Six: Chapter Twelve
Lesson Three: A Person of God

Since the Book of Proverbs was a study book in the Jewish schools teaching how to succeed in life, much emphasis is placed on how to be a person of God. In the Bible, the word righteous is found 195 times in the Old Testament and 43 times in the New Testament. The word righteous is used to describe those who were “just, holy, appropriate and lawful.” This study is valuable today because by following these Proverbs, we too can find success.

The Righteous Man

The Righteous Man Defined
Chapter 12
2 A good man obtains favor from the LORD, But a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.

Providence of God in the Life of the Righteous Man
Chapter 10
2 Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, But righteousness delivers from death.
16 The labor of the righteous leads to life, The wages of the wicked to sin.
24 The fear of the wicked will come upon him, And the desire of the righteous will be granted.
25 When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has an everlasting foundation.
27 The fear of the LORD prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be shortened.
30 The righteous will never be removed, But the wicked will not inhabit the earth.

Chapter 13
25 The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul, But the stomach of the wicked shall be in want.

The Potential (Hope) For the Righteous Man
Chapter 10
28 The hope of the righteous will be gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish.

Chapter 13
9 The light of the righteous rejoices, But the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

Chapter 14
32 The wicked is banished in his wickedness, But the righteous has a refuge in his death.
The Problems of the Righteous Man
Chapter 12
21 No grave trouble will overtake the righteous, But the wicked shall be filled with evil.

The Prayers of the Righteous Man
Chapter 15
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.

The Protection of the Righteous Man
Chapter 10
29 The way of the LORD is strength for the upright, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.

Chapter 14
11 The house of the wicked will be overthrown, But the tent of the upright will flourish.

Chapter 24
15 Do not lie in wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; Do not plunder his resting place;

Chapter 29
27 An unjust man is an abomination to the righteous, And he who is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked.

The Positive Influence of the Righteous Man
Chapter 10
31 The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.

Chapter 11
8 The righteous is delivered from trouble, And it comes to the wicked instead.
10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.

Chapter 28
10 Whoever causes the upright to go astray in an evil way, He himself will fall into his own pit; But the blameless will inherit good.
The Production of the Righteous Man
Chapter 11
18 The wicked man does deceptive work, But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward.
30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.
31 If the righteous will be recompensed on the earth, How much more the ungodly and the sinner.

The Possession of the Righteous Man
Chapter 13
22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.

Chapter 15
6 In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.

Chapter 16
8 Better is a little with righteousness, Than vast revenues without justice.

The Pity (Compassion) of the Righteous Man
Chapter 12
10 A righteous man regards the life of his animal, But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

Chapter 29
7 The righteous considers the cause of the poor, But the wicked does not understand such knowledge.

The Preference of God for the Righteous Man
Chapter 12
3 A man is not established by wickedness, But the root of the righteous cannot be moved.
7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more, But the house of the righteous will stand.
28 In the way of righteousness is life, And in its pathway there is no death.

The Pleasure of the Righteous Man
Chapter 14
14 The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, But a good man will be satisfied from above.

The Position of the Righteous Man
Chapter 10
3 The LORD will not allow the righteous soul to famish, But He casts away the desire of the wicked.
Chapter 14
19 The evil will bow before the good, And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

The Path of the Righteous Man
Chapter 11
3 The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.
5 The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.

Chapter 14
2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But he who is perverse in his ways despises Him.

Chapter 16
17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who keeps his way preserves his soul.

Chapter 21
8 The way of a guilty man is perverse; But as for the pure, his work is right.
15 It is a joy for the just to do justice, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.
18 The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, And the unfaithful for the upright.
21 He who follows righteousness and mercy Finds life, righteousness, and honor.

Chapter 22
5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; He who guards his soul will be far from them.

Chapter 28
18 Whoever walks blamelessly will be saved, But he who is perverse in his ways will suddenly fall.

Chapter 29
6 By transgression an evil man is snared, But the righteous sings and rejoices.
10 The bloodthirsty hate the blameless, But the upright seek his well-being.

The Perspective of the Righteous Man
Chapter 10
9 He who walks with integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will become known.

Chapter 28
1 The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion.
The Plea of the Righteous Man
Chapter 11
23 The desire of the righteous is only good, But the expectation of the wicked is wrath.

Chapter 12
5 The thoughts of the righteous are right, But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.
12 The wicked covet the catch of evil men, But the root of the righteous yields fruit.

Chapter 13
5 A righteous man hates lying, But a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame.

Chapter 21
29 A wicked man hardens his face, But as for the upright, he establishes his way.

Chapter 29
16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases; But the righteous will see their fall.

The Prudential Behavior of the Righteous Man
Chapter 12
26 The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.

Chapter 15
28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

Chapter 21
12 The righteous God wisely considers the house of the wicked, Overthrowing the wicked for their wickedness.

Chapter 24
24 He who says to the wicked, “You are righteous,” Him the people will curse; Nations will abhor him.
25 But those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, And a good blessing will come upon them.

Chapter 25
26 A righteous man who falters before the wicked is like a murky spring and a polluted well.

Chapter 28
4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, But such as keep the law contend with them.
The Persistence of the Righteous Man
Chapter 16
31 The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, If it is found in the way of righteousness.

Chapter 24
16 For a righteous man may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity.

The Wise Man

The Wise Man’s Foundation
Chapter 21
22 A wise man scales the city of the mighty, And brings down the trusted stronghold.

Proverbs 24
5 A wise man is strong, Yes, a man of knowledge increases strength;

The Wise Man’s Function
Chapter 10
23 To do evil is like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom.

Chapter 13
16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool lays open his folly.

Chapter 14
8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, But the folly of fools is deceit.
15 The simple believes every word, But the prudent considers well his steps.

Chapter 27
12 A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself; The simple pass on and are punished.

The Wise Man’s Fortune
Chapter 11
29 He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, And the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.

Chapter 14
18 The simple inherit folly, But the prudent are crowned with knowledge.
24 The crown of the wise is their riches, But the foolishness of fools is folly.
Chapter 21
20 There is desirable treasure, And oil in the dwelling of the wise, But a foolish man squanders it.

**The Wise Man’s Features**
Chapter 14
3 In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.
33 Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding, But what is in the heart of fools is made known.

Chapter 15
7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, But the heart of the fool does not do so.
14 The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.
21 Folly is joy to him who is destitute of discernment, But a man of understanding walks uprightly.

Chapter 16
23 The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips.

Chapter 22
3 A prudent man foreseees evil and hides himself, But the simple pass on and are punished.

Chapter 29
8 Scoffers set a city aflame, But wise men turn away wrath.
11 A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

**The Wise Man’s Future**
Chapter 12
8 A man will be commended according to his wisdom, But he who is of a perverse heart will be despised.

Chapter 15
24 The way of life winds upward for the wise, That he may turn away from hell below.

Chapter 16
20 He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he.

**The Wise Man’s Family**
Chapter 15
20 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.
Chapter 17
2 A wise servant will rule over a son who causes shame, And will share an inheritance among the brothers.
10 Rebupe is more effective for a wise man Than a hundred blows on a fool.

**Knowing Right From Wrong**

Chapter 18
13 He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.
17 The first one to plead his cause seems right, Until his neighbor comes and examines him.

Chapter 19
21 There are many plans in a man’s heart, Nevertheless the LORD’s counsel—that will stand.

Chapter 20
24 A man’s steps are of the LORD; How then can a man understand his own way?

Chapter 21
2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts.
30 There is no wisdom or understanding Or counsel against the LORD.

Chapter 24
24 He who says to the wicked, “You are righteous,” Him the people will curse; Nations will abhor him.
25 But those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, And a good blessing will come upon them.

Chapter 28
11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding searches him out.

**Exercising Discipline**

Chapter 3
11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction;
12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son in whom he delights.

Chapter 13
24 He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.
Chapter 19
18 Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction.

Chapter 20
30 Blows that hurt cleanse away evil, As do stripes the inner depths of the heart.

Chapter 22
15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Chapter 23
13 Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die.
14 You shall beat him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.

Chapter 29
15 The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.
17 Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.
19 A servant will not be corrected by mere words; For though he understands, he will not respond.
21 He who pampers his servant from childhood Will have him as a son in the end.

Special Focus: Qualities of Good Leadership

Diligence: 12:24
Good Friends: 13:17
Rewards Integrity: 17:26
Listens Before Answering: 18:13
Ability to Discern: 18:15
Listens to Both Sides: 18:17
Ability to Stand Adversity: 24:10
Ability to Stand Praise: 27:21

What Happens Without Good Leadership?

Honor Goes to the Fool, 26:8
Destruction Comes Soon, 28:15
People Will Grow discouraged, 29:2
Wickedness Spreads, 29:12
QUESTIONS:

1. How does the Book of Proverbs define a righteous man? Proverbs 12:2

2. What is more important than money? Proverbs 16:8

3. What is the ultimate fate of the wicked? Proverbs 14:19

4. What must we choose carefully according to Proverbs 12:26?

5. What is the purpose of discipline? Proverbs 20:30

Thought Questions


7. What are some of the ways we are rewarded for our behavior? Proverbs 11:31

8. What are some of the ways God uses money today? Proverbs 13:22

9. How does our relationship with God affect our priorities? Proverbs 14:14

10. Discuss the glory of an older person who has lived a good life. Proverbs 16:31

Daily Readings

Day One: Chapter Thirteen
Day Two: Chapter Fourteen
Day Three: Chapter Fifteen
Day Four: Chapter Sixteen
Day Five: Chapter Seventeen
Day Six: Chapter Eighteen
Lesson Four:  General Relationships

The people you spend your time with, to a large degree, determine who you are. Life is full of examples of how good people were led astray by their friends and also how some have placed the right people around them to make them better. A great part of the Book of Proverbs is written addressing companionship. Solomon repeatedly cautions his students to steer clear of bad influences, warning of the pitfalls and perils that come from evil associations. If this concept was true in the ancient world, it is certainly true today.

Who You Chose As Your Friends

Chapter 1
10 My son, if sinners entice you, Do not consent.
11 If they say, “Come with us, Let us lie in wait to shed blood; Let us lurk secretly for the innocent without cause;
12 Let us swallow them alive like Sheol, And whole, like those who go down to the Pit;
13 We shall find all kinds of precious possessions,
We shall fill our houses with spoil;
14 Cast in your lot among us, Let us all have one purse”—
15 My son, do not walk in the way with them, Keep your foot from their path;
16 For their feet run to evil, And they make haste to shed blood.
17 Surely, in vain the net is spread In the sight of any bird;
18 But they lie in wait for their own blood, They lurk secretly for their own lives.

Chapter 2
10 When wisdom enters your heart, And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,
11 Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you,
12 To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things,
13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness To walk in the ways of darkness;
14 Who rejoice in doing evil, And delight in the perversity of the wicked;
15 Whose ways are crooked, And who are devious in their paths;
16 To deliver you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words,
17 Who forsakes the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God.
18 For her house leads down to death, And her paths to the dead;
19 None who go to her return, Nor do they regain the paths of life—
20 So you may walk in the way of goodness, And keep to the paths of righteousness.
Chapter 3
31 Do not envy the oppressor, And choose none of his ways;

Chapter 4
14 Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil.
15 Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on.
16 For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; And their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall.
17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, And drink the wine of violence.
18 But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.
19 The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble.
20 My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings.
21 Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart;
22 For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh.
23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.
24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.
25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you.
26 Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established.
27 Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.

Chapter 13
20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

Chapter 14
7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.

Chapter 21
16 A man who wanders from the way of understanding Will rest in the assembly of the dead.

Chapter 23
17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day.
18 For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off.
19 Hear, my son, and be wise; And guide your heart in the way.
20 Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;
21 For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.
22 Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old.
23 Buy the truth, and do not sell it Also wisdom and instruction and understanding.
Chapter 24
1 Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them;
2 For their heart devises violence, And their lips talk of troublemaking.
19 Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the wicked;
20 For there will be no prospect for the evil man; The lamp of the wicked will be put out.

Chapter 25
26 A righteous man who falters before the wicked Is like a murky spring and a polluted well.

Chapter 28
7 Whoever keeps the law is a discerning son, But a companion of gluttons shames his father.

Chapter 29
3 Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice, But a companion of harlots wastes his wealth.

How to Treat Your Fellow Man
(Treat Neighbors)

Chapter 3
27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in the power of your hand to do so.
28 Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it,” When you have it with you.

Chapter 11
12 He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace.

Chapter 16
29 A violent man entices his neighbor, And leads him in a way that is not good.
30 He winks his eye to devise perverse things; He purses his lips and brings about evil.

Chapter 21
10 The soul of the wicked desires evil; His neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.

Chapter 24
8 He who plots to do evil Will be called a schemer.
9 The devising of foolishness is sin, And the scoffer is an abomination to men.
Chapter 25
8 Do not go hastily to court; For what will you do in the end, When your neighbor has put you to shame?
9 Debate your case with your neighbor, And do not disclose the secret to another;
17 Seldom set foot in your neighbor’s house, Lest he become weary of you and hate you.
18 A man who bears false witness against his neighbor Is like a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow.

Chapter 26
18 A man who bears false witness against his neighbor Is like a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow.
19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble Is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.

Chapter 29
5 A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet.

(Treat the Poor)

Chapter 3
27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in the power of your hand to do so.
28 Do not say to your neighbor, “ Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it,” When you have it with you.

Chapter 11
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.

Chapter 13
23 Much food is in the fallow ground of the poor, And for lack of justice there is waste.

Chapter 14
20 The poor man is hated even by his own neighbor, But the rich has many friends.
21 He who despises his neighbor sins; But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he.
31 He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.

Chapter 17
5 He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker; He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.

Chapter 18
23 The poor man uses entreaties, But the rich answers roughly.

Chapter 19
7 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.
17 He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given.

Chapter 20
19 He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

Chapter 21
13 Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be heard.
26 He covets greedily all day long, but the righteous gives and does not spare.

Chapter 25
20 Like one who takes away a garment in cold weather, And like vinegar on soda, Is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.

Chapter 27
5 Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed.
6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.
9 Ointment and perfume delight the heart, And the sweetness of a man’s friend gives delight by hearty counsel.
10 Do not forsake your own friend or your father’s friend, Nor go to your brother’s house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.
14 He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, It will be counted a curse to him.
17 As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

Chapter 28
23 He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward Than he who flatters with the tongue.
Do not say, “I will recompense evil”; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.

Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; Lest the LORD see it, and it displease Him, And He turn away His wrath from him. Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, For would you deceive with your lips? Do not say, “I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.”

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the LORD will reward you.

Special Focus

Do Others Really Affect Our Relationship With God?

1 Corinthians 15:33

Illustrations of the Influence of Poor Examples:
Samson
Judges 16:4-21

Solomon
1 Kings 11:1-8

Rehoboam
2 Chronicles 10:1-19

Illustrations of the Influence of Good Examples:
Ruth and Naomi
Ruth 1:16-17

Timothy and his family
2 Timothy 1:5

Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego
Daniel 3:13-27
QUESTIONS:

1. What is the danger of choosing ungodly friends? Proverbs 2:18
2. What is the advantage of choosing wise friends? Proverbs 13:20
3. How does the Bible describe the man who despises his neighbor? Proverbs 11:12
4. What will God do for the person who is generous? Proverbs 11:25
5. What is our responsibility towards someone who wrongs us? Proverbs 20:22

Thought Questions
6. Why do our choices in who we have as friends affect us so much?
7. Explain how Jesus had so many ‘ungodly’ friends and yet never sinned.
8. Why does God put so much emphasis on how we treat the poor?
9. In what way does our treatment of our enemies reflect our faith in God?
10. Who is our neighbor?

Daily Readings
   Day One: Chapter Nineteen
   Day Two: Chapter Twenty
   Day Three: Chapter Twenty-One
   Day Four: Chapter Twenty-Two
   Day Five: Chapter Twenty-Three
   Day Six: Chapter Twenty-Four
Lesson Five:  Dangers of Life

Life can be dangerous. Just as Satan pointed out the fruit to Eve so that it would appeal to her every desire, Satan places objects before us that look glamorous but lead to death. Solomon later would have an opportunity to look back on his life in the Book of Ecclesiastes and say to himself concerning much of what is found in this section, "It is all meaningless." He had surrendered his soul to things that cost him dearly. In the Book of Proverbs Solomon spends time counseling his students about the dangers of life. One out of every twelve verses of this book is devoted to warning men about choosing the wrong kind of woman. The mate you chose for life can either bless you or destroy you.

Likewise, Solomon spends time teaching about anger. While anger in itself is not a sin, if left uncontrolled it can cause you to do things you will regret for the rest of your life. Likewise, if one is to be successful in life, he must be pleasing to God. Solomon lists off exactly what it is that God hates. By avoiding those things we can know how to live and be truly successful. This chapter closes out with a summary of the Proverbs concerning alcohol. Solomon reminds us that while wine looks beautiful in the cup, it will surely lead to a painful end.

The Book of Proverbs is like a map of a minefield. As long as we read the map and avoid the traps of life, we can lead very successful and enjoyable lives. Its when we are lured into the sins of this life that we face regret and sorrow.

The Dangers of an Immoral Woman

She Will Ruin Your Reputation

Chapter 5
1 My son, pay attention to my wisdom; Lend your ear to my understanding,
2 That you may preserve discretion, And your lips may keep knowledge.
3 For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, And her mouth is smoother than oil;
4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, Sharp as a two-edged sword.
5 Her feet go down to death, Her steps lay hold of hell.
6 Lest you ponder her path of life— Her ways are unstable; You do not know them.
7 Therefore hear me now, my children, And do not depart from the words of my mouth.
8 Remove your way far from her, And do not go near the door of her house,
9 Lest you give your honor to others, And your years to the cruel one;
10 Lest aliens be filled with your wealth, And your labors go to the house of a foreigner;
11 And you mourn at last, When your flesh and your body are consumed,
12 And say: “How I have hated instruction, And my heart despised correction!
13 I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined my ear to those who instructed me!
14 I was on the verge of total ruin, In the midst of the assembly and congregation.”
15 Drink water from your own cistern, And running water from your own well.
16 Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets?
17 Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you.
Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth. 
As a loving deer and a graceful Doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; And always be enraptured with her love.
For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?
For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He ponders all his paths.
His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, And he is caught in the cords of his sin.
He shall die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

Chapter 6
32 Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so destroys his own soul.
33 Wounds and dishonor he will get, And his reproach will not be wiped away.

Chapter 30
20 This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth, And says, "I have done no wickedness."

She Will Rob You of Your Health
Chapter 2
16 To deliver you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words,
17 Who forsakes the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God.
18 For her house leads down to death, And her paths to the dead;
19 None who go to her return, Nor do they regain the paths of life—

Chapter 7
22 Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,
23 Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, He did not know it would cost his life.
24 Now therefore, listen to me, my children; Pay attention to the words of my mouth:
25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, Do not stray into her paths;
26 For she has cast down many wounded, And all who were slain by her were strong men.
27 Her house is the way to hell, Descending to the chambers of death.

She Will Rob your Mind of Peace
Chapter 6
23 For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life,
24 To keep you from the evil woman, From the flattering tongue of a seductress.
25 Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, Nor let her allure you with her eyelids.
For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.

Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned?

Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared?

So is he who goes in to his neighbor’s wife; Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.

People do not despise a thief If he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.

Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; He may have to give up all the substance of his house.

She Will Destroy Your Soul
Chapter 7
1 My son, keep my words, And treasure my commands within you.
2 Keep my commands and live, And my law as the apple of your eye.
3 Bind them on your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,” And call understanding your nearest kin,
5 That they may keep you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words.
6 For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice,
7 And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, A young man devoid of understanding,
8 Passing along the street near her corner; And he took the path to her house
9 In the twilight, in the evening, In the black and dark night.
10 And there a woman met him, With the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.
11 She was loud and rebellious, Her feet would not stay at home.
12 At times she was outside, at times in the open square, Lurking at every corner.
13 So she caught him and kissed him; With an impudent face she said to him:
14 “I have peace offerings with me; Today I have paid my vows.
15 So I came out to meet you, Diligently to seek your face, And I have found you.
16 I have spread my bed with tapestry, Colored coverings of Egyptian linen.
17 I have perfumed my bed With myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
18 Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with love.
19 For my husband is not at home; He has gone on a long journey;
20 He has taken a bag of money with him, And will come home on the appointed day.”
21 With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, With her flattering lips she seduced him.

Chapter 22
14 The mouth of an immoral woman is a deep pit; He who is abhorred by the LORD will fall there.

She Will Steal Your Wealth and Emotions
Chapter 9
13 A foolish woman is clamorous; She is simple, and knows nothing.
14 For she sits at the door of her house, On a seat by the highest places of the city,
15 To call to those who pass by, Who go straight on their way:
“Whoever is simple, let him turn in here”; And as for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,

“Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”

But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of hell.

She Will Rob You of Your Best Years
Chapter 23
26 My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways.
27 For a harlot is a deep pit, And a seductress is a narrow well.
28 She also lies in wait as for a victim, And increases the unfaithful among men.

She Will Arose the Jealousy of Others
Chapter 6
34 For jealousy is a husband’s fury; Therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.
35 He will accept no recompense, Nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts.

Anger

Uncontrolled anger is dangerous
Chapter 12
16 A fool’s wrath is known at once, But a prudent man covers shame.

Chapter 14
17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated.
29 He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.

Chapter 15
18 A wrathful man stirs up strife, But he who is slow to anger allays contention.

Chapter 16
32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

Chapter 22
24 Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go,
25 Lest you learn his ways And set a snare for your soul.

Chapter 19
11 The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to overlook a transgression.
12 The king’s wrath is like the roaring of a lion, But his favor is like dew on the grass.
Chapter 29
22 An angry man stirs up strife, And a furious man abounds in transgression.

**Uncontrolled anger can destroy**
Chapter 19
19 A man of great wrath will suffer punishment; For if you rescue him, you will have to do it again.

Chapter 25
28 Whoever has no rule over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.

Chapter 27
3 A stone is heavy and sand is weighty, But a fool’s wrath is heavier than both of them.
4 Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, But who is able to stand before jealousy?

Chapter 30
33 For as the churning of milk produces butter, And wringing the nose produces blood, So the forcing of wrath produces strife.

**Dealing With Angry People**
Chapter 18
19 A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle.

Chapter 21
14 A gift in secret pacifies anger, And a bribe behind the back, strong wrath.

Chapter 25
23 The north wind brings forth rain, And a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.

**What God Hates**

**Sinful Living**
Chapter 6
16 These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him:
17 A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood,
18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil,
19 A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.

**Those who are untruthful**
Chapter 11
1 Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, But a just weight is His delight.
Chapter 20
10 Diverse weights and diverse measures, They are both alike, an abomination to the LORD.
23 Diverse weights are an abomination to the LORD, And dishonest scales are not good.

Chapter 26
24 He who hates, disguises it with his lips, And lays up deceit within himself;
25 When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart;

The sacrifice of the wicked
Chapter 15
8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the upright is His delight.

Chapter 21
27 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; How much more when he brings it with wicked intent!

The way of the wicked
Chapter 15
9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But He loves him who follows righteousness.

Chapter 29
27 An unjust man is an abomination to the righteous, And he who is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked.

The thoughts of the wicked
Chapter 11
20 Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD, But the blameless in their ways are His delight.

Chapter 24
9 The devising of foolishness is sin, And the scoffer is an abomination to men.

Those who are proud
Chapter 16
5 Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.
Those who judge unjustly
Chapter 17
15 He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.

Wine
Wine Will Make You a Fool
Chapter 20
1 Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

Wine Will Create Poverty
Chapter 23
20 Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;
21 For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.
29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes?
30 Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine.
31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly;
32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper.
33 Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things.
34 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:
35 “ 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?"

Wine Brings Destruction
Chapter 31
4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink;
5 Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.
6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart.
7 Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his misery no more.
Special Focus: The Christian and Alcohol

The Bible clearly warns about the consequences of using strong drink (Proverbs 20:1). Society today encourages the use of alcohol at almost every occasion. Drinking is not limited to specific amounts, to certain rituals or certain times of the year. The use of alcohol is increasingly romanticized and idealized by younger age groups. The impact of the consumption of alcohol on individuals, families, employers and churches is devastating.

Those who chose to follow Christ are exhorted to “not be drunk with wine, which is dissipation.” (Ephesians 5:18). The world encourages use of strong drink by promising good times, many friends and great glamour. What happens to those who continue to drink over a period of time is the exact opposite: bad times, fewer and fewer friends, physical deterioration and a host of other woes such as depression, broken families and financial and legal difficulties. Abstinence Is not only possible but is desirable for two reasons.

1.) The person who drinks may not be able to determine if he can stop drinking until after he is addicted to alcohol. Genetic and other physical and emotional factors can play a large part in a person’s inability to quit after just a few drinks.

2.) The unbeliever needs to see the believer as a model of Christ who chooses to be filled with the Holy Spirit because believers have discovered the Spirit to be sufficient in meeting all their emotional needs.
QUESTIONS:

1. Describe how an immoral woman can deceive you. Proverbs 5:3-4

2. What is the ultimate result of sexual impurity? Proverbs 6:25-29

3. What is the danger of friendship with an angry man? Proverbs 22:24-25

4. What is common among all drunkards? Proverbs 23:21

5. What are two reasons the Christian should abstain from alcohol? Ephesians 5:18-19

Thought Questions


7. Why do you think evil people resent the upright person? Proverbs 29:27

8. Why does Solomon call a fool the man who is easily angered? Proverbs 14:17

9. Why do you think it is especially dangerous for those who are in authority to drink alcohol? Proverbs 31:4

10. Why has there been such temptation through the ages even to today to drink alcohol?

Daily Readings

Day One: Chapter Twenty-Five
Day Two: Chapter Twenty-Six
Day Three: Chapter Twenty-Seven
Day Four: Chapter Twenty-Eight
Day Five: Chapter Twenty-Nine
Day Six: Chapter Thirty & Thirty-One
Lesson Six: Our Relationship With God

Of all the lessons Solomon could teach his young students, none would be more important than having a good relationship with God. In order to have a good relationship with God, we must know who he is, Hebrews 11:6. We must also recognize the importance of following him and worshipping him.

Life is full of important decisions: who to marry, what to do for a living, friends and companions. But nothing in life is more important than having a relationship with the one who is making plans for our eternity.

Attributes of God

God is aware of all that happens

Chapter 5
21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He ponders all his paths.

Chapter 15
3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good.

Chapter 20
12 The hearing ear and the seeing eye, The LORD has made them both.

Chapter 25
2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

Chapter 26
10 The great God who formed everything Gives the fool his hire and the transgressor his wages.

God knows the heart of people

Chapter 15
11 Hell and Destruction are before the LORD; So how much more the hearts of the sons of men.

Chapter 16
2 All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits.

Chapter 20
27 The spirit of a man is the lamp of the LORD, Searching all the inner depths of his heart.
Chapter 21
2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the hearts.
12 The righteous God wisely considers the house of the wicked, Overthrowing the wicked for their wickedness.

God controls all things
Chapter 16
1 The preparations of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.
4 The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom.
7 When a man’s ways please the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.
9 A man’s heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.
11 Honest weights and scales are the LORD’s; All the weights in the bag are His work.
33 The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision is from the LORD.

Chapter 21
30 There is no wisdom or understanding Or counsel against the LORD.

Chapter 26
10 The great God who formed everything Gives the fool his hire and the transgressor his wages.

Chapter 29
13 The poor man and the oppressor have this in common: The LORD gives light to the eyes of both.
26 Many seek the ruler’s favor, But justice for man comes from the LORD.

God provides a place of safety
Chapter 18
10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe.

God rescues people from danger
Chapter 20
22 Do not say, “I will recompense evil”; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.
31 The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But deliverance is of the LORD.

God condemns the wicked
Chapter 24
11 Deliver those who are drawn toward death, And hold back those stumbling to the slaughter.
12 If you say, “Surely we did not know this,” Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps
your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?
20 For there will be no prospect for the evil man; The lamp of the wicked will be put out.

God delights in our prayers
Chapter 15
29 The LORD is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.

God loves those who obey him
Chapter 22
12 The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, But He overthrows the words of the faithless.

Chapter 30
5 Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.
6 Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

God cares for the poor and needy
Chapter 15
25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud, But He will establish the boundary of the widow.

Chapter 22
22 Do not rob the poor because he is poor, Nor oppress the afflicted at the gate;
23 For the LORD will plead their cause, And plunder the soul of those who plunder them.

Chapter 23
10 Do not remove the ancient landmark, Nor enter the fields of the fatherless;
11 For their Redeemer is mighty; He will plead their cause against you.

God purifies the heart
Chapter 17
3 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests the hearts.

The Fear of the Lord
Chapter 9
10 “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
Chapter 14
2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But he who is perverse in his ways despises Him.
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.

Chapter 15
16 Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, Than great treasure with trouble.
33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is humility.

Chapter 16
6 In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.

Chapter 19
23 The fear of the LORD leads to life, And he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil.

Chapter 22
4 By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life.

Chapter 23
17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day;
18 For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off.

Chapter 24
21 My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those given to change;
22 For their calamity will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin those two can bring?

Chapter 28
14 Happy is the man who is always reverent, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.

Trust in God vs. Trust in Man

Chapter 3
5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
Chapter 14
12 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Chapter 16
1 The preparations of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.
2 All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits.
3 Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.
9 A man’s heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.
20 He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he.
25 There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Chapter 18
2 A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart.

Chapter 19
21 There are many plans in a man’s heart, Nevertheless the LORD’s counsel—that will stand.

Chapter 20
22 Do not say, “I will recompense evil”; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.
24 A man’s steps are of the LORD; How then can a man understand his own way?

Chapter 21
30 There is no wisdom or understanding Or counsel against the LORD.

Chapter 22
17 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge;
18 For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; Let them all be fixed upon your lips,
19 So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed you today, even you.

Chapter 28
25 He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered.
26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.

Chapter 29
25 The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.
The Wicked Man

His Speech
Chapter 6
12 A worthless person, a wicked man, Walks with a perverse mouth;
13 He winks with his eyes, He shuffles his feet, He points with his fingers;
14 Perversity is in his heart, He devises evil continually, He sows discord.
15 Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly; Suddenly he shall be broken without remedy.

Chapter 16
27 An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire.
28 A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer separates the best of friends.
29 A violent man entices his neighbor, And leads him in a way that is not good.
30 He winks his eye to devise perverse things; He purses his lips and brings about evil.

Chapter 17
4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips; A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.

Chapter 19
28 A disreputable witness scorns justice, And the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

His Goal in Life
Chapter 12
12 The wicked covet the catch of evil men, But the root of the righteous yields fruit.

Chapter 17
11 An evil man seeks only rebellion; Therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

Chapter 21
10 The soul of the wicked desires evil; His neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.
29 A wicked man hardens his face, But as for the upright, he establishes his way.

Chapter 24
8 He who plots to do evil Will be called a schemer.

His Worship to God
Chapter 15
8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the upright is His delight.
The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But He loves him who follows righteousness.

Chapter 21
27 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; How much more when he brings it with wicked intent!

The Fate of the Wicked
Chapter 5
23 He shall die for lack of instruction, And in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

Chapter 10
6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
7 The memory of the righteous is blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot.

Chapter 11
7 When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes.

Chapter 18
3 When the wicked comes, contempt comes also; And with dishonor comes reproach.

Chapter 21
7 The violence of the wicked will destroy them, Because they refuse to do justice.

Chapter 22
5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; He who guards his soul will be far from them.

Chapter 24
9 The devising of foolishness is sin, And the scoffer is an abomination to men.
15 Do not lie in wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; Do not plunder his resting place;

Chapter 28
1 The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion.

Why Will the Wicked Fail?
Chapter 5
22 His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, And he is caught in the cords of his sin.
Chapter 12
13 The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will come through trouble.

Chapter 13
17 He who speaks truth declares righteousness, But a false witness, deceit.

Chapter 17
23 A wicked man accepts a bribe behind the back To pervert the ways of justice.

Chapter 21
8 The way of a guilty man is perverse; But as for the pure, his work is right.

Chapter 24
16 For a righteous man may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity.
20 For there will be no prospect for the evil man; The lamp of the wicked will be put out.
Special Focus: How to Become a Christian

The Gospel Explained
1 Corinthians 15:1-4

"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

The Gospel Reenacted
Romans 6:3-4

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

The Christian Must:

**BELIEVE**
Hebrews 11:6
Romans 10:17

**REPENT**
Acts 17:30
Luke 13:3

**BE BAPTIZED**
Acts 22:16
Galatians 3:27

**BE FAITHFUL**
Revelation 2:10
2 Peter 1:5-11
QUESTIONS:

1. Who will be the ultimate judge of all people? Proverbs 16:2

2. What is the basis of wisdom? Proverbs 9:10

3. How does God describe the man with a perverse mouth? Proverbs 6:12

4. What causes the wicked to fail? Proverbs 5:22

5. What must a person do to be saved?

Thought Questions

6. What are some examples of man’s plans that have failed because they did not include God? Proverbs 19:21

7. What is a biblical example of the folly of stubbornness? Proverbs 21:29

8. In what ways does our patience reflect our faith? Proverbs 20:22

9. How do you want to be remembered? Proverbs 10:7

10. In what ways does our baptism reflect the death, burial and resurrection of Christ?

Daily Readings:

Day One: Chapter One
Day Two: Chapter Two
Day Three: Chapter Three
Day Four: Chapter Four
Day Five: Chapter Five
Day Six: Chapter Six
Lesson Seven: The Tongue

Our words are a window into our heart. The Book of James tells us that the tongue is almost impossible to completely tame. Even in the ancient days of Solomon, a great deal of emphasis is placed on speech. As Christians we must constantly evaluate not only what we say but the manner in which we say it.

Sins of the Tongue

Corrupt Speech

Chapter 6
12 A worthless person, a wicked man, Walks with a perverse mouth;

Chapter 17
20 He who has a deceitful heart finds no good, And he who has a perverse tongue falls into evil.

Chapter 19
1 Better is the poor who walks in his integrity Than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

Chapter 26
23 Fervent lips with a wicked heart Are like earthenware covered with silver dross.

Lying

Chapter 12
17 He who speaks truth declares righteousness, But a false witness, deceit.
19 The truthful lip shall be established forever, But a lying tongue is but for a moment.
22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.

Chapter 14
25 A true witness delivers souls, But a deceitful witness speaks lies.

Chapter 17
4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips; A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.
7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, Much less lying lips to a prince.

Chapter 18
8 The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body.
Chapter 19
5 A false witness will not go unpunished, And *he who* speaks lies will not escape.
9 A false witness will not go unpunished, And *he who* speaks lies shall perish.

Chapter 21
6 Getting treasures by a lying tongue *Is* the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.

**Slander**
Chapter 11
9 The hypocrite with *his* mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.
13 A talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

Chapter 26
24 He who hates, disguises *it* with his lips, And lays up deceit within himself;
25 When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, For *there are* seven abominations in his heart;
26 *Though his* hatred is covered by deceit, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.
27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him.
28 A lying tongue hates *those who are* crushed by it, And a flattering mouth works ruin.

Chapter 29
5 A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet.

**Talking too much**
Chapter 13
3 He who guards his mouth preserves his life, *But* he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

Chapter 14
3 In the mouth of a fool *is* a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.

Chapter 15
28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

Chapter 17
27 He who has knowledge spares his words, *And* a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.
Chapter 18
13 He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

Chapter 20
19 He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

Chapter 21
23 Whoever guards his mouth and tongue Keeps his soul from troubles.

Chapter 23
9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

Chapter 24
2 For their heart devises violence, And their lips talk of troublemaking.

Chapter 25
9 Debate your case with your neighbor, And do not disclose the secret to another;

Chapter 26
20 Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.
22 The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body.

Chapter 29
11 A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.
20 Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Angry Words
Chapter 15
1 A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

Chapter 18
6 A fool’s lips enter into contention, And his mouth calls for blows.
7 A fool’s mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul.

Chapter 26
21 As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.
Proper Uses of the Tongue

Kind Words
Chapter 10
11 The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
20 The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; The heart of the wicked is worth little.
21 The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of wisdom.
31 The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out.

Chapter 12
25 Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad.

Chapter 15
26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD, But the words of the pure are pleasant.

Educated Speech (Know What You Are Talking About)
Chapter 10
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.
32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.

Chapter 15
2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.
7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, But the heart of the fool does not do so.

Chapter 25
11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold In settings of silver.
15 By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.

Helpful Advice
Chapter 12
6 The words of the wicked are, “Lie in wait for blood,” But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.
18 There is one who speaks like the piercing of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health.
Chapter 15
4 A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
23 A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, And a word spoken in due season, how good it is!

Chapter 16
24 Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, Sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.

Chapter 20
15 There is gold and a multitude of rubies, But the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

Chapter 23
16 Yes, my inmost being will rejoice When your lips speak right things.

Chapter 25
25 As cold water to a weary soul, So is good news from a far country.

Chapter 27
9 Ointment and perfume delight the heart, And the sweetness of a man’s friend gives delight by hearty counsel.

Kept Safe
Chapter 12
13 The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, But the righteous will come through trouble.
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.

Chapter 13
2 A man shall eat well by the fruit of his mouth, But the soul of the unfaithful feeds on violence.

Chapter 15
1 A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

Chapter 24
26 He who gives a right answer kisses the lips.

Chapter 28
23 He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward Than he who flatters with the tongue.

Identify Man
Chapter 18
4 The words of a man’s mouth are deep waters; The wellspring of wisdom is a flowing brook.
A man’s stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth; From the produce of his lips he shall be filled.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Chapter 22

He who loves purity of heart And has grace on his lips, The king will be his friend.

Receiving Instruction vs. Rejecting Reproof

Chapter 9

He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.

Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Chapter 10

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

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

Chapter 11

Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

Chapter 12

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

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.

Chapter 13

A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

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

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

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

Chapter 14

A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it, But knowledge is easy to him who understands.

Chapter 15

A fool despises his father’s instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent.

Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way, And he who hates correction
will die.

A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, Nor will he go to the wise.

Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established.

The ear that hears the rebukes of life Will abide among the wise.

He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, But he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.

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

Chapter 16

The wise in heart will be called prudent, And sweetness of the lips increases learning.

The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips.

Chapter 17

Rebuke is more effective for a wise man Than a hundred blows on a fool.

Chapter 18

The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Chapter 19

He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, But he who is careless of his ways will die.

Listen to counsel and receive instruction, That you may be wise in your latter days.

Strike a scoffer, and the simple will become wary; Rebuke one who has understanding, and he will discern knowledge.

Cease listening to instruction, my son, And you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Chapter 20

Plans are established by counsel; By wise counsel wage war.

Chapter 21

When the scoffer is punished, the simple is made wise; But when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

Chapter 22

Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; Yes, strife and reproach will cease.

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

For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; Let them all be fixed upon your lips,

So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed you today, even you.

Have I not written to you excellent things Of counsels and knowledge,
21 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?

Chapter 23
9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, For he will despise the wisdom of your words.
12 Apply your heart to instruction, And your ears to words of knowledge.
23 Buy the truth, and do not sell it Also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

Chapter 24
5 A wise man is strong, Yes, a man of knowledge increases strength;

Chapter 25
12 Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold Is a wise rebuker to an obedient ear.

Chapter 28
4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, But such as keep the law contend with them.
9 One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.
14 Happy is the man who is always reverent, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.
23 He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward Than he who flatters with the tongue.

Chapter 29
1 He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.
18 Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.
QUESTIONS:

1. What is Solomon’s assessment of a man with a filthy mouth? Proverbs 6:12

2. What will happen to the liar? Proverbs 19:5, 9

3. Is it wise to talk all the time? Proverbs 13:3


5. What is the best way to deal with an angry person? Proverbs 15:1

Thought Questions

6. What happens when we try to hurt others with our tongue? Proverbs 26:24-28

7. Why do you think Solomon focused so much on a person’s speech?

8. Give an example of Proverbs 29:18

9. What is Solomon’s advice to stop a rumor? Proverbs 26:20

10. Give a modern example of Proverbs 18:13

Daily Readings:

Day One: Chapter Seven
Day Two: Chapter Eight
Day Three: Chapter Nine
Day Four: Chapter Ten
Day Five: Chapter Eleven
Day Six: Chapter Twelve
Lesson Eight: Living Right

When God created all things, he established a principle for all time. In the realm of biology is it is called the "Law of Biogenesis," and is seen in the statements in Genesis 1 that all things would produce after their own kind. For example, monkeys mate and have baby monkeys—not giraffes or people. The same thing is true in the vegetable kingdom. When you plant corn, don’t expect watermelon plants to grow in their place! Paul used a similar vein of thought when he wrote, "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever man sows, that will he also reap. For he that sows to the flesh will of that flesh reap corruption, but he that sows to the Spirit will of the spirit reap everlasting life." Likewise, Solomon applies this principle to every part of life: when a man lives according to God’s Word, he will reap the blessings of God. If a man lives selfishly and foolishly, he will also be rewarded accordingly.

Reward Vs. Punishment

Chapter 2
21 For the upright will dwell in the land, And the blameless will remain in it;
22 But the wicked will be cut off from the earth, And the unfaithful will be uprooted from it.

Chapter 3
32 For the perverse person is an abomination to the LORD, But His secret counsel is with the upright.
33 The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the home of the just.
35 The wise shall inherit glory, But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Chapter 6
15 Therefore his calamity shall come suddenly; Suddenly he shall be broken without remedy.

Chapter 10
2 Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, But righteousness delivers from death.
3 The LORD will not allow the righteous soul to famish, But He casts away the desire of the wicked.
6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
16 The labor of the righteous leads to life, The wages of the wicked to sin.
22 The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it.
24 The fear of the wicked will come upon him, And the desire of the righteous will be granted.
25 When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has an everlasting foundation.
27 The fear of the LORD prolongs days, But the years of the wicked will be
shortened.

28 The hope of the righteous will be gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish.

29 The way of the LORD is strength for the upright, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.

30 The righteous will never be removed, But the wicked will not inhabit the earth.

Chapter 11

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

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

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

23 The desire of the righteous is only good, But the expectation of the wicked is wrath.

Chapter 12

7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more, But the house of the righteous will stand.

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

Chapter 13

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

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

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

21 Evil pursues sinners, But to the righteous, good shall be repaid.

Chapter 14

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

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

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

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

Chapter 15

6 In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.

24 The way of life winds upward for the wise, That he may turn away from hell[1] below.
Chapter 16
4 The LORD has made all for Himself, Yes, even the wicked for the day of doom.
5 Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.
17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who keeps his way preserves his soul.
20 He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he.

Chapter 17
5 He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker; He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.
11 An evil man seeks only rebellion; Therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him.
13 Whoever rewards evil for good, Evil will not depart from his house.
26 Also, to punish the righteous is not good, Nor to strike princes for their uprightness.

Chapter 18
3 When the wicked comes, contempt comes also; And with dishonor comes reproach.

Chapter 19
5 A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies will not escape.
9 A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies shall perish.
29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers, And beatings for the backs of fools.

Chapter 21
12 The righteous God wisely considers the house of the wicked, Overthrowing the wicked for their wickedness.
16 A man who wanders from the way of understanding Will rest in the assembly of the dead.
21 He who follows righteousness and mercy Finds life, righteousness, and honor.

Chapter 22
8 He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, And the rod of his anger will fail.

Chapter 23
17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day.
18 For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off.

Chapter 24
13 My son, eat honey because it is good, And the honeycomb which is sweet to your taste;
14 So shall the knowledge of wisdom be to your soul; If you have found it, there is a prospect, And your hope will not be cut off.
For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity.

For there will be no prospect for the evil man; The lamp of the wicked will be put out.

My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those given to change;

For their calamity will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin those two can bring?

Chapter 25

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;

For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the LORD will reward you.

Chapter 26

The great God who formed everything Gives the fool his hire and the transgressor his wages.

Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him.

Chapter 28

Whoever causes the upright to go astray in an evil way, He himself will fall into his own pit; But the blameless will inherit good.

Whoever walks blamelessly will be saved, But he who is perverse in his ways will suddenly fall.

A faithful man will abound with blessings, But he who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.

Chapter 29

By transgression an evil man is snared, But the righteous sings and rejoices.

Many seek the ruler’s favor, But justice for man comes from the LORD.

The Sayings of Agur, Chapter 30:1-10

Introduction, Proverbs 30:1-10

The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, his utterance. This man declared to Ithiel—to Ithiel and Ucal:

Agur confesses the greatness of God

Surely I am more stupid than any man, And do not have the understanding of a man.

I neither learned wisdom Nor have knowledge of the Holy One.

Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son’s name, If you know?
Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

**Agur’s two requests to God:**

7 Two things I request of You (Deprive me not before I die):
8 Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me;
9 Lest I be full and deny You, And say, “Who is the LORD?” Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.
10 Do not malign a servant to his master, Lest he curse you, and you be found guilty.

**Agur’s Groups of Fours:**

**Four classes of sinners, Proverbs 30:11-15a**

11 There is a generation that curses its father, And does not bless its mother.
12 There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness.
13 There is a generation—oh, how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up.
14 There is a generation whose teeth are like swords, And whose fangs are like knives, To devour the poor from off the earth, And the needy from among men.
15 The leech has two daughters—Give and Give! There are three things that are never satisfied, Four never say, “Enough!”:

1. Those who do not respect parents
2. Those who are self-righteous
3. Those who devour the poor
4. Children who are never satisfied

**Four things that are never satisfied, Proverbs 30:15b-16**

16 The grave, The barren womb, The earth that is not satisfied with water—And the fire never says, “Enough!”

1. The grave
2. The barren womb
3. The dry earth
4. Fire

**Four things too wonderful to comprehend, Proverbs 30:18-19**

17 The eye that mocks his father, And scorns obedience to his mother, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it.
18 There are three things which are too wonderful for me, Yes, four which I do not understand:
19 The way of an eagle in the air, The way of a serpent on a rock, The way of a ship in the midst of the sea, And the way of a man with a virgin.
1. An eagle in flight
2. The snake looking for a warm rock
3. A ship on the sea
4. A young man trying to get the affections of a young lady

The danger of an immoral woman, Proverbs 30:20
20 This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth, And says, “I have done no wickedness.”

Four things that will destroy you
21 For three things the earth is perturbed, Yes, for four it cannot bear up:
22 For a servant when he reigns, A fool when he is filled with food,
23 A hateful woman when she is married, And a maidservant who succeeds her mistress.

1. A servant given power too quickly
2. A fool who is made to be rich
3. A hateful woman who gets married
4. A maidservant who rises above her abilities

Four lessons from the little things in life, Proverbs 30:24-28
24 There are four things which are little on the earth, But they are exceedingly wise:
25 The ants are a people not strong, Yet they prepare their food in the summer;
26 The rock badgers are a feeble folk, Yet they make their homes in the crags;
27 The locusts have no king, Yet they all advance in ranks;
28 The spider skillfully grasps with its hands, And it is in kings’ palaces.

1. The ants who are small but busy
2. The “mountain mice” that are little but find places to hide and succeed
3. The locusts who are so numerous that no one can defeat them
4. The persistent spider

Lessons from the Animals, Proverbs 30:29-31
29 There are three things which are majestic in pace, Yes, four which are stately in walk:
30 A lion, which is mighty among beasts And does not turn away from any;
31 A greyhound, A male goat also, And a king whose troops are with him.

1. The lion, because of his bravery, is considered to be the king
2. The greyhound is honored for its quickness
3. A male goat who never surrenders in a fight
4. A king who stays with his troops to avoid being usurped

Agur’s reasons for proverbs, Proverbs 30:32-33

32 If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, Or if you have devised evil, put your hand on your mouth.
33 For as the churning of milk produces butter, And wringing the nose produces blood, So the forcing of wrath produces strife.
QUESTIONS:

1. Why should we live righteously? Proverbs 3:33
2. Can the wicked ultimately overcome the righteous? Proverbs 11:21
3. What is the purpose of the law? Proverbs 13:34
4. Of all the people we try to please in life, who must be first? Proverbs 29:26
5. Why must we not add to the Word of God? Proverbs 30:6

Thought Questions

7. Why should you be kind to your enemy? Proverbs 25:21-22
8. What do you think Agur meant concerning the way a young man treats a lady? Proverbs 30:18-19
9. Which of the ways of destruction in Proverbs 30:21-23 do you think is most dangerous?
10. What is a modern day example of Proverbs 28:20?

Daily Readings:
Day One: Chapter Thirteen
Day Two: Chapter Fourteen
Day Three: Chapter Fifteen
Day Four: Chapter Sixteen
Day Five: Chapter Seventeen
Day Six: Chapter Eighteen
Lesson Nine: Wisdom

According to Solomon, the most important currency in life is wisdom. Notice what he told his readers: “Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth.” Proverbs 4:5. Solomon knew that wisdom was not just the accumulation of facts (that is knowledge) but it is the practical application of knowledge in every day life. The word most often used for wisdom in the Book of Proverbs describes the skill a master craftsman would use in his work. As a surgeon uses a scalpel or an artist uses a paintbrush, so the wise man will use his skill in assimilating knowledge and opportunity in life. The words ‘wise’ or ‘wisdom’ occur 125 times in Proverbs because this trait is essential for success. Fittingly, the word ‘fool’, ‘foolish,’ and folly’ occur 97 times because this trait must be avoided at all costs.

Wise vs. Foolish

Chapter 10
8 The wise in heart will receive commands, But a prating fool will fall.
23 To do evil is like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom.

Chapter 11
29 He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, And the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.

Chapter 12
8 A man will be commended according to his wisdom, But he who is of a perverse heart will be despised.
9 Better is the one who is slighted but has a servant, Than he who honors himself but lacks bread.
23 A prudent man conceals knowledge, But the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.

Chapter 13
16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool lays open his folly.

Chapter 14
3 In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.
8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, But the folly of fools is deceit.
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.
18 The simple inherit folly, But the prudent are crowned
24  The crown of the wise is their riches, But the foolishness of fools is folly.
33  Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding, But what is in the heart of fools is made known.

Chapter 15
7  The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, But the heart of the fool does not do so.
14  The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.
20  A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.
21  Folly is joy to him who is destitute of discernment, But a man of understanding walks uprightly.
24  The way of life winds upward for the wise, That he may turn away from hell below.

Chapter 16
20  He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the LORD, happy is he.
23  The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, And adds learning to his lips.

Chapter 17
2  A wise servant will rule over a son who causes shame, And will share an inheritance among the brothers.
10  Rebuff is more effective for a wise man Than a hundred blows on a fool.

Wisdom

Chapter 1
20  Wisdom calls aloud outside; She raises her voice in the open squares.
21  She cries out in the chief concourses, At the openings of the gates in the city She speaks her words:
22  " How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning, And fools hate knowledge.
23  Turn at my rebuke; Surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.
24  Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded,
25  Because you disdained all my counsel, And would have none of my rebuke,
26  I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes,
27  When your terror comes like a storm, And your destruction comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you.
28  " Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me.
29  Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD,
30  They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke.
31  Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, And be filled to the full with
their own fancies.  
32 For the turning away of the simple will slay them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them;  
33 But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, And will be secure, without fear of evil.”

Chapter 2  
1 My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you,  
2 So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding;  
3 Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding,  
4 If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures;  
5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God.  
6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;  
7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;  
8 He guards the paths of justice, And preserves the way of His saints.  
9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice, Equity and every good path.  
10 When wisdom enters your heart, And knowledge is pleasant to your soul,  
11 Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you,  
12 To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things,  
13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness To walk in the ways of darkness;  
14 Who rejoice in doing evil, And delight in the perversity of the wicked;  
15 Whose ways are crooked, And who are devious in their paths;  
16 To deliver you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words,  
17 Who forsakes the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God.  
18 For her house leads down to death, And her paths to the dead;  
19 None who go to her return, Nor do they regain the paths of life—  
20 So you may walk in the way of goodness, And keep to the paths of righteousness.  
21 For the upright will dwell in the land, And the blameless will remain in it;  
22 But the wicked will be cut off from the earth, And the unfaithful will be uprooted from it.

Chapter 3  
13 Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding;  
14 For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, And her gain than fine gold.  
15 She is more precious than rubies, And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.  
16 Length of days is in her right hand, In her left hand riches and honor.  
17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, And all her paths are peace.  
18 She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her.  
19 The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; By understanding He established the heavens;  
20 By His knowledge the depths were broken up, And clouds drop down the dew.  
21 My son, let them not depart from your eyes— Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
So they will be life to your soul And grace to your neck.
Then you will walk safely in your way, And your foot will not stumble.
When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

Chapter 4
1 Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding;
2 For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law.
3 When I was my father’s son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother,
4 He also taught me, and said to me: “Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live.
5 Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth.
6 Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you.
7 Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.
8 Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will bring you honor, when you embrace her.
9 She will place on your head an ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you.”

Chapter 7
1 My son, keep my words, And treasure my commands within you.
2 Keep my commands and live, And my law as the apple of your eye.
3 Bind them on your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,” And call understanding your nearest kin,
5 That they may keep you from the immoral woman, From the seductress who flatters with her words.

Chapter 8
1 Does not wisdom cry out, And understanding lift up her voice?
2 She takes her stand on the top of the high hill, Beside the way, where the paths meet.
3 She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city, At the entrance of the doors:
4 “To you, O men, I call, And my voice is to the sons of men.
5 O you simple ones, understand prudence, And you fools, be of an understanding heart.
6 Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, And from the opening of my lips will come right things;
7 For my mouth will speak truth; Wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
8 All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; Nothing crooked or perverse is in them.
9 They are all plain to him who understands, And right to those who find knowledge.
10 Receive my instruction, and not silver, And knowledge rather than choice gold;
For wisdom is better than rubies, And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.

“I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion.

The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.

Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, I have strength.

By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice.

By me princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth.

I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me.

Riches and honor are with me, Enduring riches and righteousness.

My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver.

I traverse the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice,

That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries.

“The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.

I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.

When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no fountains abounding with water.

Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth;

While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primal dust of the world.

When He prepared the heavens, I was there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep,

When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep,

When He assigned to the sea its limit, So that the waters would not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth,

Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman; And I was daily His delight,

Rejoicing always before Him,

Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight was with the sons of men.

“Now therefore, listen to me, my children, For blessed are those who keep my ways.

Hear instruction and be wise, And do not disdain it.

Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors.

For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the LORD;

But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death.”

Chapter 9

Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;

She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table.

She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city,
4 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!” As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
5 “Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed.
6 Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding.
7 “He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, And he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself.
8 Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.
9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.
10 “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
11 For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.
12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself, And if you scoff, you will bear it alone.”
13 A foolish woman is clamorous; She is simple, and knows nothing.
14 For she sits at the door of her house, On a seat by the highest places of the city,
15 To call to those who pass by, Who go straight on their way:
16 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here”; And as for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
17 “Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant.”
18 But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of hell.

Chapter 16
16 How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.

Chapter 17
16 Why is there in the hand of a fool the purchase price of wisdom, Since he has no heart for it?
24 Wisdom is in the sight of him who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

Chapter 18
1 A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment.
2 A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart.

Chapter 19
2 Also it is not good for a soul to be without knowledge, And he sins who hastens with his feet.
8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps understanding will find good.

Chapter 21
30 There is no wisdom or understanding Or counsel against the LORD.
Chapter 23
23 Buy the truth, and do not sell it Also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

Chapter 24
3 Through wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established;
7 Wisdom is too lofty for a fool; He does not open his mouth in the gate.
13 My son, eat honey because it is good, And the honeycomb which is sweet to your taste;
14 So shall the knowledge of wisdom be to your soul; If you have found it, there is a prospect, And your hope will not be cut off.

Chapter 29
3 Whoever loves wisdom makes his father rejoice, But a companion of harlots wastes his wealth.

The Fool

Fools Refuse Instruction
Proverbs 15
5 A fool despises his father’s instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent.
14 The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.

Chapter 18
2 A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart.

Chapter 23
9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

Fools Seek their Own Way
Proverbs 10
23 To do evil is like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom.

Proverbs 12
15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.

Proverbs 13
19 A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul, But it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.

Proverbs 14
9 Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is favor.

Chapter 19
3 The foolishness of a man twists his way, And his heart frets against the LORD.

Chapter 24
9 The devising of foolishness is sin, And the scoffer is an abomination to men.

Proverbs 26
12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Chapter 28
26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered.

Reproof and Rebuке Are Useless With a Fool
Chapter 16
22 Understanding is a wellspring of life to him who has it. But the correction of fools is folly.

Proverbs 17
10 Rebuке is more effective for a wise man Than a hundred blows on a fool.
16 Why is there in the hand of a fool the purchase price of wisdom, Since he has no heart for it?
24 Wisdom is in the sight of him who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

Proverbs 26
11 As a dog returns to his own vomit, So a fool repeats his folly.

Chapter 27
22 Though you grind a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.

A Fool is Known by His Lips
Chapter 12
23 A prudent man conceals knowledge, But the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.

Chapter 13
16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool lays open his folly.

Proverbs 14
3 In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.
8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, But the folly of fools is deceit.
Proverbs 17
7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, Much less lying lips to a prince.
28 Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; When he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.

Proverbs 18
6 A fool’s lips enter into contention, And his mouth calls for blows.
7 A fool’s mouth is his destruction, And his lips are the snare of his soul.
13 He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

Proverbs 29
11 A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.

Fools Do Not Control Their Anger
Chapter 12
16 A fool’s wrath is known at once, But a prudent man covers shame.

Proverbs 14
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.
17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated.

Chapter 20
3 It is honorable for a man to stop striving, Since any fool can start a quarrel.

How To Treat A Fool
Proverbs 14
7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.

Proverbs 17
12 Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, Rather than a fool in his folly.

Proverbs 19
10 Luxury is not fitting for a fool, Much less for a servant to rule over princes.

Proverbs 26
1 As snow in summer and rain in harvest, So honor is not fitting for a fool.
4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.
5 Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.
6 He who sends a message by the hand of a fool Cuts off his own feet and drinks violence.
7 Like the legs of the lame that hang limp Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
8 Like one who binds a stone in a sling Is he who gives honor to a fool.
9 Like a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard Is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
Proverbs 27
3 A stone is heavy and sand is weighty, But a fool’s wrath is heavier than both of them.

Chapter 29
9 If a wise man contends with a foolish man, Whether the fool rages or laughs, there is no peace.

Consequences for the Fool
Chapter 10
10 He who winks with the eye causes trouble, But a prating fool will fall.
Chapter 11
29 He who troubles his own house will inherit the wind, And the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.

Chapter 12
9 Better is the one who is slighted but has a servant, Than he who honors himself but lacks bread.

Chapter 19
1 Better is the poor who walks in his integrity Than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.
29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers, And beatings for the backs of fools.

Chapter 24
7 Wisdom is too lofty for a fool; He does not open his mouth in the gate.

Chapter 26
3 A whip for the horse, A bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the fool’s back.
# Special Focus: The Fool vs. The Wise Man

## The Fool

### Definition:
- 1:7 Despises wisdom and instruction
- 28:26 Trusts in his own heart

### Beliefs:
- 12:15 His way is right
- 13:19 Hates to depart from evil
- 28:26 Trusts in his own heart

### Actions:
- 10:18 Spreads slander
- 10:23 Enjoys doing evil
- 12:23 Proclaims foolishness, 15:2,
- 15:4
- 14:9 Mocks sin
- 14:16 Rages and is self-confident
- 15:5 Despises his father’s correction
- 15:20 Despises his mother
- 16:22 Hates correction
- 18:2 Talks instead of listening
- 20:3 Starts quarrels
- 26:11 Never learns from mistakes,
- 27:22
- 27:11 Says whatever he thinks

### How to Treat Him:
- 13:20 Don’t be his companion
- 23:9 Don’t give him advice
- 26:1 Don’t honor him, 26:8
- 26:4-5 Be careful around him
- 26:6 Don’t trust him

### His End Result:
- 1:32 Will be destroyed by complacency
- 3:35 Will have a legacy of shame
- 10:8 Will fail due to his folly
- 10:21 Will die for a lack of wisdom
- 11:29: Will be a servant to the wise
- 19:29 Will be beaten on the back

### His Cure:
- 8:5 Have an understanding heart

## The Wise

### Definition:
- 1:5 Listens to others and learns
- 15:31 Willing to take rebuke

### Beliefs:
- 10:8 He can learn from others
- 16:20 Trusts in the Lord
- 28:7 Keeps the Law

### Actions:
- 8:33 Listens to the instruction of parents
- 9:8 Loves those who rebuke him
- 10:5 Takes advantage of opportunity
- 10:19 Restrains his lips
- 11:30 Has a positive influence on others
- 13:1 Listens to his father’s teaching
- 14:1 Takes care of family responsibilities
- 14:16 Fears and departs from evil
- 15:7 Teaches others knowledge
- 16:14 Appeases those who are angry
- 16:23 Always seeks to learn more
- 18:15 Seeks those who will teach him
- 20:1 Avoids alcohol
- 21:22 Overcomes great odds
- 29:11 Doesn’t always speak his mind

### How to Treat Him:
- 9:9 Continue to teach him
- 13:20 Strive to be his friend
- 22:17 Listen to him

### His End Result:
- 3:35 Will inherit glory
- 10:1 Will make parents happy
- 14:35 Will be liked by kings
- 15:24 His way winds toward heaven
- 17:2 Will be a success
- 21:20 Makes those around him happy
- 24:5 Will be known as strong
- 29:8 Will turn away wrath
QUESTIONS:

1. Define wisdom. Proverbs 9:10

2. What is the ultimate fate of the wicked? Proverbs 21:12

3. What is the ultimate fate of the righteous? Proverbs 19:23


5. Is there any hope for those who trust in themselves? Proverbs 28:25-26

Thought Questions

6. Is it wrong to use science and reason to try to understand this world? Proverbs 25:2

7. Is sincerity a reliable test as far as determining whether someone is right or wrong in their beliefs? Proverbs 16:2

8. What is a definition of successful living? Proverbs 15:16

9. Of the two choices in Proverbs 26:11 which is the most repulsive?

10. What is a way that we can all begin to look wiser? Proverbs 17:28

Daily Readings:

Day One: Chapter Nineteen
Day Two: Chapter Twenty
Day Three: Chapter Twenty-One
Day Four: Chapter Twenty-Two
Day Five: Chapter Twenty-Three
Day Six: Chapter Twenty-Four
Lesson Ten: Tools for Daily Living

The advertising industry attempts to tell us that material possessions will bring joy and fulfillment. The idea that happiness is to be attained through limitless acquisition is preached continuously by every form of media. Money and possessions, like many things God has placed in our control, is good when used in the way God intended it. But Satan attempts to use what God intended for good as an object of idolatry which denies us both contentment and spirituality. The following proverbs will help us avoid the pitfalls of materialism.

The disappointments and limitations of wealth

Chapter 11
4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.
16 A gracious woman retains honor, But ruthless men retain riches.
28 He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will flourish like foliage.

Chapter 19
4 Wealth makes many friends, But the poor is separated from his friend.

Chapter 22
1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold.

2 The rich and the poor have this in common, The LORD is the maker of them all.

Chapter 23
4 Do not overwork to be rich; Because of your own understanding, cease!
5 Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.
6 Do not eat the bread of a miser, Nor desire his delicacies;
7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “Eat and drink!” he says to you, But his heart is not with you.
8 The morsel you have eaten, you will vomit up, And waste your pleasant words.

The lack of profit of wealth gained dishonestly

Proverbs 13
7 There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; And one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches.
8 The ransom of a man’s life is his riches, But the poor does not hear rebuke.
11 Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, But he who gathers by labor will increase.
Chapter 15
6 In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.

Chapter 16
8 Better is a little with righteousness, Than vast revenues without justice.

Chapter 20
21 An inheritance gained hastily at the beginning Will not be blessed at the end.

Chapter 21
6 Getting treasures by a lying tongue Is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.
20 There is desirable treasure, And oil in the dwelling of the wise, But a foolish man squanders it.

Chapter 28
22 A man with an evil eye hastens after riches, And does not consider that poverty will come upon him.

**The destructiveness of the love of money**

Chapter 15
27 He who is greedy for gain troubles his own house, But he who hates bribes will live.

Chapter 17
8 A present is a precious stone in the eyes of its possessor; Wherever he turns, he prospers.
23 A wicked man accepts a bribe behind the back To pervert the ways of justice.

Chapter 18
16 A man’s gift makes room for him, And brings him before great men.
23 The poor man uses entreaties, But the rich answers roughly.

Proverbs 22
16 He who oppresses the poor to increase his riches, And he who gives to the rich, will surely come to poverty.

Proverbs 27
20 A faithful man will abound with blessings, But he who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.
Chapter 28
8 One who increases his possessions by usury and extortion Gathers it for him who will pity the poor.
11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding searches him out.
16 A ruler who lacks understanding is a great oppressor, But he who hates covetousness will prolong his days.

The great value of contentment
Proverbs 15
16 Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, Than great treasure with trouble.

Proverbs 18
11 The rich man’s wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own esteem.

Proverbs 21
17 He who loves pleasure will be a poor man; He who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

Chapter 27
20 Hell and Destruction are never full; So the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Chapter 28
6 Better is the poor who walks in his integrity Than one perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

Chapter 30
8 Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me;
9 Lest I be full and deny You, And say, “Who is the LORD?” Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.

What the godly man should do with his money
Chapter 3
9 Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase;
10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.

Chapter 10
15 The rich man’s wealth is his strong city; The destruction of the poor is their poverty.

Chapter 13
22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children, But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.
Chapter 19
6 Many entreat the favor of the nobility, And every man is a friend to one who gives gifts.
17 He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given.

Chapter 21
13 Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor Will also cry himself and not be heard.
26 He covets greedily all day long, But the righteous gives and does not spare.

Chapter 22
9 He who has a generous eye will be blessed, For he gives of his bread to the poor.

Chapter 27
18 Whoever keeps the fig tree will eat its fruit; So he who waits on his master will be honored.

Chapter 28
27 He who gives to the poor will not lack, But he who hides his eyes will have many curses.

The danger of debt
Chapter 6
1 My son, if you become surety for your friend, If you have shaken hands in pledge for a stranger,
2 You are snared by the words of your mouth; You are taken by the words of your mouth.
3 So do this, my son, and deliver yourself; For you have come into the hand of your friend: Go and humble yourself; Plead with your friend.
4 Give no sleep to your eyes, Nor slumber to your eyelids.
5 Deliver yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, And like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

Chapter 11
15 He who is surety for a stranger will suffer, But one who hates being surety is secure.

Chapter 17
18 A man devoid of understanding shakes hands in a pledge, And becomes surety for his friend.

Chapter 20
16 Take the garment of one who is surety for a stranger, And hold it as a pledge when it is for a seductress.
Chapter 22
7 The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower is servant to the lender.
26 Do not be one of those who shakes hands in a pledge, One of those who is surety for debts;
27 If you have nothing with which to pay, Why should he take away your bed from under you?

Chapter 27
13 Take the garment of him who is surety for a stranger, And hold it in pledge when he is surety for a seductress.

**Laziness vs. Diligence**

Chapter 6
6 Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise,
7 Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler,
8 Provides her supplies in the summer, And gathers her food in the harvest.
9 How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep?
10 A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep—
11 So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

Chapter 10
4 He who has a slack hand becomes poor, But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
5 He who gathers in summer is a wise son; He who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame.
26 As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So is the lazy man to those who send him.

Chapter 12
11 He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, But he who follows frivolity is devoid of understanding.
24 The hand of the diligent will rule, But the lazy man will be put to forced labor.
27 The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, But diligence is man’s precious possession.

Chapter 13
4 The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.
11 Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, But he who gathers by labor will increase.

Chapter 14
23 In all labor there is profit, But idle chatter leads only to poverty.
Chapter 15
19 The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, But the way of the upright is a highway.

Chapter 16
26 The person who labors, labors for himself, For his hungry mouth drives him on.

Chapter 18
9 He who is slothful in his work Is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.

Chapter 19
15 Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, And an idle person will suffer hunger.
24 A lazy man buries his hand in the bowl, And will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

Chapter 20
4 The lazy man will not plow because of winter; He will beg during harvest and have nothing.
13 Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty; Open your eyes, and you will be satisfied with bread.

Chapter 21
5 The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, But those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.
25 The desire of the lazy man kills him, For his hands refuse to labor.
26 He covets greedily all day long, But the righteous gives and does not spare.

Chapter 22
13 The lazy man says, “There is a lion outside! I shall be slain in the streets!”
29 Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men.

Chapter 24
30 I went by the field of the lazy man, And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding;
31 And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles; Its stone wall was broken down.
32 When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction:
33 A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest;
34 So shall your poverty come like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

Chapter 26
13 The lazy man says, “There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion is in the streets!”
14 As a door turns on its hinges, So does the lazy man on his bed.
15 The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; It wearies him to bring it back to his mouth.
16 The lazy man is wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can answer sensibly.
Chapter 27
18 Whoever keeps the fig tree will eat its fruit; So he who waits on his master will be honored.
23 Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, And attend to your herds;
24 For riches are not forever, Nor does a crown endure to all generations.
25 When the hay is removed, and the tender grass shows itself, And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in,
26 The lambs will provide your clothing, And the goats the price of a field;
27 You shall have enough goats' milk for your food, For the food of your household, And the nourishment of your maidservants.

Chapter 28
19 He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, But he who follows frivolity will have poverty enough!

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**Special Focus: The Diligent vs. the Lazy**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>The Diligent</th>
<th>The Lazy</th>
<th>Scripture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Become rich</td>
<td>Are soon poor</td>
<td>Proverbs 10:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather crops early</td>
<td>Sleep during harvest</td>
<td>Proverbs 10:5</td>
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<tr>
<td>~</td>
<td>Annoy others</td>
<td>Proverbs 10:26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have abundant food</td>
<td>Chase fantasies</td>
<td>Proverbs 12:11</td>
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<td>Reaps the rewards of hard work</td>
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<td>Proverbs 12:14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will rule over others</td>
<td>Will become slaves</td>
<td>Proverbs 12:24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prize their possessions</td>
<td>Waste good resources</td>
<td>Proverbs 12:27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are fully satisfied</td>
<td>Want much, get little</td>
<td>Proverbs 13:4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bring in a profit</td>
<td>Experience poverty</td>
<td>Proverbs 14:23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have an easy path</td>
<td>Have continuing troubles</td>
<td>Proverbs 15:19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay awake and have extra food</td>
<td>Love sleep and grow poor</td>
<td>Proverbs 20:13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make careful plans</td>
<td>Make hasty speculations</td>
<td>Proverbs 21:5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give without sparing</td>
<td>Desires but don’t work</td>
<td>Proverbs 21:25-26</td>
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<td>~</td>
<td>Have many excuses</td>
<td>Proverbs 22:13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep abundance through work</td>
<td>Experience poverty from laziness</td>
<td>Proverbs 28:19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTIONS:

1. What is more important than money? Proverbs 11:4
2. Will the greedy man ever be satisfied? Proverbs 27:20
3. How should we imitate the ant? Proverbs 6:6-11
4. Why should we maintain an active lifestyle? Proverbs 20:13
5. What can we learn from lazy people? Proverbs 24:30-34

**Thought Questions**

6. Explain Proverbs 13:7-8
7. Give an example of Proverbs 28:8
8. How does one honor God with their possessions? Proverbs 3:9-10
10. Give an example illustrating Proverbs 10:4-5

**Daily Readings:**

Day One: Chapter Twenty-Five
Day Two: Chapter Twenty-Six
Day Three: Chapter Twenty-Seven
Day Four: Chapter Twenty-Eight
Day Five: Chapter Twenty-Nine
Day Six: Chapter Thirty and Thirty-One
Lesson Eleven: Integrity

Few things are a better judge of one’s character than his commitment to honesty in all things. In today’s world of ‘white collar’ crime and Public relations officials who ply their trade of ‘massaging’ the truth, the simple beauty of one who cannot tell a lie stands out in stark contrast. If one is to find true success and happiness in life, that person must make a commitment to be a person of honesty and integrity.

Honesty

Dishonesty for the sake of gain
Chapter 11
1 Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, But a just weight is His delight.

Chapter 13
23 Much food is in the fallow ground of the poor, And for lack of justice there is waste.

Chapter 16
11 Honest weights and scales are the LORD’s; All the weights in the bag are His work.

Chapter 19
22 What is desired in a man is kindness, And a poor man is better than a liar.

Chapter 21
6 Getting treasures by a lying tongue Is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.

Chapter 22
16 He who oppresses the poor to increase his riches, And he who gives to the rich, will surely come to poverty.
28 Do not remove the ancient landmark Which your fathers have set.

Chapter 23
10 Do not remove the ancient landmark, Nor enter the fields of the fatherless;
11 For their Redeemer is mighty; He will plead their cause against you.

Chapter 28
8 One who increases his possessions by usury and extortion Gathers it for him who will pity the poor.
Dishonesty that perverts justice
Chapter 12
17 He who speaks truth declares righteousness, But a false witness, deceit.

Chapter 14
5 A faithful witness does not lie, But a false witness will utter lies.
25 A true witness delivers souls, But a deceitful witness speaks lies.

Chapter 19
5 A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies will not escape.
9 A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies shall perish.
28 A disreputable witness scorns justice, And the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

Chapter 20
25 It is a snare for a man to devote rashly something as holy, And afterward to reconsider his vows.

Chapter 21
28 A false witness shall perish, But the man who hears him will speak endlessly.

Chapter 24
26 He who gives a right answer kisses the lips.
28 Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, For would you deceive with your lips?

Chapter 25
18 A man who bears false witness against his neighbor is like a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow.

Chapter 26
26 Though his hatred is covered by deceit, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.

Chapter 28
21 To show partiality is not good, Because for a piece of bread a man will transgress.

Chapter 29
24 Whoever is a partner with a thief hates his own life; He swears to tell the truth, but reveals nothing.

Dishonesty’s bitter result
Chapter 12
19 The truthful lip shall be established forever, But a lying tongue is but for a moment.
22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.

Chapter 13
5 A righteous man hates lying, But a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame.

Chapter 20
7 The righteous man walks in his integrity; His children are blessed after him.
10 Diverse weights and diverse measures, They are both alike, an abomination to the LORD.
14 “It is good for nothing,” cries the buyer; But when he has gone his way, then he boasts.
17 Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, But afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.

Chapter 25
14 Whoever falsely boasts of giving is like clouds and wind without rain.

**Dishonesty’s motive**

Chapter 12
20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy.

Chapter 26
24 He who hates, disguises it with his lips, And lays up deceit within himself;
25 When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart;
28 A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, And a flattering mouth works ruin.

Chapter 27
5 Open rebuke is better Than love carefully concealed.
6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

Chapter 29
5 A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet.

**Exhortation to honesty**

Chapter 30
8 Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me;
9 Lest I be full and deny You, And say, “Who is the LORD?” Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.
Chapter 14
4 Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; But much increase comes by the strength of an ox.
10 The heart knows its own bitterness, And a stranger does not share its joy.
13 Even in laughter the heart may sorrow, And the end of mirth may be grief.

Chapter 18
18 Casting lots causes contentions to cease, And keeps the mighty apart.

Chapter 20
5 Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, But a man of understanding will draw it out.
6 Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, But who can find a faithful man?
9 Who can say, “I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin”?
29 The glory of young men is their strength, And the splendor of old men is their gray head.

Chapter 21
3 To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

Chapter 22
28 Do not remove the ancient landmark Which your fathers have set.

Chapter 24
10 If you faint in the day of adversity, Your strength is small.
27 Prepare your outside work, Make it fit for yourself in the field; And afterward build your house.

Chapter 25
13 Like the cold of snow in time of harvest is a faithful messenger to those who send him, For he refreshes the soul of his masters.
16 Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, Lest you be filled with it and vomit.
19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.
20 Like one who takes away a garment in cold weather, And like vinegar on soda, is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.

Chapter 26
2 Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, So a curse without cause shall not alight.
27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him.
Chapter 27
7 A satisfied soul loathes the honeycomb, But to a hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.  
19 As in water face reflects face, So a man’s heart reveals the man.  
21 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, And a man is valued by what others say of him.

Chapter 29
19 A servant will not be corrected by mere words; For though he understands, he will not respond.  
21 He who pampers his servant from childhood Will have him as a son in the end.

Humility vs. Pride

Chapter 3  
3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart,  
4 And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man.  
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.  
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.  
34 Surely He scorns the scornful, But gives grace to the humble.

Chapter 11  
2 When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.  
17 The merciful man does good for his own soul, But he who is cruel troubles his own flesh.

Chapter 13  
10 By pride comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised is wisdom.

Chapter 14  
3 In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.

Chapter 15  
25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud, But He will establish the boundary of the widow.  
33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is humility.
Chapter 16
5 Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Though they join forces, none will go unpunished.

Chapter 18
11 The rich man’s wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own esteem.  
12 Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor is humility.

Chapter 20
18 Plans are established by counsel; By wise counsel wage war.

Chapter 21
4 A haughty look, a proud heart, And the plowing of the wicked are sin.  
24 A proud and haughty man—“Scoffer” is his name; He acts with arrogant pride.

Chapter 22
4 By humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches and honor and life.  
18 For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; Let them all be fixed upon your lips,  
19 So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed you today, even you.

Chapter 25
6 Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of the great;  
7 For it is better that he say to you, ‘Come up here,” Than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen.  
27 It is not good to eat much honey; So to seek one’s own glory is not glory.

Chapter 26
12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Chapter 27
1 Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.  
2 Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

Chapter 28
11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding searches him out.  
13 He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.  
25 He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered.
Chapter 29
23 A man’s pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

Chapter 30
32 If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, Or if you have devised evil, put your hand on your mouth.

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Special Focus: Humility vs. Pride

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Humility</th>
<th>Pride</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leads to wisdom</td>
<td>Leads to disgrace</td>
<td>Proverbs 11:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes advice</td>
<td>Produces Quarrels</td>
<td>Proverbs 13:10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leads to honor</td>
<td>~~~</td>
<td>Proverbs 15:33</td>
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<td>Leads to Destruction</td>
<td>Proverbs 16:18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ends in Honor</td>
<td>Ends in Downfall</td>
<td>Proverbs 18:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brings One to Honor</td>
<td>Brings One Low</td>
<td>Proverbs 29:23</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
QUESTIONS:

1. What will ultimately happen to those who seek dishonest gain? Proverbs 22:16

2. What is the fate of the liar? Proverbs 13:5

3. What is the fate of the truthful person? Proverbs 20:7

4. Give an example of Proverbs 20:6

5. Does God expect us to have perseverance? Proverbs 24:10

Thought Questions

6. Think of an example of Proverbs 28:8

7. In what ways do we need to be very careful before we commit something to God? Proverbs 20:25

8. Explain Proverbs 27:5

9. Compare Proverbs 14:4 to the idea of investing for the future.

10. Explain Proverbs 21:3

Daily Readings:

- Day One: Chapter One
- Day Two: Chapter Two
- Day Three: Chapter Three
- Day Four: Chapter Four
- Day Five: Chapter Five
- Day Six: Chapter Six
Lesson Twelve: Personal Action

Everyone wants to be happy—yet very few ever get there. Solomon teaches his students that happiness is not only attainable in life, it is actually preferable. There is quite a bit of good to be said about the person who finds a way to be optimistic and merry in life. This is a part of attaining true success.

Hatred vs. Love

Chapter 10
12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

Chapter 15
17 Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, Than a fatted calf with hatred.

Chapter 17
9 He who covers a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates friends.
17 A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.

Chapter 19
7 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.

Chapter 26
24 He who hates, disguises it with his lips, And lays up deceit within himself;
25 When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart;
26 Though his hatred is covered by deceit, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.

Instructions to Kings and Rulers

Chapter 14
28 In a multitude of people is a king’s honor, But in the lack of people is the downfall of a prince.
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.

Chapter 16
Better is a little with righteousness, Than vast revenues without justice.  
10 Divination is on the lips of the king; His mouth must not transgress in judgment.  
12 It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, For a throne is established by righteousness.  
13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings, And they love him who speaks what is right.  
14 As messengers of death is the king’s wrath, But a wise man will appease it.  
15 In the light of the king’s face is life, And his favor is like a cloud of the latter rain.

Chapter 17  
7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, Much less lying lips to a prince.  
26 Also, to punish the righteous is not good, Nor to strike princes for their uprightness.

Chapter 18  
5 It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, Or to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

Chapter 19  
6 Many entreat the favor of the nobility, And every man is a friend to one who gives gifts.  
10 Luxury is not fitting for a fool, Much less for a servant to rule over princes.  
12 The king’s wrath is like the roaring of a lion, But his favor is like dew on the grass.

Chapter 20  
2 The wrath of a king is like the roaring of a lion; Whoever provokes him to anger sins against his own life.  
8 A king who sits on the throne of judgment Scatters all evil with his eyes.  
26 A wise king sifts out the wicked, And brings the threshing wheel over them.  
28 Mercy and truth preserve the king, And by loving kindness he upholds his throne.

Chapter 21  
1 The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Chapter 22  
11 He who loves purity of heart And has grace on his lips, The king will be his friend.

Chapter 23  
1 When you sit down to eat with a ruler, Consider carefully what is before you;  
2 And put a knife to your throat If you are a man given to appetite.  
3 Do not desire his delicacies, For they are deceptive food.
Chapter 24
21 My son, fear the LORD and the king; Do not associate with those given to change;
22 For their calamity will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin those two can bring?
24 He who says to the wicked, “You are righteous,” Him the people will curse;
Nations will abhor him.
25 But those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, And a good blessing will come upon them.

Chapter 25
2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.
3 As the heavens for height and the earth for depth, So the heart of kings is unsearchable.
4 Take away the dross from silver, And it will go to the silversmith for jewelry.
5 Take away the wicked from before the king, And his throne will be established in righteousness.
6 Do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of the great;
7 For it is better that he say to you, ‘Come up here,” Than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen.
15 By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.

Chapter 28
2 Because of the transgression of a land, many are its princes; But by a man of understanding and knowledge Right will be prolonged.
12 When the righteous rejoice, there is great glory; But when the wicked arise, men hide themselves.
15 Like a roaring lion and a charging bear Is a wicked ruler over poor people.
16 A ruler who lacks understanding is a great oppressor, But he who hates covetousness will prolong his days.
28 When the wicked arise, men hide themselves; But when they perish, the righteous increase.

Chapter 29
2 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.
4 The king establishes the land by justice, But he who receives bribes overthrows it.
8 Scoffers set a city aflame, But wise men turn away wrath.
12 If a ruler pays attention to lies, All his servants become wicked.
14 The king who judges the poor with truth, His throne will be established forever.
16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases; But the righteous will see their fall.
26 Many seek the ruler’s favor, But justice for man comes from the LORD.
Chapter 31
3 Do not give your strength to women, Nor your ways to that which destroys kings.
4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink;
5 Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.
6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart.
7 Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his misery no more.
8 Open your mouth for the speechless, In the cause of all who are appointed to die.
9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, And plead the cause of the poor and needy.

The Merry Heart

Why is it good to have a happy heart?
Chapter 15
13 A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.
15 All the days of the afflicted are evil, But he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast.

Chapter 17
22 A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.

Chapter 18
14 The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, But who can bear a broken spirit?

How do you get a happy heart?

By counseling for peace
Chapter 12
20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy.

By fulfilling your desire
Chapter 13
12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.

By getting a good report
Chapter 15
30 The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, And a good report makes the bones healthy.
By acting justly
Chapter 21
15 It is a joy for the just to do justice, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.

By speaking correctly
Chapter 23
15 My son, if your heart is wise, My heart will rejoice—indeed, I myself;
16 Yes, my inmost being will rejoice When your lips speak right things.
24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who begets a wise child will delight in him.
25 Let your father and your mother be glad, And let her who bore you rejoice.

By receiving good advice
Chapter 27
9 Ointment and perfume delight the heart, And the sweetness of a man’s friend gives delight by hearty counsel.

By being watchful
Chapter 28
14 Happy is the man who is always reverent, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.

By keeping the law
Chapter 29
18 Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.
QUESTIONS:

1. What ultimately determines the success of any nation? Proverbs 14:34

2. What is more important than money? Proverbs 16:8

3. Why is it important that God’s word be taught? Proverbs 29:18

4. What is a key to having a merry heart? Proverbs 28:4

5. What is a key to unity? Proverbs 28:2

Thought Questions

6. How does Proverbs 17:9 apply concerning relationships?

7. Why should we work so hard to be optimistic? Proverbs 18:14

8. Why is it important that we seek a government that is good? Proverbs 29:2

9. What is an example of Proverbs 21:1?

10. In what ways do our actions affect others? Proverbs 23:15-16

Daily Readings:

Day One: Chapter Seven
Day Two: Chapter Eight
Day Three: Chapter Nine
Day Four: Chapter Ten
Day Five: Chapter Eleven
Day Six: Chapter Twelve
Lesson Thirteen:   The Virtuous Woman

Proverbs 1:8-9 begins with an admonition from a father: “My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother; For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, and chains about your neck.” Proverbs 31:1-2 begins with an admonition from a mother to her son: “The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him: What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows?” Isn’t it interesting that a book filled with wise sayings begins and ends with wise words from parents?

The home is truly the heart of a nation and the church. History reminds us that when the home breaks down, the nation is not far behind. Therefore when the home is guided by the Word of God, all that it touches is strengthened. Many scholars believe that the King Lemuel of Proverbs 31 is actually just another name for Solomon. If that is so, then the mother of this passage is Bathsheba, the woman so famous because of her sin with King David. The mother in this passage was burdened with a strong desire to see her son chose a wise path. For this wise mother, her son’s footsteps would have been to follow all that God would have him to do. If this mother was Bathsheba, she certainly would not have wanted Solomon to repeat the mistakes she and David had made. However, whether Lemuel is actually Solomon, or another man with a deeply concerned mother—we can still learn from her message today.

The word “virtue” in Hebrew carries a meaning of being strong in all moral qualities. Her heart was in the right place and her actions proceeded from her pure heart.

Notice how rare her heart is: Like a fine ruby
Proverbs 31:10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

A ruby was considered the perfect stone for a woman in ancient times. It was just as hard and beautiful as a diamond and was very rare. A virtuous woman has been tried by fire, found to be strong and is very beautiful. At the time of this writing, Solomon’s lavish Temple was now standing with its encrusted jewels and vast wealth. Yet even among all of the great riches of the time, this woman’s beauty stood out.
Notice how restful she is
Proverbs 31:11-12  The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain.
12  She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.

*The husband of this good lady never had to worry about what she was up to. There was no mischief in her life and their days together were spent in peace and not worry. Rather than being a source of conflict her home was one of peace and tranquility for her husband and children.*

Notice how resourceful she is
Proverbs 31:13-15  She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands.
14  She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar.
15  She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants.

*This woman led a busy life. Yet she went about with a willing heart taking care of the needs of those who depended on her. She is not resentful of her work and lack of rest, but is at peace with her self and each task is done lovingly and cheerfully.*

Notice how rich and responsive she is
Proverbs 31:16-20, 24  She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard.
17  She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms.
18  She perceives that her merchandise *is* good, And her lamp does not go out by night.
19  She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle.
20  She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.
24  She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants.

*This woman used her talents to help herself and those around her. Her business sense translated into real estate, gardening, sewing and selling. Each of these is a daunting task, and yet she forges ahead with courage and wisdom. Her family is blessed with the fruit if her hands. Her gains are not selfishly hoarded, she is ready and willing to share with the poor and needy of her community.*

Notice how ready and respected she is
Proverbs 31:21-22, 27  She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household *is* clothed with scarlet.
22  She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing *is* fine linen and purple.
27  She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.

*This lady is prepared for the tough winters because of her organization and planning skills. She is well known for the way she is dressed. She takes care to be*
concerned with her appearance, her modesty, her tastefulness and also what her clothing says about her character.

**Notice how respected her husband is**
Proverbs 31:23  Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land

*The virtuous woman lived a life that lifted up her husband’s reputation. When people saw her beauty, resourcefulness and ability they often would compliment her husband. Married couples need to remember that as ‘one flesh’ the actions of ourselves reflect on our entire family.*

**Notice how right she is**
Proverbs 31:25-26  Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come.
26  She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness.

*This lady had a strong and noble character. This is seen in the way she lives her life and by the words that she speaks. She guards her mouth from gossip, slander and lies. Her words reflect her relationship with the Lord.*

**Notice how rewarded she is**
Proverbs 31:28-31  Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her:
29  “ Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all.”
30  Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.
31  Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.

*This lady receives the just reward of her children’s love and praise. As this lady looks back on her life and experiences she realizes that, though the way was hard, every step was worth it for her and for those whom she loved.*
Special Focus: The Importance of Marrying a Christian

While the Bible does not outright condemn the Christian who marries a non-Christian, it makes it obvious that a marriage to someone who does not have God first in life can bring great difficulty. It is difficult for a person to make a commitment to Christ and to place him first in life (Matthew 6:33) and then turn around and form the closest physical relationship possible (marriage) with someone who does not have similar priorities. Just because someone goes to the same church as the Christian does not mean that person has Christ first in their life. But we need to be careful of commitments that we make that can pull us away from our spiritual relationship with the Savior. Bobby Key, preacher from the Miami Church of Christ in Miami, Oklahoma did a twenty year study of those in his congregation who married Christians compared to those in his congregation who married non-Christians. Notice the results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>64 Christians who married a Christian</th>
<th>72 Christians who married non-Christians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remained a faithful Christian</td>
<td>92% (59)</td>
<td>27% (22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left the Church</td>
<td>8% (5)</td>
<td>72% (57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>3% (2)</td>
<td>32% (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converted Their Mates</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>17% (14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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