

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 good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,
Loving favor than silver or gold. (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 prudent man foresees evil and hides himself,
But the simple pass on and are punished. (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 rich and the poor have this in common,
The Lord is the maker of them all. (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:

*Better is a little with righteousness,
Than vast revenues without justice. (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.

¹⁹ 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.

- ²⁵ Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
²⁶ 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.

²⁵ 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 parents 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 parents 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* foresees 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 Rebuke 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

6. Why do you think evil people hate what is good? Proverbs 29:27
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.

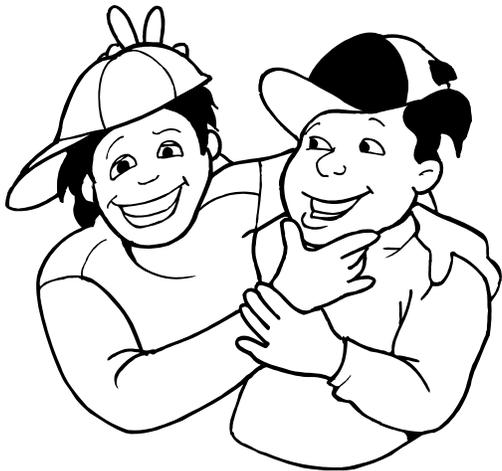
Who You Chose As Your Friends

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.

(Treat our Enemies)

Chapter 20

²² Do not say, "I will recompense evil"; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you.

Chapter 24

¹⁷ Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;

¹⁸ Lest the LORD see *it*, and it displease Him, And He turn away His wrath from him.

²⁸ Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, For would you deceive with your lips?

²⁹ 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."

Chapter 25

²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;

²² 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.

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.

²⁰ For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?

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

²² His own iniquities entrap the wicked *man*, And he is caught in the cords of his sin.

²³ 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.

²⁶ For by means of a harlot *A man is reduced* to a crust of bread; And an adulteress will prey upon his precious life.
²⁷ Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned?
²⁸ Can one walk on hot coals, And his feet not be seared?
²⁹ So *is* he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.
³⁰ *People* do not despise a thief If he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving.
³¹ 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:

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.

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

6. Why do you think God hates the worship acts of the wicked? Proverbs 21:27
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.

⁹ 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.

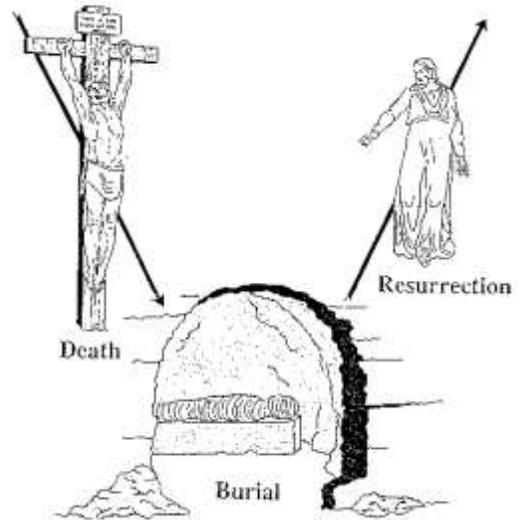
²⁰ For there will be no prospect for the evil *man*; The lamp of the wicked will be put out.

Special Focus: How to Become a Christian

The Gospel Explained

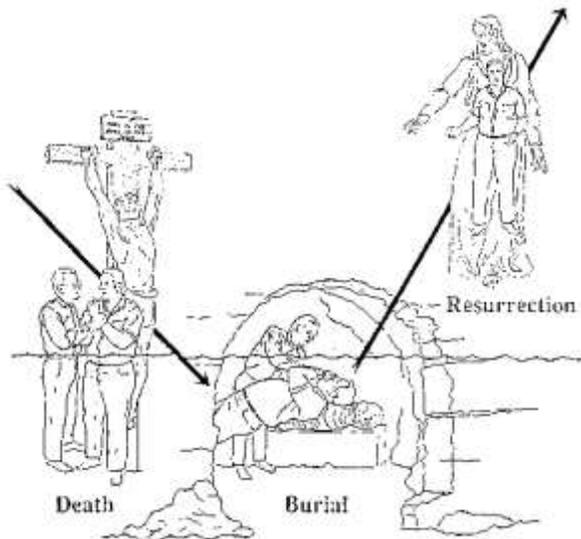
1 Corinthians 15:1-4

*"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

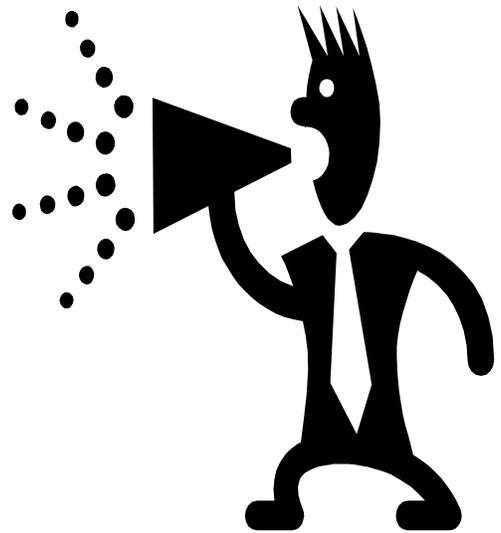
²⁴ He who hates, disguises *it* with his lips, And lays up deceit within himself;

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.

²⁰ A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth; *From* the produce of his lips he shall be filled.

²¹ Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Chapter 22

¹¹ 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

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.

Chapter 10

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

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

Chapter 11

¹⁴ Where *there is* no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors *there is* safety.

Chapter 12

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

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

Chapter 13

¹ A wise son *heeds* his father's instruction, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

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

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

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

Chapter 14

⁶ A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not *find it*, But knowledge *is* easy to him who understands.

Chapter 15

⁵ A fool despises his father's instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent.

¹⁰ Harsh discipline *is* for him who forsakes the way, *And* he who hates correction

will die.

¹² A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, Nor will he go to the wise.

²² Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established.

³¹ The ear that hears the rebukes of life Will abide among the wise.

³² He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, But he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.

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

Chapter 16

²¹ The wise in heart will be called prudent, And sweetness of the lips increases learning.

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

Chapter 17

¹⁰ Rebuke is more effective for a wise *man* Than a hundred blows on a fool.

Chapter 18

¹⁵ The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Chapter 19

¹⁶ He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, *But* he who is careless of his ways will die.

²⁰ Listen to counsel and receive instruction, That you may be wise in your latter days.

²⁵ Strike a scoffer, and the simple will become wary; Rebuke one who has understanding, *and* he will discern knowledge.

²⁷ Cease listening to instruction, my son, And you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Chapter 20

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

Chapter 21

¹¹ When the scoffer is punished, the simple is made wise; But when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

Chapter 22

¹⁰ Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; Yes, strife and reproach will cease.

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.

²⁰ 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
4. Should you always say what you think? Proverbs 29:11, 20
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 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.

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.

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 25

²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;

²² For so you will heap coals of fire on his head, And the LORD will reward you.

Chapter 26

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

²⁷ Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him.

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.

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

²⁰ A faithful man will abound with blessings, But he who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.

Chapter 29

⁶ By transgression an evil man is snared, But the righteous sings and rejoices.

²⁶ 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

¹ 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

² Surely I *am* more stupid than *any* man, And do not have the understanding of a man.

³ I neither learned wisdom Nor have knowledge of the Holy One.

⁴ 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?

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.

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

6. How does God take care of the righteous? Proverbs 10:2-3
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 scapel 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

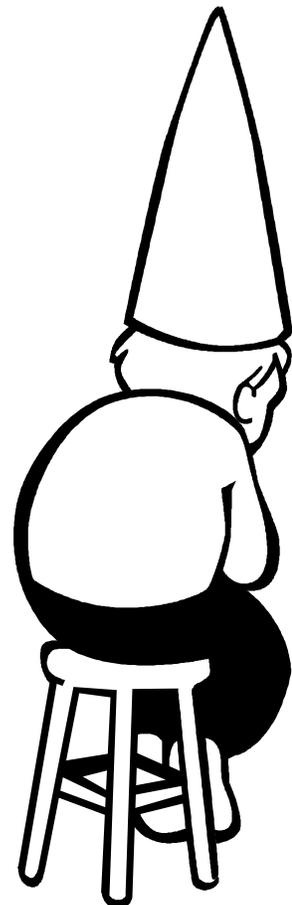
³ In the mouth of a fool *is* a rod of pride, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.

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



with knowledge.

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^[1] 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 Rebuke 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;

- 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.
²⁵ Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
²⁶ 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;

11 For wisdom *is* better than rubies, And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.
12 " I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge *and* discretion.
13 The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.
14 Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom; I *am* understanding, I have strength.
15 By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice.
16 By me princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth.
17 I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me.
18 Riches and honor *are* with me, Enduring riches and righteousness.
19 My fruit *is* better than gold, yes, than fine gold, And my revenue than choice silver.
20 I traverse the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice,
21 That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, That I may fill their treasuries.
22 " The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old.
23 I have been established from everlasting, From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.
24 When *there were* no depths I was brought forth, When *there were* no fountains abounding with water.
25 Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills, I was brought forth;
26 While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, Or the primal dust of the world.
27 When He prepared the heavens, I *was* there, When He drew a circle on the face of the deep,
28 When He established the clouds above, When He strengthened the fountains of the deep,
29 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,
30 Then I was beside Him *as* a master craftsman; And I was daily *His* delight, Rejoicing always before Him,
31 Rejoicing in His inhabited world, And my delight *was* with the sons of men.
32 " Now therefore, listen to me, *my* children, For blessed *are those who* keep my ways.
33 Hear instruction and be wise, And do not disdain *it*.
34 Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors.
35 For whoever finds me finds life, And obtains favor from the LORD;
36 But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death."

Chapter 9

1 Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars;
2 She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table.
3 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 Rebuke 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 Rebuke 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
4. What is a reason for godly living? Proverbs 23:17-18
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!

Special Focus: The Diligent vs. the Lazy

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

## **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
9. What is the danger of debt? Proverbs 6:1-5
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.

## **Miscellaneous Proverbs**

### 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.*

<b>Special Focus: Humility vs. Pride</b>		
<b><u>Humility</u></b>	<b><u>Pride</u></b>	<b><u>Reference</u></b>
<b>Leads to wisdom</b>	<b>Leads to disgrace</b>	<b>Proverbs 11:2</b>
<b>Takes advice</b>	<b>Produces Quarrels</b>	<b>Proverbs 13:10</b>
<b>Leads to honor</b>	<b>~ ~ ~</b>	<b>Proverbs 15:33</b>
<b>~ ~ ~</b>	<b>Leads to Punishment</b>	<b>Proverbs 16:5</b>
<b>~ ~ ~</b>	<b>Leads to Destruction</b>	<b>Proverbs 16:18</b>
<b>Ends in Honor</b>	<b>Ends in Downfall</b>	<b>Proverbs 18:12</b>
<b>Brings One to Honor</b>	<b>Brings One Low</b>	<b>Proverbs 29:23</b>

## 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

⁸ 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 of 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.*

