

(Through the Bible) Proverbs 11-15

by Chuck Smith

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living according to God's principles, and the contrast between righteousness and wickedness.

Duration: 1:23:21

Scripture: Proverbs 11:1, Proverbs 14:34, Luke 12:16-21

Topics: "Wisdom Literature", "Christian Ethics"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of studying and applying the word of God. He encourages the listeners to not just be hearers of the word, but to also be doers. The preacher emphasizes the consequences of wealth obtained through dishonest means and the blessings that come from hard work. He also highlights the impact of hope deferred and the importance of fearing and obeying God's commandments. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the power of a soft answer in diffusing anger.

Transcript

Shall we turn now in Proverbs to the 11th chapter? Now, we have come in the Proverbs to individual little sayings of wisdom. Each one is separate and complete in itself, and unrelated to the next, so that there is very little to comment on, because each of them become a complete little thought, and finished within the verse itself. So, it is extremely difficult as far as exposition is concerned, because it says it all.

And the wisdom is to be gleaned just from really the brevity of the statement itself. And we are in the section in which we are dealing with that type of Hebrew poetry that is in contrast. And in these particular Proverbs, there is a contrast between the righteous and the evil.

And so, you'll find them contrasted all the way through in these little nuggets of truth. A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but a just weight is His delight. Now, before the age of computers and scales like we have in all now, they used to do all of their merchandising with balance scales.

And they had little weights, and the weights would be set on the one side of the balance, and then you put the grapes on until the scale balanced out. But, these clever fellows would oftentimes have two sets of weights. One that they would buy with, and the other that they would sell with.

And this was known as a false balance. And, of course, it's an abomination to the Lord. God wants us to deal fairly.

God wants us to deal honestly. If you're in any kind of a business, God wants you to be upstanding in your business, and to deal fairly and honestly with people. A false weight is an abomination to the Lord.

So, it's talking about this diverse weights that people would often use. I read that years ago in England, when they still used the balance scales, that a baker sued a farmer over the pound of butter that he was buying. And he said that when he first started buying butter from the farmer, it was a full pound.

But gradually, the farmer was selling him less and less, until now he was only giving him about three quarters of a pound of butter, and still charging him for the full pound. And so he sued him in court. The farmer, in his own defense, said to the judge, Sir, I only have a balance scale to measure the butter.

And he said, I always put the baker's pound loaf of bread on the other side of the scale, and that's how I know when he has his pound of butter. There is a tendency of charlatans to, you know, jimmy the gallonage measures on the gas pumps and things of this nature. God hates this kind of chicanery, and it's an abomination to God.

God wants you to be fair, upright, honest in all of your dealings. He doesn't want you to be dishonest and shrewd and trying to take people. The just way is His delight.

God delights in honesty and business. When pride cometh, then cometh shame, but with the lowly is wisdom. Now, as you go through the Proverbs, he has so much to say about pride.

And it is a very fascinating study, just to run your concordance through Proverbs and find out how many things he has to say about pride. Certainly it is something that God disdains. And it is true the man who is proud is blind.

The man who is proud has never seen God. There's no way that a person can really come into a real relationship with God and still be proud. Isaiah said, In the year that King Uzziah died, then I saw the Lord high and lifted up, sitting upon the throne.

His glory filled the temple. Then said I, Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips. In seeing God, he sees the truth about himself.

And so the man who is proud has never seen the truth about himself, which means he has never really seen God. And so there's much said about pride. How God hates pride.

How God hates a haughty attitude, a haughty spirit. Thinking that I am better than somebody else. Thinking that I'm too good to give Him the time of day.

Thinking, well, I'm too busy to be bothered by His needs. That I'm somehow elevated or above Him. God hates that kind of an attitude.

The lowly, that is the attitude that is esteemed of God. And so with the proud comes shame. God will bring Him to shame.

In the next, after our lesson, the 16th, I think we get into more things on pride and all. Cometh before fall and so forth. But lowly and the proud and the humble are contrasted many times.

The integrity of the upright shall guide them, but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them. And so the contrast, the one man of integrity being guided, the man of perversity being destroyed. Riches profit not in the day of wrath or in the coming day of God's judgment.

Riches are going to be no profit to a person. How can you buy God off? What shall a man give in exchange for his soul, you see? In the day of wrath, riches will have no value at all. When God's day of judgment comes, the riches that you have gained will be of absolutely no value to you at all.

But righteousness will deliver a man from death. The day of God's wrath, riches of no value. In fact, we are told in Revelation that they'll be selling a measure of wheat for a day's wage.

A pint of wheat, work all day for a pint of wheat. In the day of God's wrath, the righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. So the contrasting between righteousness and wicked.

The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them, but the transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness. You'll be caught in your own guile and your own deceit. When a wicked man dies, his expectation or his hope perishes, and the hope of the unjust men perish.

So the death of the wicked, hope is all gone. As long as there's life, there's hope. When he dies, there's no hope.

Jesus said to Martha, when she said, Lord, if you'd only been here, my brother would not have died. She said, he said, your brother is going to live again. She said, Oh yes, Lord.

I know on the last day, the great resurrection. Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

He who lives and believes in me shall never die. Believest thou this? I like that. Jesus is so direct with people.

He makes this incredibly radical statement. So radical, that it rivals anything I've ever read or heard of any man stating in history. A man saying, if you live and believe in me, you'll never die.

Then he says, do you believe this? So immediately he puts you on one or the other side of the fence. Yes, I believe. No, I don't believe.

Oh, but it's much more than that. You either have hope or you have no hope. Those who do not believe in Jesus Christ, they have absolutely no hope.

When a wicked man dies, his expectation shall perish and the hope of unjust men perishes. It's the end of it. No hope for them.

But those who believe in Christ, I want to thank God, Peter said, for a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The righteous is delivered out of trouble. Contrast, the wicked cometh to his just deserts.

Now God delivers the righteous man, the wicked man falls in the pit. A hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor. Oh, the tongue, what it can do as far as destruction.

How many people have been destroyed by gossip? Many times untrue. A hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor. Contrasting, but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices. And when the wicked perish, there is shouting. So the contrast again, the righteous and the wicked.

When it goes well with the righteous, the city is rejoicing. When the wicked dies, the city rejoices. When the righteous man is blessed and things are going well with him, everybody rejoices.

When the wicked man gets wiped out, everybody rejoices. By the blessing of the upright, the city is exalted. But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

He that is void of wisdom despises his neighbor. But a man of understanding makes peace. A tale bearer revealeth secrets.

But he that is of a faithful spirit will conceal the matter. A tale bearer will go out and tell everything he knows of evil, of the wrongdoing. But the person of a faithful spirit will cover it.

He'll conceal the matter. Where no counsel is, the people fall. But in the multitude of counselors, there is safety.

I've often said also, in the multitude of counselors, there's confusion. There are people who shock counselors. They'll come up and they say, I was talking with Pastor Romain and I talked to Chuck Matier and I talked to Jerry Westberg and I wanted to talk to you about this.

Well, you know that they're really not looking for counsel. It's that the other three guys haven't agreed with them yet and they're looking and hoping someone's going to agree with them somewhere along the line. They're looking for confirmation rather than real counseling, real guidance.

And people just shop around until they can find someone and say, Oh, well, that's fine. Go ahead and do it. Yes, that's wonderful.

No, they're really not wanting to be guided. They're only wanting affirmation that what they're doing is all right to do or is the right thing to do. And so, in the multitude of counselors, quite often there's confusion.

The more you go to, the more different things you hear. And you get to where you don't know what to do. He that is surety for a stranger will smart for it.

If you say, Oh, yeah, he's all right, you know, and you don't know the guy, you're going to get bit. You're going to smart for it. And he that hateth suretyship is sure.

Interesting play on words. If you hate suretyship, that is putting up your word for somebody else. If you hate doing that, then you're going to be safe.

But if you put it up for a stranger, you're going to get hurt. A gracious woman retains her honor and strong men retain riches. A gracious woman retains her honor.

Beautiful. The merciful man doeth good to his own soul, but he that is cruel troubles his own flesh. The wicked works a deceitful work, but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.

As righteousness tendeth to life, and he that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death. So righteousness and life contrasted with evil and death. They that are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the Lord, but such as are upright in their way are his delight.

What a contrast. Though hand join in hand, that is for strength and defense, the wicked shall not be unpunished, but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered. This next one is an interesting picturesque.

As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion. A beautiful woman that has no discretion, has no sense. The ornament of gold, it's beautiful, but it's out of place in a swine's snout.

A fair woman, beautiful, but she's out of place if she doesn't have discretion. If she's not discreet. The desire of the righteous is only good.

Righteous and wicked again, but the expectation of the wicked is wrath. Now, here we have an interesting spiritual law in the 24th Proverb here. There is that which scatters and yet it increases.

And there is that which holds more than is necessary, but it tends towards poverty. There is a spiritual law, give and it shall be given unto you. Measure it out, press down.

Running over, shall man give into your bosom. He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly. He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountily.

And whatever measure you meet it out, it's going to be measured back to you again. Spiritual law. Here it is said in just a little different way, but the same spiritual truth.

There are those who scatter and yet they increase. You increase by giving. There are those who withhold more than is necessary, but it tends towards poverty.

The liberal soul shall be made fat. And he that watereth shall be watered himself. He that withholdeth corn from the people, or he that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him.

But blessing shall be upon the head of him that sells it. He that diligently seeks good procureth favor. But he that seeks mischief, it will come to him.

He that trusts in his riches shall fall. But the righteous shall flourish as a branch. He that troubles his own house shall inherit the wind.

And the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart. But the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life. And he that winneth souls is wise.

They that are wise. Let's see. They that win souls are wise and shall shine as the stars forever and ever.

Daniel. He that winneth souls is wise and shall shine as the stars forever and ever. How God wants us to be winning souls for Jesus Christ.

He that winneth souls is wise. It's a very wise occupation to give yourself to winning others to Jesus Christ. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life.

He that winneth souls is wise. Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth. Much more than the wicked and the sinner.

Continuing the contrast between righteousness and wickedness on through the twelfth chapter of the Proverbs. Whoso loves instruction loves knowledge. But he who hates reproof is brutish.

And there's a lot in the Proverbs about instructing a wise man and he will, you know, love you. Instruct a fool and he'll hate you. And the fool hateth instruction and so forth.

And the value of loving instruction, receiving instruction. A good man obtains favor of the Lord. But a man of wicked devices will be condemned by God.

A man shall not be established by wickedness. But the root of the righteous shall not be moved. A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband.

But she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones. Now, to understand what the virtuous woman is about, you'll have to turn to Proverbs 31 when you get home and read the description of the virtuous woman. She's a crown to her husband.

What a blessing a good woman is. How thankful we are for these marvelous wives God has given to us. They're a crown to her husband.

The thoughts of the righteous are right, but the counsel of the wicked is deceit. The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood, but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them. The wicked are overthrown and are not, but the house of the righteous shall stand.

That is much like the third verse. It says it in a little different way. A man shall be commended according to his wisdom, but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.

He that is despised and hath a servant is better than he that honors himself and is lacking bread. That's a very interesting proverb. There are those which honor themselves, which, of course, there are much about that too.

But he that is despised and has a servant is better off than the person who honors himself. A righteous man regards the life of his beast. Kindness to animals is a sign of a righteous man.

A person who is cruel to an animal is really cruel to one of God's creatures, one of God's creation. So the righteous man regards the life of his beast, but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. He that tills his land shall be satisfied with bread, but he who follows vain persons is void of understanding.

So if you're just sitting around town following vain persons, leaving your field go, you're void of understanding. But if you're out there working in your field, you're going to be satisfied with bread. The wicked desires the net of evil men, but the root of the righteous yields fruit.

The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips, but the just shall come out of trouble. A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth, and the recompense of a man's hand shall be rendered unto him. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes.

Remember, instruct a fool, he'll hate you. But he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise. A fool's wrath is presently known.

They just spout off their mouth. They just, you know, they let you know that they don't appreciate that. I'm not, you know, and they, you presently know the fool's wrath.

He doesn't try to hide it. But a prudent man covereth shame. A prudent man, oh, let it go.

But the fool's wrath is presently known. He that speaks truth shows forth righteousness, but a false witness deceit. Eighteen, there is that which speaks like the piercing of the sword.

People can cut you to shreds with their words. Words can be devastating, so cutting. God help us not to have a sharp tongue.

God help us not to use our tongue like a sword to cut people. But rather, may our words be a balm, a healing agent, a comfort, lifting up one another. If you use your tongue as a cutting instrument, if you use your tongue to destroy others, then people are going to seek to defend themselves and what you dish out is going to come back to you.

People are going to start cutting you and chopping you if you're always chopping others. But if you will speak well of others and speak well to others, and it's just as easy to compliment a person as it is to cut them down. And there's probably just as much to be commended as there is to be condemned in any of us.

There is another proverb. There is so much bad in the best of us and so much good in the worst of us that it ill behooves any of us to talk of another. My words can be used to build up.

My words can be used to tear down. It seems that there are two types of people in the world. Those who are building up, those who are tearing down.

Now, when you're looking for a friend, which kind do you look for? You are drawn to and you look for the person who is constantly building up. You don't like to be around a person who is constantly tearing you down. You avoid them like the plague.

But a person who is kind, a person who is gentle, a person who is complimentary, you enjoy being around those kind of people. So there are those who speak and their words are like the piercings of the sword. But the tongue of the wise is held.

It's building, it's edifying. The lip of truth shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment. Truth will endure.

A lie might serve for a moment, but you'll get caught. Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil, but to the counselors of peace is joy. There shall no evil happen to the just.

Now that is in the final judgment. But the wicked shall be filled with mischief. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.

Now, there are many things that are an abomination to the Lord, and you should take your concordance and run this word abomination and find out how many things are an abomination to the Lord. Proud look, it's an abomination to the Lord. A lying tongue, a false balance, these things are an abomination to God.

Now, I surely don't want to be doing anything that's an abomination to God. I don't want to find my life an abomination unto Him. So, it would be wise to follow this through in your concordance and find out how many things and what things are an abomination to God so that you can avoid them.

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are His delight. A prudent man conceals knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaims his foolishness. The hand of the diligent shall bear rule, but the slothful shall be under taxes.

Heaviness in the heart of a man makes it stoop, but a good word makes it glad. The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor, but the way of the wicked seduceth them. The slothful man, or the lazy man, does not roast that which he killed when he was hunting, but the substance of a diligent man is precious.

The Bible more or less condemns the hunting for just the joy of hunting. Hunting to eat, yes, but the slothful man doesn't roast that which he took hunting. In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death.

Now, Jesus said, He who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Here we are told, in the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death. Then how do we explain what happens to those who live and believe in Jesus Christ who have lived a righteous life? If Jesus said, He who lives and believes in Me shall never die, I must accept that that is true.

Then if they have not died, what has happened to them? Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5, For we know that when this earthly tent, our body, is dissolved, we have a building of God that is not made with hands, that is eternal in the heavens. So then, we who are living in these bodies do often groan earnestly desiring to be freed from these bodies, not that we would be an unembodied spirit, but that we might be clothed upon with the body which is from heaven. For we know that as long as we are living and are at home in this body, we are absent from the Lord, but we would choose rather to be absent from this body and to be present with the Lord.

There is no death. What is there? There is a metamorphosis, a change of body, where my spirit moves from this tent into what Jesus said was a mansion. In my Father's house are many mansions.

If it were not so, I would have told you, I'm going to prepare a place for you. And if I prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. So, one day my spirit is going to be freed from this tent, from this house, and it will move into a new building that God has been preparing for me, a building of God that is not made with hands, that is eternal in the heavens.

And even as God designed this body to exist upon the planet Earth and to exist within the environmental aspects that are on the planet Earth, so God has made another body for me that is designed for the environmental conditions of heaven. This body is not made as an eternal dwelling place. This body is decaying.

The tent is getting old, getting ragged, beginning to leak. So, we who are in these tents do often groan, earnestly desiring to move out, tired of trying to patch it, keep it clean, move into that new building of God. What a contrast! Not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The new body I have is a permanent model. And even as I have borne the image of the Earth and have been earthy, I'm going to bear the image of the heavens, my new model. I can hardly wait to see the new model.

I'm interested in all the gadgets that it must have, so far superior to this. And yet this body is not to degrade. The body is a marvelous instrument, absolutely phenomenal, all of the capacities that God has built into the human body.

But yet, that new model that God has for me vastly superior. This model in which I'm living is designed and restricted to one place, the Earth and the environs around the Earth. The new model, take it anywhere.

If I want to go sit on the sun for a while, surely God can design a body that could exist on the sun. There would really be no bigger problems in designing a body to exist on the sun than there would be to design one to exist on the Earth. After all, He's the master designer.

The new body, building of God, eternal in the heavens. So, there is no death. It's wrong to say of a Christian, Oh, he died last week.

You should rather say, Oh, he moved last week. Didn't you hear? He moved out of that crummy old tent. He's living now in a beautiful new mansion.

A building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In the 13th chapter of Proverbs, there is a continuation of the contrasting of the righteous with the wicked. The wise and the scorner, the transgressor and the good man.

A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scorner does not listen to rebuke. A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth, but the soul of the transgressors shall eat violence. He that keeps his mouth keeps his life, but he that opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

The soul of the slugger desires and has nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat. A righteous man hates lying, but a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame. Righteousness keeps him that is upright in the way, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.

There are those that seem to be rich and yet they have nothing. There are those that seem to be poor, yet they have great riches. That's because true riches are not measured in material things.

True riches have a standard in spirituality, in the eternal. Your true riches are those that you'll possess five minutes after you're dead. Now a lot of people have been awfully rich in life, but five minutes after they're dead, they're going to be absolute paupers.

They'll have absolutely nothing. There are many people that have had nothing all through life, but five minutes after they're dead, they're going to have such vast riches, the true riches, the spiritual riches. Jesus, in Luke's Gospel, the 12th chapter, speaks a parable, beginning with verse 16.

And He spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do? Because I have no room to bestow all of my fruit. And he said, I know what I'll do.

I'll pull down my barns. I'll build bigger ones. And then I will bestow all my fruit and all of my goods.

And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come. Take your ease. Eat, drink, and be merry.

But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall be those things that you have laid up? Who's going to inherit it? So is he that layeth up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God. True riches are those that are laid up in heaven.

They are the riches that will not decline. They are the riches that cannot lose their value. The true riches.

So there are those who seem to be very rich and yet in reality, they have nothing. There are those who seem to be poor and yet they are very rich. The ransom of a man's life are his riches, but the poor hears not rebuke.

The light of the righteous rejoices, but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out. Only by pride comes contention. Now that's an interesting statement, but examine it carefully.

Whenever contention arises, somewhere behind it someone's pride. How important it is for us to come to the cross and to reckon our old man to be dead. But that's the only way you're going to get rid of pride and that's the only way you're going to get rid then of contentions.

I'm so upset. Did you hear what he did? Why are you so upset? Well, he said this about me and all. Well, how much truth is there to it? Well, I didn't want people to know that bit of truth about me.

I wanted people to think, I always want people to think better of me than I really am. I always like pictures that flatter me. If they look too much like me, I don't care for them.

I like them to make me look really handsome and all, you know. Oh, that's a good picture. It doesn't really look like me, but it's sure good looking, you know.

Somehow we always want to put out a better impression and anything that tarnishes that creates contention within us. Pride is the basis of contention. Only by pride comes contention, but with the well advised is wisdom.

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished, but he that gathereth by labor shall increase. Now, there are a lot of scams whereby people are getting wealthy. A while back there were these pyramid parties.

Wealth gotten by vanity. That is, you know, the get rich schemes. Money that is gained by get rich schemes is going to vanish.

I have a friend who is a member of the mafia and I've been witnessing to him for quite a while. He loves to flash a roll. He loves to open up his safe and let me see hundred thousand dollars in hundred dollar bills.

Or he loves to take me out to dinner and pull out a roll of twenty thousand dollars in hundred dollar bills, you know, and peel them off. He just loves the flash of it. And he's always, always dreaming up some scam to rip somebody off.

He was laughing and telling me about how that he collected twenty thousand dollars from a guy to rub out another guy. And he said, I was going to get fifty thousand dollars for the job. He said, I took twenty thousand dollars down to get thirty thousand when it was done.

But he said, I just took the twenty thousand. He said, I didn't rub out the guy, but he says, but I got twenty thousand. He said, but who's the guy going to tell? Who's he going to complain to? Now he told me, he said, you see this wad of money? He said, I have it now.

But he says, out there, there's a hundred guys that know that I presently got the role. And he said, all of them are sitting up nights dreaming up some scam by which to rip the money off of me. And he said, one of them will come up with something and I'll be a sucker and I'll go in for it and he's going to rip me off from this role.

And when he does, everybody will know that he's got the role and they'll all then start dreaming up and I'll start dreaming up a scam to rip him off from the role. He said, we all know where the role is. And he says, we all get to handle it every once in a while, for a while.

But he says, sooner or later, one of these guys gets to us with a scam and he rips us off and then, you know, we have to go after him. And he said, it's money that just passes through our hands every once in a while. And I thought of this proverb.

Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished, but he that gathers by labor shall increase. Hope deferred makes the heart sick. Oh yes, I'll marry you, honey.

Just wait a year. Oh, my heart's sick. Hope deferred makes the heart sick.

But when the desire comes, it's a tree of life. Whoso despises the Word shall be destroyed. And this would be the Word of God.

But he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded. Will be blessed. The law of the wise is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death.

Good understanding gives favor, but the way of the transgressors is hard. Sometimes we look at the sinner and say, oh man, he's got to say... No, the way of the transgressor is hard. God declares that.

And we see that so many times. Boy, we see a person just really up against the wall. We see them just really, you know, they really had it.

And they come in and say, oh man, can't believe. Well, the way of the transgressor is hard. It's going to catch up with you.

And when it does, man, you've had it. Every prudent man deals with knowledge, but a fool lays open his folly. A wicked messenger falls into mischief, but a faithful ambassador is helped.

Poverty and shame will come to him who refuses instruction, but he who regards reproof shall be honored. The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul, but it's an abomination to fools to depart from evil. Desire accomplished is the completed goal.

Oh, how sweet it is. He that walks with wise men shall be wise, but the companion of fools shall be destroyed. Evil pursues the sinners, but to righteous, good shall be repaid.

A good man leaves inheritance to his grandchildren, and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just. Much food is in the tillage of the poor, but there is that that destroys for want of judgment. It is interesting that the United States has had a tremendous food program for India.

I forget exactly what percentage of the food that we send over, though, is eaten by rats. But it's a large percentage of the grain that we send to support India is eaten by rats. And, of course, they don't believe in killing rats because it might be your uncle.

It could very well be one of mine. I always question him. But it really isn't always for the lack of food that a person is hungry.

It's many times the lack of good judgment. Now, he that spares the rod hates his son, but he that loves him will chasten him often. Solomon has quite a bit to say about the correction of a child.

The foolishness of the world is bound up in the heart of the child, but the rod of instruction driveth it far from him. Then he said, spare the rod and spoil the child. Now, my son thought that was a command.

And when I started to use the rod, he said, but the Scripture says, spare the rod and spoil the child. He thought that I was supposed to spoil him, you know. I said, son, you don't understand.

It means if I spare the rod, I'll spoil you. He that spares the rod hates his son. The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul, but the belly of the wicked shall want.

Continuation of the contrasting of goodness and evil. Every wise woman, and wise and foolish contrasts always do. Every wise woman builds her house.

She takes care, she takes pain, she takes effort to really build her house. A wise woman. It to me is a very tragic thing that today there is so much pressure upon women to be something other than good wives and keepers of the home.

It's almost made a downer to a woman if she's just a good mother and housekeeper. Oh, you're just a housekeeper? Oh, you don't have a career? Oh, you know. The other day my wife and daughter signed up for exercise class at the YMCA.

And the woman just kept talking to my daughter and almost ignoring my wife. And was just so interested in my daughter. And my wife got upset.

She later on said to my daughter, you know, that woman was extremely rude to me. She was just spending so much time with you. It's just because you're young and I'm older.

And I don't appreciate the fact that people just ignore a person when they get older and all. And giving you so much time. And Jan sort of, you know, said, well, Mom, you know.

And tried to pass it on. Finally, Jan says, well, Mom, if you want to know the truth. She said on the application where it says occupation, I put down writer.

You put down housewife. And that's why she was paying so much attention. Because, you know, career.

And the world, you know, Oh, you're a writer. Oh, my. You know, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Oh, you're a housewife? But a wise woman builds her house. I'll tell you there's no greater reward in all the world than to see the fruit of a wise woman who has built a house in which there is love and security for the children who can grow up in that kind of an environment and blossom forth into manhood and womanhood. What a reward and what a blessing.

The wise woman builds her house. But the foolish plucks it down with their hands. He that walks in his uprightness fears the Lord.

But he that is perverse in his ways despises him. In the mouth of the foolish is the rod of pride. But the lips of the wise will preserve them.

Where you have no ox, the corn crib is clean. But with much increase is by the strength of the ox. You know, don't brag because your corn crib is so clean.

It could be that you have no oxen. A faithful witness will not lie. But a false witness will utter lies.

A scorner seeks wisdom and cannot find it. But knowledge is easy to him that understand it. It used to be always after the test in school, someone would say, well, was it a hard test? And I'd always respond, not if you know the answers.

It's only hard when you don't know the answers. You know, then it's tough because man, you got to think of something and make up something. That makes a hard test.

But if you know the answers, the test isn't hard at all. So, the knowledge is easy unto him who understands. No problem if you understand it.

Go from the presence of a foolish man when you perceive that there is no knowledge in his lips. Some guy just, you know, spouting off and you perceive the guy's a nut, just walk away. Don't subject yourself to it.

The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, but the folly of fools is deceit. Fools mock at sin, but among the righteous there is favor. Oh, how fools love to mock at sin.

How much we see today the mocking of sin. Oh, I suppose I'm a sinner, you know. People mock at it.

The heart knoweth his own bitterness and the stranger does not intermeddle with his joy. The house of the wicked shall be overthrown, but the tent of the upright shall flourish. There is a way which seems right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

So, what is the way that seems right to man but ends in death? Is it narrow and is it straight or is it broad? Jesus said, Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for straight is the gate, narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it, but broad is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction. Many there are that go in thereat. There is a way that seems right unto man.

You hear people today say, Well, all roads lead to God. Not according to Jesus Christ. He said, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes to the Father but by Me.

All roads may lead to God, but which God? You see, there's only one path that leads to the Father. There's only one way to the Father. That's through Jesus Christ.

So there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death. If you are walking in any other way other than Jesus Christ, you're walking in a path that's going to ultimate in death. Separation from God.

There's only one way. Jesus Christ. Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

That is for the man who is walking in the path of death. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways, and a good man shall be satisfied from himself. The simple believes every word, but the prudent man looks well to his going.

A wise man fears and departs from evil, but the fool rages and is confident. He that is soon angry deals foolishly. How many times we have made foolish mistakes in a fit of anger.

We've responded, we've reacted in anger, and we've done foolishly. He that is soon angry, quick-tempered, will deal foolishly. You do foolish things with that quick temper.

And a man of wicked devices is hated. The simple inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge. The evil bow before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

The poor is hated even of his own neighbor, but the rich have many friends. He that despises his neighbor sins, but he that has mercy on the poor, happy is he. Do they not err that devise evil, but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

In all labor there is profit, but the talk of the lips tends only towards punery. The crown of the wise is their riches, but the foolishness of fools is folly. A true witness delivers souls, but a deceitful witness speaks lies.

In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. In the multitude of people is the king's honor, but in want of people is the destruction of the prince.

He that is slow to wrath is of good understanding, but he that is hasty of spirit exalts folly. A sound heart is the life of the flesh. This is an interesting thing.

How did Solomon know that? But envy is the rottenness of the bones. Envy can destroy you. A sound heart is just life to your flesh.

He that oppresses the poor reproaches his maker, but he who honors him has mercy on the poor. If you really honor God, you'll have mercy on the poor. Now, there's much that the Bible says in Proverbs concerning the poor and the attitude that we should have towards the poor and God's attitude towards the poor.

Again, you might look that up through your concordance. The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope, even in his death. You bet I do.

A living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Wisdom rests in the heart of him that has understanding, but that which is in the midst of fools is made known. Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

If I had anything to do about that kind of thing, I would have this over the Capitol, over the Supreme Court, over the White House. I would have this all through Washington, D.C. and in every state capital, this motto. Righteousness exalts a nation.

Sin is a reproach to any people. The history of the nation of Israel. Oh, that we could read it and study it and benefit by it because it was all written for our examples.

God put the whole thing there as an example to us that we might learn. And what is the lesson to be learned from the history of the nation of Israel? Whenever they honored the Lord and sought the Lord, God blessed them and prospered them. And they were strong and they subdued their enemies and they lived in happiness and prosperity and peace.

Whenever they turned from the Lord and turned to the flesh and lived after the flesh, then they were subjugated by their enemies. They came into bondage and they were destroyed. Oh, how important that a nation be established in righteousness.

Righteousness exalts a nation. The king's favor is toward a wise servant, but his wrath is against those that cause shame. Fifteen.

I love this first one here. A soft answer turns away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger. How oftentimes a person comes just raging and a soft answer turns away wrath.

If you rage back at them, then get out the gloves, you know, because you're soon going to be going at it. But a soft answer, how it can just mellow out a situation. Oh, God help us to respond with soft answers rather than with grievous words which only tend to stir up the whole scene.

The tongue of the wise uses knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools just pours out foolishness. The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding evil and the good. Yikes.

The Bible says that everything is open and naked before Him with whom we have to do. The eyes of the Lord are everywhere. You cannot hide from God.

It is folly to think that you can hide any action from God. I think that we need to have a greater consciousness of Thou, Lord, seest me. That we do not hide anything from God.

The eyes of the Lord are everywhere. You say, oh, I thought that God was too holy is to behold evil or to look upon evil. God cannot look upon sin.

That word look upon is an implication to look upon it with favor or condoning it. He cannot do that, but He surely sees it. He's not blind.

The eyes of the Lord are in every place. He's beholding the evil and the good. A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

A fool despises his father's instruction, but he that regards reproof is prudent. In the house of the righteous is much treasure, but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the foolish does not sow.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. Now we've got another thing that's an abomination to the Lord. The sacrifice of the wicked.

God isn't interested in any sacrifices that the wicked might offer to Him. I think that it is a tragedy when the church goes public to collect funds, solicits funds from the public, from wicked people, accepts the gifts of wicked people, because it's an abomination to the Lord. The sacrifice of the wicked.

God doesn't need it. He doesn't care for it. But the prayer of the upright is His delight.

The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. So the sacrifice of the wicked. Now the way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord, but He loves him that follows after righteousness.

Oh, how God loves to see you doing the right thing. How God loves to see you make the right decision. How God loves to see you doing righteousness.

Correction is grievous to him who forsakes the way, and he that hates reproof shall die. Now hell and destruction are before the Lord. How much more then the hearts of the children of men.

In other words, it goes back to God, the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Hell and destruction are before the Lord. He understands it.

How much more the heart of the children of men. How God understands us. That's not the wonder.

The fact that understanding us as He does, He still loves us. That's the wonder. A scorner loves not one that reproves him, neither will he go to the wise.

A merry heart will make a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. The heart of him that has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness. All the days of the afflicted are evil, and he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.

Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of vegetables with love than a barbecued ox with hatred. A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

The way of the lazy man is as a hedge of thorns, but the way of the righteous is made plain. A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother. Now again, Solomon equates my son, he's a wise boy.

Foolish, that's his mother's son, you know. A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother. Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom.

When foolishness is a person's joy, folly is a person's joy. The guy is just destitute of wisdom. But a man of understanding walks uprightly.

Without counsel, purposes are disappointed. But in the multitude of counselors, they are established. You can establish the purposes, you can figure the way to go.

A man has joy by the answer of his mouth and a word spoken in due season. How good it is. Oh, that word, just, you know, it's so appropriate.

Oh, it's so right. How good it is. The word spoken in due season.

The way of life is above to the wise that he may depart from hell beneath. The Lord will destroy the house of the proud, but he that, but he will establish the border of the widow. The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.

Now again, you ought to look up all these things that are abomination to God. The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, but the words of the pure are pleasant. He that is greedy of gain troubles his own house, but he that hates gifts shall live.

The heart of the righteous studies before he answers, but the mouth of the wicked just pours out evil things. The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous. The light of the eyes rejoices the heart and the good report makes the bones fat.

The ear that hears the reproof of life abides among the wise. He that refuses instruction despises his own soul, but he that hears reproof gets understanding. The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.

He that exalteth himself shall be abased. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Before honor is humility.

Solomon tells us the purpose of a proverb is to know wisdom and instruction, to perceive words of understanding, to receive the instruction of wisdom and justice and judgment and fairness, to give subtlety to the simple and to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear and increase his learning. So it's good.

Listen, hear and increase your learning and understanding of the ways of the Lord, the path of the just. Father, we thank You for the instruction and the wisdom and the learning that we can receive. Incline our hearts towards wisdom.

Let us seek instruction in Thy way. Let us follow after it. Help us, Lord, to avoid the path of the foolish or of the slothful or of the wicked that we might walk in the pathway of righteousness and truth, following after Thee, serving Thee, knowing Thee, loving Thee.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we stand? Your next assignment will be the next five chapters, 16 through 20.

And three weeks hence, the Lord willing, we will get into the Proverbs from chapters 16 through 20. So it gives you plenty of opportunity to really study them and to take them to heart and to learn. And I would exhort you, as did James, be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

It isn't enough to know. It's important that we follow, that we practice, that we put it into practice in our lives. And in those areas where we're having difficulty in putting it into practice, then let us seek the Lord.

If one of these really speaks to you and you say, wow, that cuts. Oh, rejoice. God is dealing with you.

Now, don't pass over and say, man, I was really cut last night by that proverb. Oh boy, it really got me. And then you forget about it.

That's foolishness. But when the Holy Spirit begins to deal with you and says, hey, you're walking in the way of perversity. You're walking in the way of wickedness.

You're walking in the way of death. Then listen and turn. And say, oh God, help me.

I don't want to perish with the wicked. I don't want to be destroyed with the unrighteous. I want to be with You, Lord, in Your eternal kingdom.

I need Your help. I need Your strength, Lord, that I might live righteously. That I might walk in the path of the wise and the just.

And seek God's help. And seek God's strength. And seek God's guidance.

And let God deal with the issues of your life. Don't hate reproof. Don't scorn instruction.

But receive it. That it might be to you the fountain of life. And bring you into His eternal habitations.

God bless you. And God keep you. And God watch over you.

We covet your prayers. Even as we will be praying for you. And remembering you daily.

Holding you up before God. That the God of all wisdom might grant unto you wisdom and understanding. That you might walk in His way of truth and righteousness.

That you might be built up in your relationship with Jesus Christ. Until you come into that same image. According to His Spirit.

And the power of His Spirit working in your life. As He conforms you into the image of Jesus Christ. And thus, may you grow up into that fullness.

That God would have you to experience and to know. Of His grace. And of His love.

And of His truth. In Jesus name.

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