

# (Through the Bible) Proverbs 16-20

by Chuck Smith

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life pleasing to God, seeking wisdom, and exercising self-control in order to avoid destruction and find true fulfillment.*

**Duration:** 1:22:30

**Scripture:** Proverbs 16:1-32

**Topics:** "Relational Wisdom", "Family Values"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding and compassion in relationships. He uses the example of a child fighting for survival to illustrate the need for empathy. The speaker also highlights the value of putting oneself in another person's position to truly understand them. He warns against rejoicing in the misfortune of others and encourages a positive attitude. The sermon also touches on the significance of family and the impact of words and actions on children. The speaker references biblical verses, such as Ezekiel and 1 Corinthians 13, to support his points.

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## Transcript

Shall we turn now to Proverbs 16, the 16th chapter and begin our study this evening. The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. God works in our lives even when we're not aware of it.

If we're a child of God, God is continually working in our lives. It's amazing how many times we say things that we don't realize that at the time we are saying it, but actually it's a word from the Lord. It just comes out.

God prepares your heart. The preparations of the heart, they're from God. In Philippians, we work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that is working in you both to will and to do.

You see, God is planting now his law in the fleshly tablets of our hearts, even as he promised to Jeremiah, the day will come when I will no longer write my law on the tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of their heart. So God plants his word. God plants his desires right in your heart.

So the preparations of the heart are from the Lord. How great it is to be a child of God and to have your life submitted to the Lord so that the Lord is directing from that just inner kind of desires and all that he plants within your own heart. Second proverb, all the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord

weighs the spirits.

Now, no matter what a guy does, it's right. All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes. You can justify everything you've done.

We're so full of excuses. Well, I did it because, even if it was wrong, we've got a good reason or at least a good excuse. Of course, Benjamin Franklin said, the man who is good with excuses is seldom good for anything else.

The ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but God weighs the spirits. Now God knows the motives. God knows why I did it, the motive behind it.

That's what's important. Commit thy works unto the Lord and thy thoughts shall be established. So many times we're worried that we haven't done enough and it's probably correct.

However, when we look at our service to God, we so often say, oh, but you know, I should have done such a better job. And you know, I, well, could you have done a better job? No, I did the best I could. Well, that's all God expects.

God doesn't expect more from you than what you can actually produce. So you've got to commit your works unto the Lord. Do your best and then just commit the rest and your thoughts will be established.

Well, you know, Lord, that's the best I can do. You know, I'm sorry you have to use this kind of instrument to do your work, Lord, but that's the way it is. And that's all I can do.

And I don't go home and worry. Oh, could I have done this? Could I have done that? Oh, I should have done this. I should have done that.

You just do your best and then you just place the rest in his hands. Your thoughts are then established. You rest.

Well, Lord, here it is, such as it is the best I can do. And you just commit your work to the Lord and your thoughts then are established, just are resting. Well, best I could do.

God, you know, use it if you can. It's my best. This is an interesting and yet a difficult proverb to understand.

The Lord has made all things for himself. Yea, even the wicked for the day of evil. Now, the word evil, of course, is a reference to the judgment that is coming.

There is a scripture in Isaiah that has brought a lot of problems to people where God has declared that he has created evil. And they say, oh, how could God create evil? The word actually is judgments. God has created the judgments that come upon the evil.

So the Lord has made all things for himself. Thou has created all things and for thy good pleasure they are and were created. And God has even created the evil or the wicked.

Now, God didn't create them wicked, but he created wicked people. Can you catch the difference? God created people, some of them are wicked. They don't have to be, but they are.

God created them. It doesn't, you can't deny the fact that God created them. So in a sense, you can say God created the wicked.

He didn't create them wicked, but he created the wicked. They became wicked, God created them. And he has actually created also the judgments that shall come upon those wicked persons.

Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. One of those, another one of those, which God has a lot of things that are an abomination to him. Again, you need to take your concordance and go through the book of Proverbs and go through this word abomination and find out how many things are an abomination unto God.

I don't know exactly what an abomination is, but it sounds bad. And I know I don't want to be one. Now, the proud in heart are an abomination to the Lord.

Oh, that pride, what a destroyer it is. We'll get to that in a minute. And though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.

Now this hand in hand, again, the striking of the hand, making a deal, it's usually a, you know, in this case, joining hand in hand for strength. Yet you can't escape the punishment. By mercy and truth, iniquity is cleansed.

God's mercy and God's truth. You remember, um, John in the opening remarks concerning Jesus Christ said for the law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ. Of course, grace and mercy are sister kind of words, mercy and truth, grace and truth by mercy and truth, iniquity is cleansed.

And by the fear or the reverence of the Lord, men depart from evil. Now the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. And so here by the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.

There is a tremendous inconsistency. John points it out in his first epistle. He said, he that saith he hath fellowship with God and walketh in darkness is lying.

He isn't telling the truth. You cannot walk in fellowship with God and have a desire and a love for evil. The fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.

When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. Thus, really the goal of each of our lives is and should be to be pleasing to God. God, what pleases you? Now, usually we use as our standard, is it right or is it wrong? And trying to measure, and this was of course the mistake that the, uh, that the religious leaders in Judaism made concerning the law.

Now, what constitutes bearing a burden on the Sabbath day? What if you have false teeth? If you put your false teeth on, on the Sabbath day, that means you're bearing a burden, doesn't it? You're carrying something that isn't natural to you. What about if you have a wooden leg? Well, sure, that's a burden. So you can't put it on, on the Sabbath day.

And, and all of these little fine points, you know, they're trying to tune the fine points of, of right and wrong. You can throw all of that out the window. The real question is, is it pleasing to God? Is God pleased with it? Because you may sit down and rationalize that a, that, you know, a particular action, a particular thing that you want to do, you may rationalize and say, well, sure, look, it's all right.

And give all of your rationale for why it's right, but it may not be pleasing to God. So really the rightness or the wrongness of a particular action isn't what really matters. What really matters is, does it really please the Lord? My life, I desire that my life be pleasing.

Jesus said, I do always those things that please the Father. Now, if you use that as your standard, you won't have to worry about right or wrong. You won't have to sit and examine a thing to see if it's really right or really wrong.

Hey, does it please God? That's where it's at. When a man's ways please the Lord, then the Lord makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

A little that a righteous man hath is greater riches than many wicked. Same concept. A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps.

How many times our plans have been changed by the Lord? We've decided we're going to do something and God throws the monkey wrench in and stops us. I'm always sensitive to interruptions. Maybe God is trying to stop me.

You know, the man who is expecting to be disturbed is the man who is never disturbed when disturbances come. If you are open to God and you think, well, Lord, anytime, you know, I'm heading down a path you don't want, you just stop me. Therefore, I'm expecting to be disturbed.

Therefore, when the disturbance comes, it doesn't disturb me because my life and my steps are committed to the Lord. So we devise something in our heart, but God directs our steps. And I want it that way.

I don't want to do my own will. I don't want to fulfill my own purposes. I want God to stop me whenever I am getting out of line and doing something that isn't from Him and directed by Him.

I want the Lord to interrupt me. I want God to disturb me. I want God to direct my steps.

A divine sentence is in the lips of the king. His mouth transgresseth not in judgment. Now, herein, of course, is a beautiful situation when the king is a godly king.

Then God will direct his mouth, his lips, and place actually God's sentences within his lips. And his mouth will not transgress, will be faithful in judgment. A just weight and balance are the Lord's.

All the weights of the bag are His work. Now again, we'll get another proverb that deals with this pretty soon. All of their merchandising was done with the balanced scales.

And so they would have little bags of weights. And the crooked merchant would have two bags of weights, diverse weights. One that they would sell with and one that they would buy with.

So butchers have had their thumbs on the scales for years. Goes back to the time of Proverbs, where in the balancing, they would use one set of weights to buy and they would use another bag of weights to sell. It's an abomination unto the Lord.

False balance is an abomination unto God. But the true, honest in business, a just weight and balance are the Lord's. And all the weights of the bag are His work.

It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness, for the throne is established by righteousness. So those who are in leadership actually have a greater responsibility before God. Righteous lips are the delight of kings and they love him that speaks right.

The wrath of the king is as messengers of death, but a wise man will pacify it. In the light of the king's countenance his life and his favor is as a cloud of the latter rain. So here we have four Proverbs that are related to each other because they all deal with kings.

And then as much as none of you are kings, I don't know, maybe you are. You're the king's kids. Now Solomon declares how much better it is to get wisdom than gold.

And to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver. You remember when he started out, God said to Solomon, ask of me whatever you desire. And Solomon prayed for wisdom.

And God said, in that you have asked for wisdom, you've asked for a good thing. And I will grant unto you wisdom, but I will also grant unto you that which you did not ask, riches and so forth. And so wisdom, understanding, these are more valuable than gold, treasure, silver.

The highway of the upright is to depart from evil. And he that keeps his way preserveth his soul. Then one that is very familiar, but so often misquoted.

How many times you've heard people say, pride goeth before a fall. That's not a scripture. This is the scripture from which that quotation is taken, but it is misquoted.

Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. So pride goes before destruction. That haughty spirit is going to be brought down.

Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord. He shall lift thee up. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

He that exalted himself shall be abased. Better it is to be of a humble spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud. So a couple of them that deal with pride and humility.

He that handleth the matter wisely shall find good. And whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he. How neat it is to just have your trust in the Lord.

Happy man. You know, you're not really disturbed by the circumstances of life. My trust is in God.

Happy is he. The wise in heart shall be called prudent and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning. Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it, but the instruction of fools is folly.

So understanding with all of thy getting, get understanding, David said to Solomon. It's a wellspring of life to him who has it. Oh God grant to us a better understanding.

I think to have understanding is so important because I think it is the key to compassion. There are many people in many circumstances in which we find it difficult to be compassionate. In operating summer camps, which I did for years and years, you get those kids that are just behavioral problems.

I've had the counselors come in and say, you better get that kid out of my group or I'm going to kill him. He's horrible. You know, he's just screaming at night and always creating problems.

I can't stand that kid. Get him out of there before you have to carry him out. He's going to do something rash.

And so I'll bring the little kid in and I'll sit him down. And of course, you know, he has to go to Chuck and he comes in all trembling and, you know, here he is, you know, like I'm going to be a monster. And I'll go over and buy him an ice cream bar and sit him down and start talking, asking him, you know, about his home, about his background.

The little kid will start unfolding the story. How his dad, he never sees him. Doesn't know where he is.

Comes home, his mom's usually drunk. Different men in the house who yell at him and tell him to get out of there and all this kind of stuff. And man, you get the background stories of some of these little guys and you can't believe it.

It's horrible. And then I'll call the counselor back in and I said, do you realize that, you know, this is what happens when this little kid goes home and this is what the situation is? Oh, wow. You know, we have a whole changed attitude towards it.

Now you understand why he's fighting everybody. Man, this little kid has to fight for survival. And as you understand now the background, now you can have compassion and now you can deal with him and now you can minister to him.

Understanding is such an important thing. Ezekiel said, I sat where they sat. And you really need to sit in another man's place for a while to really understand that other person.

I think one of the keys to relationship is to put yourself in the other person's position. We have so many labor problems. Well, if you could reverse roles, if management could sit where labor is, and if labor could sit where management is, you could remove so many of these labor problems.

The management would understand that this guy has to have a decent wage to live. But also this guy would understand that management has to have a profit to survive. If a wife could sit where her husband sits, and if a husband could sit where his wife sits, how many problems this would solve.

When he comes home at night, just all frazzled from the pressures and the hassles that he's had all day, and sits down and just wants to turn on TV and just, you know, tune out for a while. And he's uncommunicative to his wife. Well, if she could just understand the pressures, the hassles he's had.

On the same token, if he could just be with those kids all day long, and be communicating to them, he'd understand the wife's need to communicate on a different level when he gets home. And I sat where they sat. Understanding, understanding the other person's position is so important, really, to compassion, to love.

It's a wellspring of life to him who has it. Oh, God grant that we might have better understanding. The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

So, the heart is the issue of life. Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, health to the bones. Now, I don't know if the scientists have ever made any relationship between honey and the bones, but it's sweet to the soul.

Honey and health to the bones. What are they? Pleasant words. Oh, just, just cheerful words, pleasant words.

How, how good they are. There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. I think of so many people today who are deceived by false prophets, who are deceived by false religious systems.

They're convinced that they are right. There is a way that seems right unto man, but the end of it, and there's another scripture, every man's way is right in his own eyes. But here, there is a way that seems right, the way of life, you know, the philosophy of life that a man has chosen.

It seems to be right. Eat, drink, and be merry. Tomorrow we die, you know, and you talk to that guy, and he's convinced his philosophy is correct.

But the end thereof, the way of death. He that laboreth, laboreth for himself, for the mouth craves it of him. It's, it's a thing that your labor goes to feed yourself.

An ungodly man digs up evil, and in his lips there is a burning fire. Actually, James says, behold, what a great fire, such a little matter kindleth, and the tongue is, is like a fire, the things that it can inflame. A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer can separate the best of friends.

A violent man entices his neighbor, and leads him into the way that is not good. He shuts his eyes to devise perverse things. Moving his lips, he brings evil to pass.

Now, the hoary head, which is the gray, the hoary frost, the white hair, is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. I think that one of the worst things in the world is a dirty old man. You know, when people get old and gray-headed, they're supposed to all be sweet and kind and loving.

After all, they're, you know, getting towards the end, and, and so you ought to be mellow. And to see a little old gray-haired lady using four-letter words and all that, it's just, it's just wrong, it's out of place. My daughter used to work for a medical supply firm, and she had to deliver some things to this little old lady in the hospital.

And she walked in and saw her and thought, oh, what a sweet-looking little old lady, you know. And then this lady, you know, says, who in the hell are you, and what are you doing here? You know, and just started all this filthy language. And it's just, it's just somehow incongruous, it's just out of place.

The gray hair is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness. The man of his nut. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty.

And he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that takes a city. How important it is. Slow to anger, ruling our own spirits.

Important. The lot is cast into the lap. Now, it's a, the lot is a thing whereby they would oftentimes determine, you know, it's like drawing a straw.

They would cast lots into their lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord, trying to get guidance or direction or to determine, they cast lots. But the real direction and the disposing of the thing comes from God. Better is a dry morsel with quietness than a house full of sacrifices with strife.

Now, the house full of sacrifices refer to the sacrifices. If in that economy of the Judaism, if you decided that tonight you wanted to have roast leg of lamb, to butcher your lamb, you'd take it down to the temple and you bring it to the priest. And you'd say, I want to offer this as a peace offering unto God, a sacrifice.

So, you would butcher the lamb and the priest would take the fat and put it on the fire and burn it. And the smoke and all, of course, smells real good. And that's your portion, God, you know.

And I take, and the priest gets his portion out, puts his hook in, gets his portion. But then the rest of it, I roast and I gather together my family and friends. We have a big, you know, barbecue.

So, the house full of sacrifices actually refers to a house full of meat, which in those days and is becoming more so now a real delicacy. But a dry morsel in quietness, in peace, is better than a whole house full of sacrifices with strife. A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame and shall have a part of the inheritance among the brethren.

The fining pot is for silver, the furnace for gold, but the Lord trieth the hearts. Now, the Bible speaks about God testing our works by fire, God trying our hearts. The testing of our works really, when it comes down to it, is not so much what we have done, but the motive that was behind what was done.

Bible says that all of our works are to be tested to see what sort they are, tested by fire. And those works that can remain after the testing of fire, you'll be rewarded for. But many of the works that we do are as wood, hay, and stubble.

They're going to go up in the flame. I really didn't do them with a pure motive, though the work may be a very commendable thing. Oh, look what he did, you know, and a very commendable thing, yet it was done with a motive of bringing glory or honor to myself.

I was doing it to be a big show. I was doing it so people would know what a great, neat guy I am, you know, and to bring attention or honor to myself. Well, those kind of works are going to be tried by God, for God tries the hearts, and he knows what is in my heart when I am doing something.

All of our works tested by fire. Jesus said, take heed to yourself that you do not your righteousness before men to be seen of man. Don't let that be the motive, the approval, the praise, the recognition of man.

For he said, I say unto you, you have your reward. So even as the fining pot is for silver and the furnace is to burn out the dross and the gold, so it is the Lord who, through the fire, will try our hearts, our works, the manner of sorts they are. A wicked doer gives heed to false lips, and a liar giveth ear to the naughty tongue.

Whoso mocketh the poor reproaches his maker. Now God takes up the cause for the poor. So if you're poor, take heart.

God takes up your cause, and anyone who mocks the poor is reproaching his maker. Has not God chosen the poor of this earth, yet rich in faith? He that is glad at calamity shall not be unpunished. One of the characteristics of this agape love in 1 Corinthians 13 is that it rejoices not in iniquity.

It rejoices not in the calamity. You know, there are some people we just hope something bad happens to them. They deserve it.

And when it happens, you say, oh right, I knew it, you know, they had it coming and all, and yet he that is glad at calamities shall not go unpunished. So be careful of that. It's the wrong attitude.

Children's children, or your grandchildren, are the crown of old men. Amen. They are glory.

And the glory of children, their fathers. Excellent speech becomes not a fool, much less lying lips of prince. Quite a contrast.

A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that has it. Wherever he turns it, he prospers. In other words, it's like a precious stone, wherever you turn it, you see the different colors and facets.

So is a gift, like a precious stone to the man who receives it. He that covers a transgression seeks love. Now the Bible says love covers a multitude of sins.

If you cover it, you're seeking love. But he that repeats a matter can separate friends. A reproof enters more into a wise man than a hundred stripes into a fool.

It's interesting how that in raising children, you find the diversities of personalities, even of your own children. And you learn that there are some kinds of punishment that work for one child, but don't work for another. With some, just a word of reproof, and they're devastated.

Others, you can wail on them and it doesn't touch them. My little grandson Bradley, we were down in Phoenix and we were having Thanksgiving dinner with the family there. And I think it was during prayer that he had been naughty.

So I said, Bradley, Grandpa's ashamed of you. Well, the kid, you was like, I had beaten him. He wailed and cried.

He was broke tears. Grandpa never said anything before to him of a cross or angry nature. And it just devastated the poor little guy to have grandpa disappointed with him.

It just almost destroyed him. Reproof enters more into a wise man's heart and all than a hundred strikes enters into a fool. An evil man seeks only rebellion.

Therefore, a cruel messenger shall be sent against him. Let a bear robbed of her cubs meet a man rather than a fool in his folly. That one I thought was quite interesting.

I wouldn't want to meet a bear robbed of her cubs, but I wouldn't want to meet a fool in his folly either. Whoso rewards evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house. That's quite a problem and it's quite a warning.

Whoso rewards evil for good, evil will never depart from his house. The beginning of strife is as when one lets out water. Therefore, leave off contention before it be meddled with.

Once you start letting the water out, it's awfully hard to stop. Therefore, stay away from contention, the beginning of strife. He that justifies the wicked and he who condemns the just, even they both are an abomination unto God.

Woe unto them who say, who call evil good and good evil. Why? Because it's abomination to the Lord. Wherefore, is there a price in the hand of the fool to get wisdom seeing he hath no heart to it? I love this

one.

A friend loves at all times and a brother is born for adversity. A friend, they love at all times. A brother, he has been born for this time of adversity.

A man who is void of understanding strikes hands and becomes a surety in the presence of his friends. Now, he really warns about this business of striking hands and being a surety for someone else. Evidently, he got burned many times on this.

He that loves transgression, that loves strife, and he that exalts his gate seek destruction. He that hath a perverse heart finds no good and he that has a perverse tongue falls into mischief. He that begets a fool doeth it to his sorrow and the father of a fool has no joy.

Wouldn't it be tragic to have a child that's a fool? He who begets a fool does it to his own sorrow. The father of a fool has no joy. A merry heart does good like a medicine.

You know, more and more they are learning what a healthy thing it is to be happy. The merry heart, when you eat, laughter just gets the right juices going that really help you to digest your food well. A merry heart is just as good for you as medicine.

The relationship between our attitudes and our physical well-being, how that these glands that are excreting the various chemicals into our systems, the good chemicals that come in joy and in happiness, and the other chemicals that are produced in fear or in anger and bitterness or whatever, those chemicals which destroy you. So, without knowing all of the capacities and work of the pituitary and hypothalamus and everything else, Solomon just made an observation that a merry heart is good like a medicine, but a broken spirit can dry up the bones. A wicked man takes a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

Wisdom is before him that has understanding, but the eyes of the fool roam to the ends of the earth. The one is before you, the other is always looking out to the ends of the earth. A foolish son is a grief to his father and bitterness to her that bear him.

Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity. He that hath knowledge spareth his words, and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit. He that hath knowledge spareth his words, how's it go? There was an old owl who lived in the oak.

The more he saw, the less he spoke. The less he spoke, the more he heard. Why can't you be like that old bird? And of course, in the same line as the proverb there in verse 28, even a fool, when he holds his tongue, is counted wise.

And he that keeps his lips shut is esteemed a man of understanding. You know, just sit back and say, hmm, well, you know, feeling, man, he's smart. Through desire, a man having separated himself, seeks and inter-metalleth with all wisdom.

A fool has no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself. When the wicked comes, then comes also contempt and with ignominy reproach. The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook.

It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment. A fool's lips enter into contention and his mouth calleth for strokes. That is, a fool's lips enters into contention and by his mouth, the strokes is really his blows.

A fool's mouth is his destruction. His lips are a snare of his soul. The words of a tail bearer are as wounds and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

He also that is slothful in his work is a brother to him that is a great waster. Now, Solomon has quite a bit to say about the slothful or the lazy person. The man who is lazy, slothful in his work, he's a brother to him that is a great waster.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous runneth into it and is safe. What a strong tower the name Jehovah is.

How many times we have run into it to find safety. The rich man's wealth is his strong city and as a high wall in his own conceit. Before destruction, the heart of man is haughty.

That's again pride goes before destruction or haughty spirit before the fall. Before destruction, the heart of man is haughty and before honor is humility. Humble thyself, he shall exalt thee.

Exalt thyself, he'll abase you. So, the same concept, another proverb. He that answers a matter before he hears it, it's a folly and a shame.

So many times we answer a person before we really understand completely what they're asking for. They're starting to explain their situation and we assume that, oh yes, this is what they want to know and we start giving out all this worthless information. Like the little child who came into her mother one day and said, mother, where did I come from? And the mother thought, oh, oh, this is it, you know, time for the story of the birds and the bees and all.

So, she said, well, honey, you go outside and play for a little while and then come on in and mother will tell you. So, she sent the little girl out and she got into the psych books on how to explain the facts of life to your child and all and boned them all up and then called her little girl in and sat her down and started through and explained to her the whole process of life and procreation, everything else. And she said, well now, honey, do you think you understand? She said, oh yes, mommy.

She said the little girl next door said she came from Missouri and I just wondered where I came from. So, it's possible to answer a matter before you really know what the matter is. And he that answers a matter before he hears it, it's folly and a shame to him.

The spirit of a man will sustain his weakness, but a wounded spirit who can bear, oh, how hard it is when your spirit has been wounded. And yet, if you have a strong spirit, how it can bear the infirmities, the weaknesses, the sicknesses. The heart of a prudent gets knowledge and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

A man's gift makes room for him and brings him before great men. Actually, he's saying that by giving gifts, you can open a lot of doors. It gives a place for you.

It'll bring you before great men. Actually, brought me before Begin last week. I've never been able to see Begin.

We didn't have a gift for him or Israel, so. He that is first in his own cause seems just, but his neighbor comes and searches him. The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parts between the mighty.

So, the castle lot, you're arguing over saying, well, let's cast lots for it. It stops the argument. It's the idea of a flipping a coin, you know.

Same idea, let's flip a coin. Can't agree on something, we'll flip a coin. Heads we will, tails we won't, you know.

And so, it stops the contentions. A brother who is offended is harder to be one than a strong city. So, the idea is don't offend your brother.

And their contentions are like the bars of a castle. You can't get through them. A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth, and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

This is, I think, quite an important part of the next one. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. Whoso findeth a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor of the Lord.

So, Solomon found a thousand of them. He surely learned an awful lot about women. The poor useth entreaties, but the rich answereth roughly.

The poor man has to entreat. Sort of big. A man that hath friends must show himself friendly.

That's basic now. If you want to have friends, you've just got to show yourself friendly. A lot of people complain, we don't have any friends.

Well, you're not showing yourself friendly. If you're going to have friends, you've got to just be friendly. And there is a friend.

There is a special friend who will stick closer than a brother. That, of course, is Jesus Christ. That's an important proverb to me.

A man to have friends has to show himself friendly. But there is one friend who will stick closer than a brother. Better is the poor that walks in his integrity or in honesty than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool.

Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good. And he that hasteth with his feet sinneth. The foolishness of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth against the Lord.

Wealth maketh many friends, but the poor is even separated from his neighbor. If you're rich, you have a lot of people coming around, but you really don't know. It would be hard to be rich and have all of the, you know, the people hanging around because you don't know if they're really your friends or not.

What will happen in adversity? So, you have all of this crazy problem of accepting people because, I don't know, what do you really want? You know, because I'm rich that you're coming around. Do you really love me? And so, they have a hard time. A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaks lies shall not escape.

Many will entreat the favor of the prince, and every man is a friend to him who gives gifts. All of the brethren of the poor do hate him. How much more do his friends go far from him? He pursues them with words, and yet they are wanting to him, the poor man.

He that gets wisdom loves his own soul. He that keeps understanding shall find good. A false witness shall not be unpunished.

We had that one just a little bit ago, verse 5, but then the latter part is just a little different. He that speaketh lies shall perish. Verse 5 says shall not escape.

Very similar, though, Proverbs. Delight is not seemly for a fool, much less for a servant to have rule over princes. Oh man, the worst thing in the world is to give a little power to some people.

They don't know how to handle it. The discretion of a man deferth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression. Much better just to say, oh let it go.

Just to pass over the transgressions. The king's wrath is as a roaring of a lion, but his favor is as the dew on the grass. A foolish son is the calamity of his father, and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

That's like the Chinese torture trick, you know. Or you ever have a leaky faucet, and you're trying to sleep at night, and you hear the boop, boop, boop. House and riches are the inheritance of fathers, and a prudent wife is from the Lord.

Oh, isn't that neat? He that finds a wife finds a good thing. A prudent wife is from the Lord. God is good to us.

Slothfulness, the laziness again, casteth into a deep sleep, and an idle soul shall suffer hunger. He that keeps the commandment keeps his own soul, but he that despises his ways shall die. Then he that has pity upon the poor is lending to the Lord, and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Now, here's an interesting thing. As I told you, God takes up the cause of the poor. And if you have pity on the poor and give to them, then God will repay you.

In other words, it's like loaning to God to give to the poor. That's how much God takes up the cause. And God says, I'll repay you.

So it's a neat thing to give to the poor. You're lending to the Lord. I like to lend to the Lord.

I think it's, I think it's grand to be able to lend to God. How can I do that? By giving to the poor. You're lending to the Lord, and the Lord will repay you.

The Lord will pay you back. Try it. Chasten your son while there is hope, and let not your soul spare for his crying.

Now, kids learn very quickly to start wailing the minute you look at them, you know, so that you won't hit them so hard, or you won't spank them so long, or whatever. And so, they really, they catch on quick, you know, really wail and scream, even when you missed them, you know, because there's a condition for that. So, go ahead and spank your son, really, while there's hope.

Don't, don't spare for his crying. Now, of course, let me say, there is reason. And surely, the Bible does not advocate child abuse.

And there, in these days in which we live, is so much child abuse. It's terrible. To abuse a child has to be one of the worst things that a person could do.

A little child that is so helpless, can't defend himself. I think that we need to be extremely careful in, in our punishment of a child. And I think that when we get to these kind of scriptures, surely, we do not understand them to mean beating a child.

Spanking a child, yes, but not beating a child. There's, there's no value in that ever. A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment.

For if you deliver him, you're just going to have to do it again. A guy with a hot temper, you know, you may get in and help him out. But man, you're just going to have to do it again.

Hear counsel and receive instruction that you may be wise in the latter end. There are many devices in man's heart. Nevertheless, the counsels of the Lord, they shall stand.

In other words, you can't really fight against God or against God's word. Now you may have all kinds of devices. You may be figuring out all kinds of schemes, but ultimately, you know, God's word is going to stand.

There's an old Greek saying, the dice of the gods are loaded. It means you just can't go against God's word and win. God has said certain things and you may scheme and devise all you want, but the word of the Lord is going to stand.

And anytime you try to go against the word of God, you're going to lose. The desire of a man is his kindness, and a poor man is better than a liar. The fear of the Lord tends to life, and he that hath it shall abide satisfied.

He will not be visited with evil. So the fear of the Lord, how important it is reverencing God, it just tends towards life. You'll be satisfied, not visited with evil.

The slothful man, again the lazy man, he hides his hand in his bosom. And this is really lazy. He won't even so much as bring it to his mouth.

Man, that's really lazy. When you get so lazy, you're not going to feed yourself. You've had it.

Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware. And reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge. He that wasteth his father and chases away his mother is a rat.

He's a son that causes shame and brings reproach. Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causes to err from the words of knowledge. An ungodly witness scorns judgment, and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

And judgments are prepared for the scorners and stripes for the backs of fools. In the chapter 20, wine is a mocker. Strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

He will have more to say about wine as we move along in our study next week. Chapter 23. Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contention? Who has babblings? Who has wounds without cause? Who has red eyes? They that tarry long at wine and those that go to seek mixed wine.

And so forth. He talks about them in chapter 23. Wine is a mocker.

Strong drink is raging. Whoever is deceived thereby is not wise. In the New Testament, we are told that in choosing those as overseers in the church, they are not to be given to wine.

In the Old Testament, there were two sons of Aaron who when they had built the altar and were ready to offer sacrifices, the fire of God came down and kindled the altar. And Aaron's two sons grabbed their little incense burners and put coals in them and started in to offer incense before the Lord. And the fire of God came from the altar and consumed the two sons of Aaron.

And when this happened, the Lord said unto Moses, speak unto Aaron and his sons and tell them that they are not to be drinking wine when they come in to offer sacrifices before me. For God does not want service from any kind of a false stimulation. So, there are people today that feel a freedom and a liberty to drink wine.

And again, it's a thing where, you know, you say, well, Jesus turned the water and all this kind of stuff. And you can rationalize and all. But yet, wine is a mocker.

Better that you didn't. The thing is, again, not is it right? Is it wrong? Is it pleasing? Is this what God wants? Strong drink is raging. Whoever is deceived by them is not wise.

Paul said, all things are lawful for me. So, you can prove that it's lawful. But he said, I will not be brought under the power of any.

Does it affect my judgment at all? Does it affect my attitudes? Then I'm being brought under its power. The fear of the king is as a roaring of a lion. Whoso provokes him to anger sins against his own soul.

You provoke a king, provoke a lion, you're in trouble. It is an honor for a man to cease from strife. But every fool will just keep on meddling.

You know, there's sometimes you just don't want to get into trouble. You don't want to get in a brawl. But the guy just keeps kneeling, just keeps going and going and going.

The fool will just keep on meddling. We used to have a great big old English setter, Duke. And he's the kind of dog every boy should have to grow up with, you know.

Of course, we didn't have leash laws in those days. And everywhere I went, Duke was with me. Ride my bike, he'd, you know, be alongside.

Go to school, create worse havoc in school. Through the hallways looking for me and all. And he was big.

He could jump up and his feet would be on my shoulders. He could lick my face. And he was just a boy's dog, great dog.

Those English setters are very independent dogs, and they're sort of a one-owner type of dog. In other words, you call them, you try and pet them, and they're very independent. They have nothing to do with

you.

But their master, you know, they're just devoted. And Duke was just devoted to me. I was his master.

And just, you know, I could whistle anything else, and man, he would come charging. He was just my dog. And we went up to Bass Lake one summer and took Duke with us.

And he created quite a bit of havoc there at Bass Lake. One evening, we were sitting down to eat dinner. Of course, the campfire and so forth, cooked the food and fixing dinner.

And he looked sort of longingly at our food. And then he went over and began to dig in the dirt and pulled up a whole string of sausages that he had ripped off from some camp somewhere. And there was this little terrier dog that was in a camp next to us.

And here Duke, big old thing, and this little terrier was always yipping. And whenever Duke would go running along the lake, this little dog would be nipping at him and yipping. And he just ignored him.

You know, just like a little mouse. And you just, you know, go away, you little runt, you know. And just leave me alone.

But this little dog kept persisting. And one day, Duke was running along the lake, and this little dog was along yipping and nipping and evidently clipped him and made him mad. And he turned around and picked up this little dog in his mouth and just flung him on out into the lake.

But it reminded me of this proverb. It is an honor for a man to cease from strife, but the fool will just keep on meddling until he's into trouble, you know. Now we deal with the sluggard or the slothful, the lazy man again.

The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold. Oh, it's too cold to go out and plow today. Therefore, he'll be begging in the time of harvest and have nothing.

Counsel in the heart of a man is like deep water. This is beautiful. But a man of understanding will draw it out.

Now, a really good counselor will be able to draw you out. Deep within, you know the answer, you know what's right, you know what you should be doing. And a counselor really isn't there to tell you what to do.

He's there to help you understand yourself. Now, it's like a well of deep water. It's down inside.

You know basically what you should be doing. And a man of understanding, a good counselor, can draw it out of you. And that's what wise counseling really is.

It's drawing out the answers within the person. I'm not a good counselor. Don't come to me.

But I just know what they should be doing. Most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness. Isn't that the truth? But a faithful man who can find.

The just man walks in his integrity and his children are blessed after him. The king that sits in the throne of judgment scatters away all of the evil with his eyes. He looks around.

Who can say I have made my heart clean? I am pure from my sin. Any of you say that? I've made my, I'm pure. Who can say it? Now, here's the thing again on the balance is the weights.

Diverse weights and diverse measures. This is, you know, as I said, one to buy and one to sell. Both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord.

If you have different sizes of cups, different weights, they're an abomination to God. Even a child is known by his doings whether his work be pure and whether it be right. You begin to see that even in a child.

The hearing ear, the seeing eye, the Lord hath made both of them. Love not sleep, lest you come to poverty. Open your eyes and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.

Get up. Now, this one is so typical. It is nothing, it is nothing, says the buyer.

But when he has gone his way, he boasts, man, what a deal I got, you know. Yet when you're, you know, you're looking at it, oh, it's, you know, it's an old dog, that's not worth anything. It's nothing.

There is gold and a multitude of rubies, but the lips of knowledge are like a precious jewel. Take his garment that is a surety for a stranger and take a pledge of him for a strange woman. The bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel.

Deceitfulness, you may think it's smart, but man, you're going to grind. Every purpose is established by counsel and with good advice make war. He that goes about as a talebearer reveals secret and therefore meddle not with him that is flattering with his lips.

Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in obscure darkness. An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed. And say not thou, I will recompense evil, but wait on the Lord and he shall save thee.

Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. And so don't you go around saying, well, I'm going to get even. I'll repense him or get even for his evil.

Just give it to the Lord. Now diverse weights are an abomination unto the Lord and a false balance is not good. Man's goings are of the Lord.

How can a man then understand his own way? Isn't that interesting? Man's goings are the Lord. God guides my path. How then can I understand my own way? It is a snare to a man who devours that which is holy and after vows to make an inquiry.

In other words, if you make a vow to God, then don't modify it, just keep it. A wise king scatters the wicked and brings the wheel over them. The spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, searching all of the inward parts of his life.

The spirit of man, God's candle searching within. Mercy and truth preserve the king and his throne is upheld by mercy. And the glory of young men is their strength and the beauty of old men is their gray head.

I don't know where that leaves me. The blueness of a wound cleanses away evil. So do stripes, the inward parts of the life.

Proverbs, interesting little bits of instruction and wisdom. A wise man will take heed to them and will gain in knowledge. Father, we thank you for the instructions in the way of righteousness and truth, that which is good, that which is wholesome, that which is honest.

Help us, Lord, to take to heart these words of instruction. Help us, Lord, to walk in righteousness before thee. Help us to seek peace and to pursue it.

O God, keep us from the wicked way, from the false lips, from the tail bearing. May we in love relate to each other. Committing, Lord, ourselves, the issues of our lives unto thee.

Knowing, Lord, that you are the judge who will make the final disposition of all things. And thus may we rest in thy justice and in thy truth. In Jesus' name, amen.

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