

(Proverbs) ch.21:9 - 22:11

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of wisdom, righteousness, and mercy in our lives, and how our actions have consequences that can either bring peace and prosperity or suffering and hardship.

Duration: 1:00:57

Scripture: Proverbs 22:1-2, Proverbs 22:9-10, Proverbs 22:13-14, Matthew 5:7

Topics: "Christian Living", "Righteousness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a good reputation and testimony in one's locality. He states that it is better to be known for righteousness, humility, and kindness rather than for wealth and material possessions. The preacher also discusses the transformation of a thief who becomes a Christian and highlights the importance of honest work. The sermon also touches on the consequences of unjust tyranny and the need to overcome anger and avoid being a tyrant in any relationship. Additionally, the preacher emphasizes the blessings that come from generosity and the importance of driving out scoffers and promoting peace.

Transcript

The book of Proverbs chapter 21. We turn today to Proverbs 21 and verse 9. It is better to live in a corner of a roof than in a house shared with a contentious woman. Or as the good news Bible says, better to live on the roof than share the house with a nagging wife.

Even though it's not comfortable to live on the roof, particularly when it rains, yet the word of God says even that is preferable to living inside that house if there is a wife there who is constantly nagging. And that's the verse which should be a challenge to all sisters who are married in the church, that they should never allow their home to be like that. We've seen in another chapter in Proverbs how it's a wise woman who builds her house.

And since it's the woman who is in the house more than any other member in a normal family, more than the husband, more than the children, and therefore it's the woman who has a very important part in the building of the atmosphere of a house. And that is to ensure that it is a place where wisdom is found. And nagging is the very opposite of wisdom.

Verse 10 reads in the good news Bible like this, Wicked people are always hungry for evil, and one mark of them is they have mercy on no one. They have no mercy on anyone. And basically what that means is

that if you want to find fault, you can find fault with anyone in the whole world.

We know that the Pharisees found plenty of fault even with Jesus. There was one person who walked on this earth who was absolutely perfect. Even God Almighty could find no fault with him.

He said, I'm well pleased. But the Pharisees were always finding fault even with that person with whom Almighty God found no fault. So you can imagine what religion does to people, that it can make a person so cockeyed and crooked in his thinking that even when God is happy with a man, a Pharisee can find fault with him.

It's easy to find fault if we want to. And that indicates that basically within us there is an unmerciful attitude. When we find ourselves picking faults in others easily, that is a pretty good test, an indication of the fact that we are basically unmerciful in our attitude.

Wicked people are always hungry for evil to find fault. They have mercy on no one. Verse 11 in the Living Bible, it reads, The wise man learns by listening, whereas the foolish man, or the simpleton, can only learn by seeing scorners punished.

There are two ways to learn. One is by hearing what God has to say. And here it says, another is by seeing scorners punished.

And this is why the Word of God says that there is a place for public rebuke in the church. We read in 1 Timothy 5.20 where it says that if anyone sins, continues to sin, he should be rebuked publicly so that others also may fear. There is a place for public rebuke so that the others also, they should be rebuked in the presence of everyone, it says, so that others also may be fearful of sinning.

There is a place for private counsel, but if private counsel is not received by a person and he continues in sin or rebellion, then there is a need for public rebuke so that others will fear to sin in the church. And this verse is also referring to that, that some people learn only when they see others punished. Verse 12 reads like this in the Good News Bible, The righteous one, God, the righteous one, knows what goes on in the homes of the wicked, and he will bring the wicked down to ruin.

The righteous one referred to there is obviously God himself because he is the only one who understands what goes on inside the house of a wicked person. And that teaches us that God knows what goes on in everybody's home. That's what it says there, God, the righteous one, knows what goes on in the different homes.

And he brings the wicked down to ruin. That shows that he is interested to see what goes on in our homes. God's not deceived by the impression people give to others.

He knows what goes on in the different people's homes. Verse 13, he who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor will also cry himself and not be answered. That we read in many portions of scripture.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy. And he who has not shown mercy will not find mercy from God. In the same measure in which we treat others, in the same measure God treats us.

That's one of those verses that tells us that God treats us in the same way that we treat other people in need who come across our path. And that's something we have to bear in mind. When we find that God's treating us in a particular way, it's good for us to examine ourselves and see whether we've treated some

other human being in that same way.

And perhaps we're just reaping in the same measure. God's using the same measure to measure it out to us. And these are verses that should put a fear in our hearts, in our relationships with other human beings in general.

Not just with believers, but with human beings in general. Verse 14 reads in the Good News Bible like this, If someone is angry with you, a gift given secretly will calm him down. That's really a very practical exhortation.

That can happen even in our relationship with different people. That you find that someone has sort of cooled off towards you for some reason or the other. Obviously, when somebody cools off, he's carnal or soulish.

He's not spiritual. No spiritual person cools off towards any other brother. That's clear.

But carnal people, babies who don't have victory, can sometimes cool off in their relationship towards us. Even in the church, because there are babies in the church. There are carnal people in the church, and they can tend to cool off in various ways.

And then it says here, a practical way, if you really want to overcome evil with good, is a gift. Given secretly means not publicly. Of course, the person knows that you gave it, but you don't embarrass them by giving it to him publicly.

In fact, all gifts should be given secretly. But a gift given in secret can calm him down, can change his attitude. Because all people love gifts.

Particularly worldly people and carnal Christians and babies all love gifts. So when such people receive a gift, they tend to change their attitude. This is one of those instances of using the mammon of unrighteousness to make friends for ourselves.

So that we can have someone in those eternal habitations. Verse 15 The execution of justice is joy for the righteous, but is terror to the workers of iniquity. A righteous person is always happy when justice is done.

Because he loves righteousness, and he loves justice. And this verse is really just referring to that. But the execution of justice is a terror to the workers of iniquity.

Verse 16 A man who wanders from the way of understanding will rest in the assembly of the dead. And so there is an assembly called the assembly of the dead. And that's obviously Babylon.

Spiritual Babylon. And when a person wanders away from the way of understanding, means the way of wisdom. Which is called by many names in the word of God.

It's called the path of the righteous. It's called the way of holiness in Isaiah 35. It's called the new and living way in Hebrews chapter 10.

And it's called here the way of understanding. The way of wisdom in the book of Job. Many titles, but it's all the same way.

And a man who wanders from this way. Who does not take heed to the voice of the spirit. That tells him when he drifts to the left or right.

He will end up in the assembly of the dead. Verse 17 He who loves pleasure will become a poor man. And he who loves wine and oil will not become rich.

And that refers to becoming a slave to material things. And to food and drink. And to a comfortable easy life that involves no self-denial.

We can apply that spiritually. And say that it means that self-denial is the way to spiritual wealth. That it is one who denies himself.

Who really becomes spiritually rich. And it also teaches us that these things which God has created. Are things to be used.

But not to be mastered by. There are many pleasures we can enjoy. But here it speaks about those who love pleasure.

Not those who have pleasure. God gives us pleasure in many many things in life. He has given us richly all things to enjoy.

But it's a question of loving it. It says in the last days men will be lovers of pleasure. Rather than lovers of God.

And it speaks about loving good food. It's not a question of eating good food. But loving good food.

That means the person has been mastered by it. Paul said all things are lawful. But I will not be mastered by anything.

1 Corinthians 6.12 So that's what it's referring to here. That we must not allow any of these things on the earth to master us. If we want to be spiritually rich.

Verse 18 Reads like this in the Good News Bible. The wicked bring on themselves the suffering that they've tried to cause to godly people. To good people.

In other words What we considered in an earlier study That The What the wicked does. Verse 7 in the Living Bible. Boomerangs on him.

In other words It's like the Old Testament story of Haman. He prepared a gallows To hang Mordecai. And God turned the tables In such a way that finally Haman himself Hung on it.

And we can apply that to ourselves. That When we Seek To do something which is not good To another You may find later on in life Sometimes years later. That very thing Comes back upon us.

For example Here's a young person Who in his zeal And lack of wisdom Criticizes An older brother Or even a servant of God For something he sees And he doesn't agree with it He says it's all Maybe he criticizes them for being lukewarm or Carnal or something like that And God Made a record of that And maybe Five years later That person Will find himself In exactly the same situation Which he criticized Somebody five or ten years Ago And then if he has years To hear He will hear the spirit saying Now you are reaping what you have sown We bring on ourselves The suffering That they try to cause to good

people And criticism of another person Can Be included here That's why it's Always safest Not to be a busybody In other people's matters To leave them To themselves Let God take care of them Why

do we want to Criticize or find fault With someone in something One day it will come back on us A young person can Criticize for example The way someone else brings up his children Ten years later When this man himself is married and he's got a small Whole lot of children you may find that his children are Much worse Than the children he criticized in some other family That's just a reaping Of what he sowed in his younger years It's very important that we don't sow Such stupid things In our younger years And reap a harvest of sorrow and misfortune Ten years later Because these are laws of God That the suffering we cause To good people In any way Maybe you hurt someone by words you speak And the person's a good person God can't overlook it One day It'll take its course This boomerang and

ten years later it comes back It's really true And that's why we Need to radically repent Of these things And I've come to see more and more That the proof of repentance is that I don't do it again If I do it again That proves that I didn't really repent I just said words to God And very often we have found We hear a message on something like this And we say ya lord I'm sorry for all that I've done in the past And the next year I go and do the same thing all over again Which shows that I didn't really repent I just felt sorry that this boomerang May hit me five years later But I wasn't really convicted Of the guilt of causing Suffering to some good person By something I said or did We have to be very careful That we don't cause Any suffering to others By the words We speak They'll

boomerang on us One day or the other Verse 19 Verse 19 Here is a further step From verse 9 We commenced in verse 9 With this man running off to the roof But now We find that the wife has chased him To the roof as well And now he's left the house all together And he's gone out to the desert It's better to live out in the desert Than with a nagging Complaining wife I mean that's a sad thing That the poor man didn't get peace on the roof either And had to Go off even from there So That's really something which A sister should take seriously It's not that we're against women Or that Solomon was against women Or Paul was against women A lot of people have got these ideas The Holy Spirit Speaks about a nagging wife And it's interesting He never speaks about a nagging husband There may be a few

exceptions like that But generally speaking It's a nagging wife Who is referred to more You know drip drip drip drip drip Spoken of in another chapter This possibility of Making life difficult For your husband at home And the poor man seeks for peace Somewhere And some corner of the house May not be a desert Because there are no deserts nearby But it may be that he goes off to some other place Or Wants, dreads to come back home Or something like that It must never be like that Dear sisters When you're married You've got the responsibility To make your home such a place That your husband just longs to Shoot back home And your children just long to Shoot back there Because that is the most wonderful place They can ever be in Think of building a house like that And it is by words

Spoken of A nagging, complaining wife It says in the Good News Bible And nagging means to constantly be after your husband For some little thing here And some little thing there And it's not a big major thing Usually something here, something there And complaining about this and complaining about that Now It's a peculiar Temptation that comes to sisters To married women And therefore you need to ask God for grace To overcome it Say Lord, make me that wise woman Who can build my house So that it can be a place of peace You know Jesus said When you enter a house He told his disciples First of all say Peace Be to this house That is the fruit of wisdom And that's A tremendous responsibility And the book of Proverbs has much to say About women, in fact the book of Proverbs Closes with a whole

Almost a whole chapter On the virtuous woman Chapter 31 And There is something there That sisters can take very seriously That you never turn your home Into a place where people Don't feel happy to be in, not even for one day Of your life Take that seriously Verse 20 It says In the living bible The wise man saves for the future But the foolish man Spends Whatever he gets And We can apply that In two ways We can apply that In relation to Earthly things The wise man saves For the future but the foolish man Spends whatever he gets The wise man thinks Well I'm not God It says in the book of James chapter 4 That I don't even know what's going to happen Tomorrow It says you can't even say tomorrow I will go to that city And I will do this business and come back It says you must say if the Lord

wills For we do not know what one day Can bring forth, even for believers And therefore A wise man thinks, yeah I may have some Need tomorrow Now either I must have faith That God will provide my need Or if my faith is not that high Because God has allotted to each person a different measure Of faith and he may not have allotted To you and me the measure of faith That he allotted to George Muller or Hudson Taylor We got to humble ourselves And say Lord I don't have that measure of faith Well maybe I need to Save a little so that When my time of need next month I don't have to Rush to the brothers and Sisters for help or go to some Money lender to borrow or Sit there expecting Somebody to come to me with a gift All of these things are unworthy of a Christian That's because He's been

foolish because when he got Something he spent it all And that can be a foolish Thing to do when I don't have any Forethought about the future That I spend whatever I get I spend it all Then I have to depend On gifts and become a sort of A dignified beggar After some time because I'm foolish I don't know how to manage my Expense Within my income Well Maybe I'm foolish in the sense that I compare Myself with other people It says that in 2nd Corinthians 10-12 Those who compare themselves with others are foolish And I say I want to live like that person And the end result is I can't manage it and I Am in debt But the wise man Saves for the future And so we can say that wisdom Is to be frugal That is not to waste Unnecessarily Anything That is wisdom So that we can Have something in our time

of need And also We can apply that spiritually Of course we understand The meaning of that like the Wise virgins Who had Reserves of oil That kept them ready to meet the bridegroom When he came Verse 21 Here it says He who Pursues righteousness And loyalty Finds life Righteousness And honor That is very similar to what Jesus said In Matthew 6-33 Seek the kingdom of God First and his righteousness And all these other things Will be added to you And those who hunger and thirst after righteousness Will be Satisfied In other words it's those who pursue after it Who get it If you don't pursue after it It's not going to come to anyone who sits back In an easy chair expecting God to give it to him Verse 22 A wise man Scales the city of the mighty And brings down The stronghold In which they

trust And that Basically means what it says elsewhere In the book of Ecclesiastes that wisdom Is better Than strength And that has an application to many Many areas in life That Wisdom Is able to overcome Mighty walls That people have built You know there's a verse in scripture which says That a brother offended Is harder to be Than a Strong city And But a man of wisdom Knows how to scale The walls of that city How to Win this Offended brother back But Very few people have wisdom They usually try to hammer against The walls and it only ends up In that brother making the walls a little stronger It's not by Strength, it's not necessarily By rebuke But by goodness And there We see What a need there is for wisdom And all of us To be able to scale The city of the mighty It is by good That we

overcome evil Wisdom is better than strength If you have a wife Who is offended What's the solution to that?

She's not going to talk to you Well You can handle strength with strength Tackle strength with strength
And say alright, I won't talk to you either Fine, we'll see how long it lasts And What is that? That is only
folly The woman's a fool there and the man's a greater fool No What he needs there is wisdom To scale
This wall That his wife has built between Him and her How can I scale this with wisdom?

Strength won't do it Wisdom Is better than strength, or it can be the other way Think of a wise woman Who
can scale the wall That her husband builds That has many applications A wise man Can scale the city of
the mighty And bring down the stronghold Wonderful And build a relationship Verse 23 Reads like this in
the living bible Keep your mouth closed And you'll stay out of trouble That's really true A lot of people get
into trouble Just because they open their mouth Keep your mouth shut And you'll stay out of a lot of
trouble So much trouble I mean just think of, all of us can look back In our past life And I think all of us
have experienced In this area Think of the different situations Where if he had just kept our mouth shut
Some problem Would never have arisen But because we went ahead and opened our mouth It caused
more trouble And there Particularly when we are young And there we need to see Even a fool can be wise
If he just keeps his mouth shut What a lot of problems we cause Just because we cannot Keep our mouth
shut We lose our testimony We mess up things We spoil things We make a mess of things Just because
we don't keep our mouth shut Keep your mouth shut And you can stay out of a lot of trouble Now the thing
is, we can hear this But we have to be gripped by it Otherwise We'll still go ahead and do the same old
thing God's intention is at least that we learn from our past follies So that we know in future Particularly
when we are in unrest About something My dear brothers and sisters We don't make laws in the church
But I'll give you one simple principle To live by When you are in unrest Keep your mouth shut Old or young
Until you have come to rest Even if it takes one week Keep your mouth shut Particularly when you are in
the presence of Somebody Who is causing that unrest to you Very important It's a simple principle But We
haven't followed it in the past And gotten into a lot of trouble And ruined our life At least we can do that in
the future Verse 24 Reads like this In the Good News Bible Show me a conceited person And I will show
you Someone who is arrogant Proud And Inconsiderate A conceited person Is a person who thinks Too
much of himself Who's got higher thoughts About his own spirituality and about his own worth Than is
really the case Which is the case with most people And That Conceit Is what makes him inconsiderate
About the Feelings and needs of other people One of the most important Laws or principles For good
relationships In the church And for wisdom in learning how to Live with one another and get along with
One another is the simple Principle of Consideration Consideration for Others.

Consider The feelings of that person When you speak Like that Why did we find it so difficult to be
Considerate It's because of conceit That's what this verse says It's conceit that makes us Inconsiderate
Towards the feelings of other people When we are, there's a certain pride In us And that's why we don't
have light On being considerate About others For example when a few people are sitting together And one
person dominates the conversation And he speaks the most Usually you can find that That is the most
conceited person in that group Because He has no consideration for others And that is a folly that All
young people should get rid of It's one thing if it's someone who's got wisdom Very often you find That
there's a Tremendous amount of lack of consideration That's just a small area but there can be many
other areas Where we can be inconsiderate Towards the conveniences of other people We can think only
in terms of our own Convenience and that can be Purely a result of conceit I think I am so Important that
other people's Convenience must be secondary to mine That is conceit It's good to have small thoughts
About ourselves where we think More about the other person's convenience Than mine That is humility
Verse 25 And 26 We can read that together The desire of the sluggard Or as the good news bible says A
lazy man who refuses to work Is only killing himself All he does Is think about what he would like to have A

righteous man However can give And give generously Now it is the will of God That All of us Become righteous Though we may not begin there We may begin Without being righteous We do not know how to give We are dependent on other people giving us But we should never think that we should Live there all our life We have to move out of that Think for example of this verse In Ephesians 4.28 which says Ephesians 4.28 It speaks about a thief who is converted When a thief Gets converted and comes Into the church, what should he do?

Now usually Thieves are poor people There are some rich thieves but Most of the thieves are poor people Who are stealing because of their poverty And it says here Let him who steals, Ephesians 4.28 Steal no longer But rather let him work Working With his own hands what is good Not only So that he can meet his own need But that he may have something to share With someone else Who has need, in other words When a person comes into the church Even if he started off as a thief His aim should be Not only to give up stealing But to So Take care of his own financial need But go beyond that To be able to also give To someone else who has less than him That should always be our goal And if we say Lord that is what scripture says I want to make that My goal in my life Then we will find that We experience that blessing Which Jesus said in Acts 20.35 It's more blessed to give than to receive Speaking also in this verse about diligence Necessary for that Verse 27 The sacrifice of the wicked Is an abomination How much more When he brings it With an evil intent In other words When there is The Lord hates it When wicked men offer him sacrifices Especially if they are doing it from evil motives In other words It's a hypocritical sacrifice The Lord hates The sacrifices of wicked people in any case But particularly When it comes with an evil motive When we do something With a wrong motive Even if there is a sacrifice in it You see I can do something for example in the church Which is a sacrifice And yet I can do the whole thing With some selfish Motive Of my own gain In the whole thing And the Lord hates it It looks like a sacrifice That I have made.

The other brothers and sisters See what I am doing and they Really think I have sacrificed But the Lord who sees The inner motive and all the hidden things Sees that there is some Corrupt motive Even in that sacrifice Which has gained the Esteem of so many other brothers And sisters.

The Lord hates it When people Offer him sacrifices With wrong motives Verse 28 The Good News Bible says The testimony of a liar Is not believed But the word of someone Who thinks matters through Is Accepted We must not Get A testimony That we are not truthful I just want to say It is very easy To get that testimony If we don't hate lying In every form In our lives The word of God says in Colossians chapter 3 Don't tell lies to one another In other words it is possible To tell a lie to a brother in the church Because I want to give him the impression that I am spiritual In some particular situation I say something which is not 100% True. I have given him a wrong impression Because I want him to think I am spiritual And if I tell him the real truth it will put me in a Bad light. It is so easy to Tell a lie.

So easy And that shows That I don't love the truth It is far better That I become small in that brother's eyes And love the truth Rather than that I remain big in his eyes And God sees me as a liar Yeah That happens a lot And if we really are honest We will see what a fantastic Amount of lying there is Even in our conduct With one another If you haven't seen that yet brother And sister I just say you are not judging yourself sufficiently Maybe that is why you haven't seen it But when we judge ourselves We discover what a fantastic amount Of lying there can be in our Conduct and in the words That we say to one another In the church And here is where we need a radical cleansing From all Lying Because The testimony of a liar Is not believed Whatever testimony I give Cannot have power If I have not cleansed myself from lying But the word Of someone who thinks matters through Is accepted. The man who listens to the truth His word

Will be accepted Who loves the truth. Verse 29 Reads like this in the living Bible.

An evil man Is stubborn But a godly man Will Reconsider And that's a good verse to think of That To be stubborn about some decision We have taken or Something we have done To say that is right Can sometimes be the mark Of an evil man But a godly man is one who is humble Enough to say I'm not god I may have been mistaken Like Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 Verse 12. I don't know myself Fully. I don't know Everything perfectly Now brother I think about what you Say.

Maybe I Shouldn't have said that Maybe I shouldn't have done that That must always be The attitude. A godly Man is willing to reconsider He makes His way sure it says here That means he tries to Find out which is the perfect way And every man Who is not perfect Is willing To reconsider his way. And none of us Are perfect.

To press on To perfection means to find that Perfect middle path And to say ya I may be drifting Maybe half a degree only but Maybe a little off from the center And I just want to Think about what that person said Sometimes Maybe you got a A hard letter from someone who hates you Ya take it Before the lord because sometimes our enemies Tell more truths about us Than our friends. You know that Even those Who speak straight to us. Our enemies Can sometimes tell us more truths About us than our friends and it's good to think Is there some truth in that Let me think about it before God Verse 30 Good News Bible reads like this Human wisdom And brilliance And insight They are all of no help If the lord Is against you Think of that All our human Wisdom.

All our brilliance And all our insight All of it is of Absolutely no use If the lord is Against us And we know that According to the word of God God is basically against The proud God is against the proud It says in 1 Peter 5 And then if I am Proud then all my Brilliance and cleverness and wisdom And everything even spiritual Wisdom and brilliance is just No use if God is against me It's far better to have God on my side Than all this human cleverness And everything else.

Verse 31 Here it Speaks about our dependence on God The horse Is prepared for the day of battle But victory Belongs to the lord It says here You can get the horses ready for battle but It's the lord alone who can give you the victory And that's Related to what we see in Verse 29 If you turn to 2 Chronicles chapter 14 2 Chronicles 14 verse 9 to 11 It's a very beautiful Story there that can be an Encouragement to us There was a king in the old testament called Asa And Asa was a man who started off Very well but he did not End very well When he started off He trusted in the lord We read in 2 Chronicles 14 verse 9 That against Asa The Ethiopian army came out against him With an army Of one million men Think of that 10 lakhs people came to fight Against him And 300 chariots And Asa Went out to

meet him Verse 11 Asa called to the lord his god and said Lord There is no one besides thee to Help in the battle So help us oh lord for we trust in thee And it says here In verse 12 the lord routed These one million Ethiopians These things Are written for our encouragement That one million people May come against us If we humble ourselves at that time And say lord I don't trust in my horses I don't trust in my chariots I don't trust in my influence Or my power or my ability I trust Only in you I ask you lord To help me The god who helped Asa Will help us too But the same man Asa a little later In chapter 16 We read that When the king of Israel Came against him Chapter 16 Asa This man didn't have one million people Much less than one million But this time Asa Did not seek the lord for

help It says he went and asked for help From the king of Syria And then There was a prophet who came to the king In verse 7 and said Because you relied On the king of Syria And you did not rely on the lord

Therefore You will not be able to overcome this army Were not the Ethiopians That's the one we saw in chapter 14 An immense army One million people And yet because you relied on the lord He delivered them into your hand and here is that verse Which we are all familiar with It comes in this context Because the eyes of the lord run to and fro Throughout the whole earth To strongly support Those whose heart is completely his And when you read the context You understand what it means to have our heart completely his That means those whose hearts are completely Relying on his help Alone And

who are not depending on human help But who depend on the lord But here you have acted foolishly And so from now on You will have wars And Asa became more stupid It says he was angry with the prophet And just put him in prison That doesn't solve the problem That you get angry with the man who tells you the truth But that's how many people even today That's what the fate of many preachers They go up to someone And tell them the truth And the man gets angry with them Instead of judging themselves But there is a lesson there It's possible to start out like Asa Trusting the lord in difficult situations And then after some time To move on to the place where We lean upon The arm of flesh And there is a curse on that Those who lean upon the arm of flesh Now we move to chapter 22 Verse 1 The

living bible If you must choose Take a good name rather than great riches For to be held In loving esteem is better than silver and gold It's far better To have a good testimony In your locality Than to be Known as a rich man in your locality It's far better to have A testimony in your locality that you are Righteous, upright, humble Good, loving, kind, pure Rather than To have a testimony in your Locality that you are wealthy And you have this that and the other That's basically what that verse means Verse 2 The rich and the poor Have a common bond The lord is the maker of them all Which teaches us that basically All human beings Are equal in god's eyes And if in my thinking I despise any human being Either because of his community Or his background or his education or his intelligence

Or his culture or his barbarian Barbarianism or anything like that That shows that I have not understood The first thing about god That god is the one who has made all people If I haven't understood that first thing There's not much hope that I'll understand Anything else about god It's one of the first things I need to understand is that god Has made all people and he's made them all equal There are these Differences of wealth and intelligence and color And culture but in god's eyes They're all the same and we need to look at every single Human being Particularly when we look at the poor people Those who are far Beneath us in social level I'm not talking about our neighbors They are usually around the same social level I'm talking about the people who are very much lower than us Very

much lower Much lower levels of society To see them as Equal to us in god's eyes Now that's something we must Always keep in mind That person may be poor I may be rich But in god's eyes I'm just We're just the same and one day When we stand before the judgment Seat there will be None of us will be on a higher level than the other person All are going to stand on the same level ground It's good to keep that in mind always Verse 3 The prudent Sees the evil and hides himself But the simple go on And are punished And that teaches us that wisdom Is to Think ahead And to consider If I go this way There can be some Snare of the devil there He sees the evil ahead And he Avoids it Whereas the simple person He just goes on Simply And he falls into the pit Which the devil has made Jesus said be

shrewd As serpents To think ahead And to see what will happen if I continue Along this way What will happen if we do this That is wisdom Forethought is wisdom The wise man Sees the evil And avoids it That can have many applications In many areas of practical life And also our spiritual life To ask God to help us to see What will happen if we go like this What will happen if I bring up my children like this What will

happen if I run my home like this What will happen if I continue Along this way in my office Doing this or in this type of conversation What will happen if I continue this friendship With this particular person Where is it going to finally lead to And then The wise person is who thinks all about that And takes precautions now itself But the simple person is one who says Ya the

Lord will take care of it He's got spiritual language for all this And goes ahead and falls Verse 4 The reward of humility And the fear of the Lord Are riches, honor and life We can say that those are the two things Which are the most important Qualities For the soil In which the fruit of the spirit Is to grow The fruit of the spirit Is love, joy, peace, long suffering Gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance And in the fruit of the spirit We don't see humility And we don't see the fear of God Why is that?

Because humility and the fear of God Are the soil On which the fruit grows Love is the greatest fruit But it grows in the soil Of Humility And the fear of God We can say they are the two most Important qualities For the soil in which the fruit of the spirit Is to grow By humility And the fear of the Lord Are all spiritual riches All spiritual honor And all spiritual life We have to cultivate These qualities This is to dig up the fallow ground Is to humble ourselves To fear God So that the fruit of the spirit Can grow forth in our life Verse 5 It speaks about something else That can grow up If we don't have this type of soil Thorns And snares Are in the way of the perverse You know Jesus said In the parable of the sower About the man in whose ground the seed Brought forth fruit But then thorns grew up Thorns can't grow up In a soil that has Humility and the fear of God No, it's because of a lack of humility And a lack of the fear of God That these thorns grow up The lusts for so many things The deceitfulness of riches The cares of this world And crush and crowd out The fruit that God is seeking To grow in our lives Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse But he who guards himself Will be far from them That means a person has to guard himself In order to stay far away From these thorns He has to pull out the weeds Verse 6 Train up a child in the way he should go And when he is old He will not depart from it It doesn't tell us here How many years A person is a child Because it doesn't say Train up a young man It says train up a child And I would think It's probably referring to the first 12 years Of A person's life The first 12 years A person is a child, after that He is growing up to be a young man Or a young woman But those 12 years God gives to us as parents To Train up To discipline To teach, to correct, to rebuke To punish To encourage, to strengthen To challenge And to train that child In the way that he should go And when he is old What we have labored In all those years Just like the evil that the wicked does Boomerangs on him This that we have sowed Will one day, even if the child Drifts away for a while, come Finally It will come back And bring that person To the Lord.

So that's very important Those early years Of a person's life A father and mother who have no time For their children in those First 12 years to teach them the way Of the Lord, will leave it to the Sunday school to do that Or the church will do that Yeah, they will Have to reap the consequences In later years And that's the sad thing we see today So often, how When you have Situations where Parents are too busy Sometimes father and mother are all out to work And child is alone at home They are busy making money But money is not what That child needs in the first 12 years It can do with a little less It can do with a Mother who has time To instruct That boy or the girl In those early years Yeah, that's something we need to think of Those of us Who have growing children That we never think

That time spent with our children in those first 12 years Is a wasted time at all It's the most important investment We can ever make in all of our life As parents Verse 7 The rich rules over the poor And the borrower Becomes the lender's slave Now that's basically what Is the result of getting into debt When we get into debt It says we become a slave And it's not God's will That any of us should become slaves And that's why the word of God says In Romans 13.8 Oh no man anything And if we are not wholehearted To

take seriously that exhortation That we should never be in debt Oh no man anything Then we shall remain slaves Because it says here the borrower Is a slave to the lender Then I'm a slave and I have to cry out to God And say Lord All my spirituality and all my knowledge Is just a

lot of garbage as long as I'm a slave Help me to be free from this slavery And never to be in this slavery At any time of my life Let no one deceive himself here Keep out of debt There's a sad story we read in 2nd Kings Chapter 4 You know the story of that widow who came to Elisha And you know Elisha told her To go and get All borrowed vessels from all her neighbours And to pour the little oil that she had But what was her problem I mean leaving aside the miracle What was her problem Her problem was That her husband had died And left her in Debt And he was a preacher Think of that He was a man who spoke the word of God And he left his wife in debt It was a shameful thing to do You know that's We should never do such a thing That's why it's very important That we never get into debt at all

Verse 8 In the living bible It says The unjust tyrant Will wreak Disaster And his reign of terror Shall end We can see that Happening in many countries around us in the world In Asia and Africa Where some unjust tyrant Dominates The people And then finally he is assassinated And his reign of terror Ends Now We are not in that danger Because none of us are going to rule any countries But we can apply this To ourselves In areas where we Tend to be tyrants Towards somebody else It says here That The rod of his fury Will perish And that means We can look at it like this That a time can come If I haven't overcome my anger In my younger days A time can come When I am older Physically weaker, mentally weaker Emotionally weaker And this anger Just overpowers me And it frustrates me Because my

body Is not strong enough Like it was in my younger days I could explode in anger Get people to do what I wanted Like a father who is a tyrant over his children He hasn't overcome his anger He can be old and His body becomes weak But he hasn't overcome his anger yet There can be a frustration there That makes him irritable That hinders his own spiritual life But it's good to overcome anger Quickly Quickly And it's good not to be a tyrant Over anyone, not over our children Not over servants, over no one To learn to overcome Our anger Verse 9 He who is generous will be blessed For he gives some of his food To the poor That's a truth we've already considered On a number of occasions Just notice that the book of Proverbs Repeats some truths again and again And again and again For emphasis

It's more blessed to give than to receive There's a blessing in being generous Verse 10 Drive out the scoffer The proud man And contention will go out Even strife and dishonor will cease Get rid of that conceited person And then there'll be no more Arguments or quarreling or strife There must be no place For a proud person In the church of the living God All strife Comes through proud people And the preaching of the word Must be of such a nature Always in the church That there is no place For proud conceited people To have any Place there And that's how we keep the church free From strife Verse 11 Two things Purity of heart And graciousness of speech Makes the Lord The King Our friend Out of the abundance of the heart The mouth speaks, Jesus said And when there is Purity in the heart And

graciousness In our speech The Lord the King Will be

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