

(Proverbs) ch.24:1 - 34

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of wisdom, humility, and self-judgment in building a strong spiritual house and living a life that pleases God.

Duration: 1:00:47

Scripture: Proverbs 24:1-6, Proverbs 24:10-12, Proverbs 24:15-16, Proverbs 24:19-22, Proverbs 24:30-34, Luke 21:34

Topics: "Wisdom", "Worldliness"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the dangers of worldliness and the importance of wisdom in building our lives and communities. He warns against the gradual intoxication of our hearts by worldly desires, which can lead to spiritual downfall, and stresses that true wisdom, understanding, and knowledge are essential for establishing a strong foundation in our lives. Poonen highlights the need for self-examination, especially during adversity, to reveal our true spiritual condition and encourages believers to seek wise counsel and avoid the pitfalls of envy and partiality. He concludes by urging the congregation to learn from the mistakes of others and to remain vigilant against the spirit of rebellion and vengeance.

Transcript

In our last study we were looking at the last few verses of chapter 23, verses 29 to 35, which are sort of a warning against drink. We mentioned how most of us may not have much of a problem with relation to alcoholic drink, but Jesus spoke in Luke chapter 21 about our hearts being drunken, verse 34, Luke 21, 34. And the heart gets drunk with worldliness and many believers get drunk in this way, as spoken by Jesus in Luke 21, 34.

The drunkenness of worldliness, a drunkenness that comes through a little sip at a time, slowly, slowly, slowly, the heart gets weighed down with drunkenness. And we can apply those verses, verses 29 to 35, in relation to that type of drunkenness too. That type of drunkenness, a little sip of worldliness at a time can gradually lead, as it says in verse 32, at the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper.

And your eyes will see strange things, and your mind utter perverse things, and so on. And yet, though a person experiences this, yet he seems to still want to go for another drink, as it says in verse 35, after it all. Now we come to chapter 24, verses 1 and 2. It says here, do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them.

For their minds devise violence, and their lips talk of trouble. As the Good News Bible says, causing trouble is all that they ever think about. Every time they open their mouth, someone is going to be hurt.

And it's very interesting that when it speaks about an evil person, it speaks about the way he uses his mouth, and the words he speaks. See, as human beings, the children of Adam, our understanding of the word an evil man is someone who is out to kill people, or cheat people, or harm people in some way. But the Word of God says that a person who uses his mouth to say something bad about another person is an evil person.

The thing is, our conscience is not sensitive enough, sin has not become exceedingly sinful, that we think of such a person as an evil person. Most believers don't think of a gossip as an evil man in the same category as a murderer. Why is it? Because sin has not become exceedingly sinful in their eyes.

That's why we think of a murderer as an evil person, but one who speaks evil about others with his tongue is not an evil person. And there we need to see that sin has to become exceedingly sinful in our eyes if we are to see, to have the same understanding as God's Word. It says don't be envious of evil men, don't desire to be with them, don't try to make friends with them.

Don't envy a man who has certain advantages that we don't have because we seek to follow the Lord. And don't try to make friends with them. Verses three and four.

There are three words here, wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, that are used in these two verses. And we are told how a house is built, and that can refer to God's house, the church, and our homes. By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established.

By knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches. And there we see that the most important requirement to build a home or a church is not knowledge. We can say that knowledge is like the furniture.

You put in the furniture after the house is built. And that's what we see in verse four, that knowledge is needed. We need a knowledge of God's Word, but that is to fill the rooms after the rooms have been constructed, with all precious and pleasant riches, which includes tables and chairs and beds and all that.

And we can say that a church which is built just with Bible knowledge, without that wisdom which comes through the fear of God, is like a man who's got all his furniture out on an empty plot of ground, and he's living there. No rooms, no roof, no walls. But he's got all the furniture, he's keeping on increasing the furniture.

And that's the danger of increasing in knowledge without wisdom. It's a very beautiful picture. Think of a man trying to live in an open plot of ground, constantly increasing the furniture in his house, and trying to buy expensive paintings and various things to beautify the house.

The whole thing is exposed to the sun and the rain. It's just as stupid to increase in knowledge without corresponding increase in wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and it says here, by wisdom a house is built.

The most important thing, my own personal life, that's another house that we're building. That also, the first requirement is wisdom. And that is, we can say, God's nature.

We read in 2nd James 3.17 that wisdom, the characteristics of wisdom described there, the seven characteristics are all a description of God's nature. And by wisdom a house is built. By understanding, we can say that understanding refers to an understanding of God's ways.

God's ways. We read in Psalm 103, He made known His ways to Moses. To partake of God's nature, that's wisdom.

Understanding is to know God's ways, to understand God's ways, how He works, and then knowledge is God's word. So we can say that's referring there to God's nature, God's ways, and God's word. And thus, a house is built, it's established, and the rooms are filled with precious, pleasant riches.

When we have that balance of all these, then we can say we have a house. It's got walls, roof, floor, and furniture also inside, and then that's a place that can be used by people to live. Verses 5 and 6. Here we read, let me read it in the Living Bible, A wise man is mightier than a strong man.

Wisdom is mightier than strength. Don't go to war without wise guidance. There is safety in many counselors.

When you're young, you're strong, not wise. And in that strength of zeal, in the strength of youth and zeal, a lot of foolish things can be done if wisdom is not there. By young, I don't mean young just in age, young spiritually.

But it is wisdom that is mightier than strength. And all that zeal of young people is not as good as the wisdom of a mature saint. And so, don't go to war.

Don't try to proceed in this Christian life, which is a war, without wise guidance. And if we ourselves are not wise, then we need to seek for wise guidance from others in whom we have confidence that they are wise. That's a very important principle in the church.

There's not just a question of accepting somebody who claims to be an elder or thinks he's an elder, but rather that we have confidence that someone has got wisdom, such a person we would go to for guidance. There is safety in many counselors. It's good to humble ourselves and go and seek advice from those whom we believe and have confidence that they have more wisdom than us.

That's the way to conduct a warfare. Verse 7, I'll read that in Good News Bible, Wise saints are too deep for a fool or a stupid person to understand. He has nothing to say when important matters are being discussed.

This phrase, in the gate, is an Old Testament expression which indicates the counsel of the elders. The elders always used to sit in the gate of a city and he does not open his mouth and the gate means he does not have anything to say, anything valuable to say, of course. He's got a multitude of words by which his voice is known as a fool, but he's got nothing important to say, nothing of content to contribute when important matters are being discussed.

Wisdom is too high for a fool. And in the we are all like that. Here is where we need to really pursue after wisdom so that content increases in our lives, so that we have that to contribute that can be of help to others.

Verse 8 and 9 in the Good News Bible, if you are always planning evil, you will earn a reputation as a troublemaker. And that is particularly the case with people who don't have wisdom and yet try to be busybodies in other people's affairs or try to go around giving advice to others. And many young people are like that.

Not all those who have wisdom are careful here, but it's very easy to earn a reputation as a busybody, to earn a reputation as a nuisance, as a constant source of trouble. It's a very bad thing to earn a reputation like that. There we need to humble ourselves and cleanse ourselves.

And it says here, it comes through planning evil. In other words, one is not cleansing oneself from the evil that is in one's flesh. One is not cleansing oneself.

And it's because a person is not living in a self-judgment and a self-cleansing that he or she goes around doing a whole lot of stupid things with other people and other families. And gradually, over a period of time, that person begins to get a reputation that that person is a real nuisance. But if we live in a constant self-judgment and self-cleansing, we will never earn such a reputation because if we do one foolish thing once, we won't repeat it.

The sad thing is when we keep on repeating the same thing year after year after year. Any scheme a fool thinks up is sinful. Verse 9. People hate a person who has nothing but scorn for others.

When a fool thinks up a scheme, it's sinful, it's useless because he's not cleansing himself. It's good for us to recognize that nothing good dwells in our flesh. People hate a person who has nothing but scorn for others.

And that's how the children of Adam are. That it's very difficult for us to find something to appreciate in others. And that's a pretty good test of our own spiritual condition.

That when you think of a particular brother or particular sister, I don't mean one of the ones whom you think are most spiritual. That's easy to think of something good to say about them. But think of some of the others in the assembly who are not so spiritual in your eyes.

And when you think about them, and you cannot find even one good thing to say about them, that is an indication of a pretty sad spiritual condition that you are in. It's a very sad spiritual state that you are in, that when you think of some particular brother or sister, even a carnal one, that you can't think of one good thing to say about that person. Very sad.

Always scorn for that person. Think that Jesus has accepted him or her, and Jesus has found something good in that person. He or she may not be perfect.

And there we can see how much the thinking of Adam governs our attitude towards others. To scorn who has nothing but scorn for others, such a person is a fool himself. Verse 10.

If you are slack, or if you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is limited. Or as the Living Bible says, you are a poor specimen if you can't stand the pressure of adversity. It is in the time of testing and adversity that we really discover whether we are strong or not.

And that's one reason why God has to allow trial and adversity to come across our path, because that is when we really discover whether we are spiritual or not. And most people, even among believers, faint in

the day of adversity. That means their strength is small.

Then what should they do when they discover that? They should humble themselves and say, Lord, why did I faint in the day of adversity? That means I was deceiving myself all along, that I was spiritually strong at the other time when the pressure didn't come. When the pressure came, I fainted. I got upset.

I got irritated. I got into unrest. That proves that all my life, that has been my spiritual state and I never discovered it.

Thank God for that adversity. Thank God for that trial, which showed me my condition. Like someone has said, if you are carrying a glass of sweet water, then however strongly another person shakes you, what will spill out of your glass is only sweet water.

But if someone shakes us strongly and out from our mouth comes all types of hard words and bitter words, what does that indicate? That indicates that all through my life, I was carrying a glass full of bitter water. I didn't know it because nobody shook me till now. But when somebody shook me, then I discovered what was inside.

So instead of getting upset with that person for shaking me and upsetting me, I should say thank you, my dear brother, my dear friend, because through you, I discovered what otherwise I would have lived in a self-deception about, that I was carrying bitter water inside me all the time. We need to see it like that. In the day of adversity, I faint.

I fail. Then I am a poor specimen, the word of God says. God wants to show me to the angel.

He says, see how that child of mine behaves. See how that child of mine behaves. Not when things are going easy, but see how they behave when the pressure is on.

In adversity, see how they speak. Wisdom comes forth from their tongue. So dear brothers and sisters, we must take this very seriously.

I don't believe that anyone can be spiritual if he does not see what his true condition is in the time of pressure and judge himself in the light of that. Because it's so easy to deceive ourselves when there's no pressure to think we are highly spiritual because we have so much knowledge. But the day of testing reveals our true condition and we must be honest about it and humble ourselves and say, Lord help me so that the next time I face that type of pressure, my reaction will not be like that anymore.

That's the person who's really going to make progress from glory to glory. So we praise God for the day of adversity and we praise God that God allows the evil day to come to us here on this earth so that we don't spend our whole life deceiving ourselves. Think if we had a smooth life.

So many believers would like to have a smooth passage through life, no trial, no testing, nobody backbites against them, nobody says anything against them. Everything is easy, no financial difficulties, no sickness, no nothing. We can live 50 years and think we are spiritual and wake up at the judgment seat of Christ to discover perhaps we are not even converted or thoroughly carnal.

Isn't it good that God doesn't allow us to be deceived for 50 years? He shakes us up after 5 years or 10 years. He allows some situation where we just collapse into unrest and irritability and grumbling against God and against people and everything else and God says, I love you. I'm just trying to show you your true

condition so you don't deceive yourself.

I've come to help you so that you can do something about it before the judgment seat of Christ. Before you leave this earth and you say, thank you Lord. Thank you for that time that's helped me to see my condition.

I really want to cleanse myself. I really want to make use of the opportunity so that in the days to come before I leave this earth, I really partake of your nature. Praise God for the day of adversity.

Verse 11 and 12. Let me read that in the Good News Bible. Don't hesitate to rescue someone who is about to be executed unjustly.

You may say that it is none of your business but God knows and judges your motives. He keeps watch on you. He knows that you knew that person was innocent and yet you allow him to be judged in the court and he's going out to be hanged.

You know that he didn't commit the murder and you keep quiet because all the whole crowd says he's guilty. We can think of how Jesus was crucified and how all the crowd said crucify him, crucify him. Think of a mob shouting crucify him and you are one wholehearted disciple there.

You know that Jesus is not guilty. Think to be able to raise a voice in the middle of that mob and say no, don't crucify him because he's not guilty. That mob can crucify you if you do that.

It's not easy to take a stand for something that's unpopular when everybody else is saying something else. To take a stand because you know that's not right. To be willing to be unpopular for the sake of the truth and you keep quiet because everybody's saying that and God he knows and he will reward you according to what you do.

Don't join the crowd. Be willing to stand distinct. That's a word for you children in schools and colleges, for all of us in offices.

All the mob is saying one thing and you know that's wrong to stand against it and say no, that's wrong to treat that person like that. Particularly, we don't have to give an opinion on everything that happens in the office or everything that's happening under the sun, but when you find particularly that someone is who is innocent is being accused and going to be punished, there we have a right and it's necessary for us to stand up for the truth and that has of course many other applications of being willing to be unpopular with the vast majority of Christians if need be for the sake of the truth. I do not believe that God will ever use in his service as his servant a man who's afraid of becoming unpopular for the sake of the truth and I just want to tell you the vast majority of Christian preachers are like that.

They're unwilling to be unpopular for the sake of the truth. Popularity, what the crowd says, means so much to them and therefore God puts them on the shelf and says you can't be my servant. Verse 13 and 14.

I'll read that in the living bible. My son, honey wets the appetite, so does wisdom. When you enjoy becoming wise, there is hope for you.

A bright future lies ahead. Their wisdom is compared to honey and honey was the thing which was used to sweeten food in those days when there was no refined sugar or jam or any such thing. It was honey was

the big thing and honey was good and you can imagine how much honey meant in the day when there were no chocolates or ice creams or jams or any such thing.

Honey and says wisdom should be like that. Desire for wisdom should be like that and when you enjoy becoming wise, when you say Lord I don't want to be a fool, I want to become wise and you really long for that and you're willing to receive correction and you're willing to be disciplined by the Lord, then it says a beautiful promise. There is hope for you.

There is hope for you and a bright future lies ahead. You know we'd like to say there's hope for everybody but I want to tell you honestly there isn't hope for everybody. There is hope only for those who enjoy becoming wise.

Not for anybody and everybody. Right? We can now look at verse 15 and 16. I just want to mention this before I move on and that is when it says about enjoying becoming wise we must enjoy the process by which God makes us wise.

Be willing to accept it and that is through the cross that God leads us to wisdom that we are willing to accept it. Verse 15 and 16 from the living Bible, O evil man leave the upright man alone and quit trying to cheat him out of his rights. Don't you know that this good man though you trip him up seven times each time he will rise again but one calamity is enough to lay you an evil man low.

You know that's a wonderful encouragement for those who are seeking to live before God's face and who are humble and who are righteous that even if they fall seven times and seven is you know the number of perfection and we can say any number of times he will get up like a rubber ball throw it down not like a stone you throw a stone down it just lies there you throw a rubber ball down and it doesn't stay there it bounces up you throw it down again again it bounces up and that's how a righteous man is in other words he's not discouraged he's not depressed he's not not down there in the dumps when he's fallen he gets up and that's how we must be if we have fallen we must humble ourselves repent mourn cry out to God for mercy and grace and bounce up that's how a righteous man is that's the

mark of a righteous man he falls seven times or any number of times and he rises again but the wicked one time he falls and that's enough and we can say if we read in psalm 37 verse 23 there's a reason why the righteous man's lifted up psalm 37 verse 23 and 24 the steps of a man or a righteous man are established by the Lord and he delights in his way when he falls that means even this righteous man will fall the man whose steps are established by the Lord because he's not so faithful he can fall but he shall not be hurled headlong that means he doesn't go and crash his head because here's the reason the Lord is the one who holds his hands and in this connection he says I've been young and now I'm old yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken I have not seen a situation where the Lord

would not hold that righteous man's hand think of that brothers and sisters it's because the Lord holds my hand and that's why it's so important to be in that place of humility and of a clear conscience where the Lord can hold my hand so that even if I fall he lifts me up I fall he lifts me up praise God for that there's a beautiful verse in Romans 14 I don't know whether you've noticed it very beautiful verse a phrase Romans 14 4 who are you to judge the servant of another and the context here is judging a weaker brother you are a spiritual strong brother and you judge a weaker brother and he says who are you to judge him to his own master he stands or falls and listen to this phrase and he will stand because the Lord is able to make him stand that's the same thing he will stand don't be

a fool to criticize him the Lord will make him stand one day and you'll look like a fool then so here it says in verse 15 don't plot against the dwelling of the righteous don't lie in wait against the dwelling of the righteous proverbs 24 15 what does it mean to lie in wait it says about Jesus that the Pharisees were always waiting to catch one word but false who is the person who lies in wait for a righteous man to fall do you know that whenever a person preaches victory over sin wholeheartedly with all of his heart not just this wee teeny weeny voice but when we speak about it wholeheartedly there are many believers who don't like it and who call it heresy because they themselves are defeated you know what such believers are waiting for they are waiting for this man who preaches victory

to fall and what does the bible call such a person who waits for a righteous man to fall what is the word of God calling such a person what a wicked man is he a believer far from it he's a wicked man whenever we wait for someone to fall you're a wicked person that can happen you don't like something in someone and he falls and you're a bit happy you're a wicked person don't call yourself a believer a wicked person waiting for someone to fall and it goes on to say in verse 17 being happy when someone falls don't rejoice even if it's your enemy who falls don't let your heart be glad when he stumbles lest the Lord see it you think the Lord doesn't see that you think the Lord doesn't see that little spark of delight that came into your heart when somebody fell when instead of being grieved

you were a little happy when some misfortune came upon someone with whom you didn't have a good relationship beware of that brothers and sisters what is an enemy someone it can be a brother in the church with whom your relationship is a bit cold that can happen to any of us and when it happens particularly if the other person's done something against you or said something against you you know what you should do this is what i do i say Lord help me here help me in my relationship with this person because i fear that i will fall i fear that there might be something in that take that seriously it's very very dangerous when you are a righteous person and somebody has done something against you it's you need to cry out to God for help in such a situation that there should not even be a slight

coloring of your attitude towards that person that will show that you're a God-fearing person have you cried out like that yeah i've done that i heard someone said something or somebody did something against me and i say oh my God please help me now it's easy to say i've got nothing against him that's true but i don't know the corruption that dwells in my flesh please help me Lord that i shall now behave like Jesus Christ towards that person from now on particularly let me be careful to behave really like Jesus towards that person otherwise i'll pollute myself i'll corrupt myself and just go around like a humbug and a hypocrite having a good testimony saying i've got nothing against anybody humbug no it's so easy for wrong attitudes to come and that happened that's happened in our midst

brothers and sisters you know it happened to you and why did it happen because when when you saw some somebody saying or doing something you say yeah i'm strong that's why you fell if you had a sense of your own weakness and cried out to God for help God would have helped you and you wouldn't have fallen but you fell into a wrong attitude which finally came out in wrong words when will we learn when will we learn how many years have gone by when will we realize that we are so weak and so corrupt that we cry out to God for help immediately that was why God heard Jesus prayers he was so weak he cried out for help all the time because he feared to sin even in a wrong attitude even in a slight coloring of an unloving attitude towards another person very important do not rejoice when your

enemy falls do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles let the Lord see it he sees it and he's displeased with whom displeased with this person who is watching this person who's been lying in wait

and he turns away his anger from that man he turns it on me now you see this spirit of vengeance is there very deeply in our flesh when someone has done something against me or said something against me i need to realize how weak i am at that time Lord vengeance dwells in my flesh please help me i won't take revenge by killing him i'm not so crude it is in subtle ways it can be just in being a little happy when he falls it's the same spirit as that man who killed they commits murder in vengeance no different only thing i don't go that far i stop a little this side just little delight when

something goes wrong with that person who's done something against me he who has years to hear let him hear he who is interested in keeping his heart clean who wants a testimony from his conscience not a testimony from people remember this my dear brothers and sisters we are most in danger most in danger when someone has said or done something against us we are in danger of really becoming polluted in our heart towards that person unless we live in fear and cry out to God to help us in our weakness let no one think that he will stand because he will fall on his own very important this vengeance comes out in so many ways in so many ways i tell you if we get light on it we will see our husbands take revenge on their wives not by killing them you read about these people who burned the burned

their wives because the wives didn't bring dowry and we shrink back and say oh how terrible i would never do such a thing but we can take revenge on our wives in so many other ways without burning them the same spirit that made that fellow burn his wife we do it in more refined ways where the God sees it and you see why did you say that to your wife wasn't that revenge for what she did yesterday or said day before yesterday or to your husband revenge serve the food late or cold purposely so many things and you got of course excuses for it i had so much work to do and you know that's not the thing it's a little trying to hit back it's the new and living way type of hitting back hypocrisy deception all these NAL ways of revenge brothers and sisters ask God for light on all these things i

find that vengeance is the thing which doesn't go away easily we it can come in so many subtle ways if we don't see our weakness here and cry out for against our own children we can take vengeance and they are helpless a wife or a husband can hit back what about poor children they can't hit back and we can take revenge on them because they made life inconvenient for us in some way so many things and against brothers and sisters and let not someone think that he is free from this danger we are all in tremendous danger in this area if we don't realize our weakness and cry out for help he shall fall verse 19 and 20 do not fret yourself because of evildoers or be envious of the wicked for there will be no future for the evil man the lamp for the wicked will be put out and there we see there

again the thing mentioned in verse 1 this danger of being envious because another person who's unrighteous say somebody who's unrighteous in the office seems to find it easier life is so difficult for you because you're so righteous you won't give money for that hindu festival and so life becomes a little more difficult for you it'd be easier if you were unrighteous and gave money for that hindu festival yeah don't be envious but there will be no future for that evil man finally the lamp of the wicked will be put out it's better to suffer a little and stand for righteousness see what it says in psalm 17 let me read that to you psalm 17 verse 14 and 15 in the living bible it's read like this these men of the world whose only concern is earthly gain these men whom you have filled with your

treasures yeah god has allowed them to have treasures so that their children and grandchildren are rich and prosperous yeah god has allowed them their children and their grandchildren of these wicked people to be rich and prosperous but david says as for me my contentment is not in wealth verse 15 but in seeing you and knowing that all is well between you and me and when i awake in heaven then i will be fully

satisfied for i will see you face to face blessed is the new covenant brother who can say what that old covenant brother said with lesser light in psalm 17 verse 14 and 15 never to compare our lot with the unrighteous man and now we come to the last of the 30 statements we saw here in verse 1 and 2 statement number 19 was 3 and 4 was statement number 20 was 21 verses 5 and 6 was the

21st verse 7 was the 22nd verse 8 and 9 was the 23rd and verse 10 was the 24th was 11 12 the 25th was 13 and 14 the 26th verse 15 and 16 the 27th and verse 17 and 18 the 28th verse 19 and 20 the 29th and now we come to the last of these 30 statements which i said was like a mini book of proverbs that is verse 21 and 22 i want to read that in the good news bible fear the lord my son and honor the king that means fear god first and submit to the secular authority it may not be the king it may be the boss in your office honor him fear the lord and the king have nothing to do listen to this a word for our day have nothing to do with people who rebel against god or who rebel against the boss don't have fellowship with them that's why i say it's very dangerous for a christian to join a trade

union if it involves the spirit of rebellion against authority have nothing to do with people who rebel against the lord or against the king or the boss such men could be ruined in a moment do you realize the disaster that god or the king can cause yeah that's the last statement he says there that spirit of rebellion be careful about rebellion against your parents your father's king in the home be careful that you don't rebel against them children and your mother be careful wives that you don't rebel against the one whom god has placed as king over you in your house i don't know how many wives see their husband as the king god has placed over them be careful have nothing to do with that spirit of rebellion or rebellion in the church we read about korah who stood against moises korah dathan

and abiram they said what does this moises think he is he's not the only one through whom god speaks god speaks through us also moises just kept quiet he fell on his face and god said all right i'll teach these fellows a lesson i'll teach them through whom i speak and moises said tell all the congregation of israel to stand back and that's the only case recorded in the bible the only case recorded in the bible where a man went alive into hell korah dathan abiram and their family alive into hell just like enoch and elijah went straight up to heaven one case in the scriptures the spirit of rebellion against authority be careful be careful it's good to humble ourselves before god be careful for the spirit of rebellion is spreading all over in homes and schools and colleges and factories and

churches everywhere they have to be careful now concluding those 30 statements that began in chapter 22 now we come to something else here in verses 23 to 25 he says here are some additional proverbs it is wrong to sentence the poor and to let the rich go free he who says to the wicked you are innocent shall be cursed by many people of many nations but blessings will be showered on those who rebuke sin fearlessly that's a wonderful word for those who preach the word of god the last verse 25 blessings will be showered on those who rebuke sin fearlessly that's our calling in the church another thing we notice in verse 23 in the nasb it says these also are sayings otherwise to show partiality in judgment is not good it's very easy to be partial just like vengeance as i said earlier quite

strongly loose it dwells very close to us in the flesh i also want to say the spirit of partiality is very close to us in our flesh we like certain brothers and we don't like certain others we like certain sisters and we don't like certain others and when there is a little difficulty between those two unconsciously we take the side of the one whom we like why because we don't have the divine nature which is impartial we live according to our adamic nature which is partial i like this brother so he must be right i don't like that brother so he must be wrong i've seen that i've seen that right in our own with um i've seen a brother come and tell me a

complaint against another brother yeah what that other brother did was wrong and i i can sense when this brother is making this complaint that

he doesn't like this brother also that's why he's making this complaint and then some weeks later i find the same brother faced in a situation with another brother then of course he's got no complaint at all even though a similar situation happened and i say yeah now i know why there's no complaint because he likes that brother that's why there's no complaint if this brother x had done the same thing oh he would have had complaints but now it was brother y who did it so it's all right we got to bear we got to forgive that's an example of partiality that's partiality how long are we going to take to cleanse ourselves from it when will in the world will we get light on it if we don't get light after sitting in the church for so many years i would say the chances are we won't get light even

in the next 50 years because it's shone pretty brightly in our midst in all these years and if we still haven't got light when are we going to wake up take that seriously brothers and sisters to show partiality is evil and in judgment it's so easy to be partial we had to cry out to god help me lord to form a right assessment here and verse 23 in the good news bible reads like this it is wrong for a judge to be prejudiced to be prejudiced means to be have a little weight towards this person what would you think of a christian who was selling something in a shop and underneath say he was selling vegetables or fruit or something and underneath the side where he puts the vegetables he's got a little extra weight underneath to you know so that he doesn't have to sell so much you could say you

mean that brother talks about the new and living way he's a humbug well brother you're a humbug too when you've got that little extra weight towards that brother informing an assessment equally the same thing that is prejudice to have a little weight in favor of that person or in favor of this person you who tell another person that he's a humbug aren't you a humbug yourself there yeah there's great safety in not being a busy body in other people's matters but in judging ourselves alone wonderful that's the way of salvation verse 26 in the good news bible it says here it says he kisses the lips who gives the right answer the meaning of it is kissing of the lips is a sign of intimate friendship the good news bible says an honest answer is a sign of true friendship kissing the lips is used

as a phrase as a metaphor it means that when you speak the truth to somebody that is the sign that you're a real friend to that person you're a diplomat beating around the bush never telling the person the truth you're not his friend at all a real friend is one who speaks the truth straight an honest answer is a sign of true friendship brother do you think what i shared in the meeting was too long yes it was too long and too boring also that's a sign of true friendship honest you just kept on repeating the same old thing so many times you need to cleanse yourself from that honest answer not your brother it's good it's sort of he appreciated it and all this humbug no we need to learn to be honest with one another get over all this diplomacy walk in the light that's the secret of fellowship

west 27 a wonderful word for those who are planning to get married particularly men prepare your work outside and make it ready for yourself in the field afterwards then build your house yeah that's clear isn't it um that says don't build your house and establish a home good news bible until your fields are ready and you're sure that you can earn a living in those days they the only way they earned a living was through their fields which is don't build your house and establish a home unless you're sure that you can earn a living and we can say that this could also apply to the fact that we need to think of our necessities first and luxuries afterwards and to earn a living is a necessity and marriage can be a luxury and the necessity must come first but we don't become beggars we seek to

find support for ourselves and we say but it's so difficult these days with so much unemployment in our country i'll tell you one group of people that will never have a problem in this area those who obey matthew 6 33 seek ye first the kingdom of god and his righteousness and all your material needs will be added to you even where unemployment is very high that's the solution to unemployment seek the kingdom of god first in his righteousness all your material needs will be added to you and then god will give you a wife as well so that's the way in marriage we must be established financially first otherwise we can be like what jesus said the man who started to build a tower and he didn't have enough yeah i'll get married i'll trust the lord this phrase trust the lord has become so abused

and devalued and halfway through he cannot complete and then he has to beg and borrow and get into all types of problems be wise verse 28 and 29 let me read that in the good news bible don't give evidence against someone else without good reason or say misleading things about him don't say i'll do to him just what he did to me i'll get even with him that's again the spirit of vengeance that when you're asked to give a testimony in a court they may not go to court but we can have other applications for it you say yeah now is my chance to really paint it black i won't tell any lies but i'll color it in such a way that it'll really put him in a difficult situation and that can happen sometimes you know we don't have too good a relationship with someone maybe you're a bit cold towards someone

or someone's a bit cold towards you and you are called in some situation to talk to another brother and the topic comes about brother x with whom you don't have a very good relationship and then of course we are there to point out something that we saw some stupid thing that he did which we have retained in our file to bring out at the right time because i want to take my vengeance and i can't say something good i'll do to him as he has done to me beware of that spirit beware of that demonic evil luciferian spirit i'll do to him as he did to me that's a million miles away from the other side of the universe from the spirit of christ verses 30 to 34 here is a beautiful passage i passed by the field of the sluggard that's the lazy man and by the vineyard of the man who is lacking sense and

i saw that it was completely overgrown with thorns and covered with weeds and its stone wall was broken down and when i saw it i did not criticize him praise god he had learned his lesson i judged myself i learned a lesson for myself i reflected upon it i thought about it and i learned a lesson for myself the lesson i learned was a little extra sleep a little more slumber a little folding of hands to rest and your poverty will break in upon you suddenly like a robber and violently like a bandit yeah we have to learn from the follies of others and i want to say to all young people when you see another young brother or another young sister doing a stupid thing and as a result of which over a period of time that person loses their testimony in the church there are weeds and thorns in their

testimony walls are broken down what should you do don't waste your time criticizing that person this person didn't criticize no use criticizing just sit down and think about it and say lord i've got a flesh exactly like that person help me that i don't go around becoming such a fool myself with weeds and thorns growing all over and the walls broken down help me i reflect it and it's good to think about these things when we see it around to look and to learn learn from the mistakes of others so that you don't have to make the same mistake yourself we can learn from mistakes but it's far better if we learn from the mistakes that we see other people making then we can avoid it and the wise person is the person who observes sees the blunders and follies of others and says yeah there's

something i don't have to make that mistake myself because i i saw that person do it think of how many things we can save ourselves from in so many other areas in the world we are careful that we see

somebody doing a stupid thing and we make sure we don't do that ourselves how much more we need to be careful in the area of the spiritual life it says here in verse 32 i learned beautiful phrase i learned and we can say a wise man is one who observes the follies of foolish people and learns from them and a foolish person is one who does not observe the good qualities and wise people and learn from them what are these thorns we can say they are the lusts the lusts that have overpowered a person because he's been lazy he's not been wholehearted in judging himself he's been careless and the

wall wall we can say the wall are god's commandments like we saw in the wall nehemiah's wall the commandments of god many bricks make a wall and here's a person who's been careless attitude towards god's commandments the wall is broken down learn a lesson learn a lesson from the final fate that comes upon such people the spiritual poverty that people come into finally like a robber that poverty has come upon them suddenly and violently like a bandit suddenly you hear someone has become fallen suddenly you see someone flaring up and losing his temper poverty spiritual poverty suddenly it has come it's not slowly suddenly because the person's been lazy in judging himself all through his life i remember hearing of a brother who had quite a responsibility in one of the churches in europe and

much respected but obviously he was not working on his own salvation and one day his folly became manifest to everybody because he publicly lost his temper that was all one event one publicly losing one's temper is enough for god to reveal a person's folly to everyone and to indicate to the whole world this person as was not working on his own salvation in his private life despite all his knowledge of the new and living way and that brother was a brother who could explain the new and living way better than you or me he was a teacher he was a man who was respected he was a man who had a wonderful family god-fearing children publicly lost his testimony by once flaring up and losing his temper what does that indicate it's not just a question of once losing one's temper it is an indication of

some serious problem that's been there behind for many years that the person was not working on his own salvation and judging himself in high thoughts about himself never cleansed himself therefore finally got all upset and irritated and flared up publicly yeah god allows that to happen and when that happens no use criticizing them we have to think say lord that can happen to me when you see an old person irritable bitter cranky demanding whenever i see old people like that i say oh god have mercy on me that i don't grow to be an old person like that stupid foolish demanding cranky then you see other old people who are so wise so gracious so good there's much for us to think when we see these things around us to say lord help me i have the same flesh help me to grow up to be more like

jesus so that no in my old old age people will see that there's something of wisdom instead of all the wretched nature of adam that's being nourished and cherished when when should we start working in order to grow up to be a saint when you're old you got to start working probably when you're 10 when you're 10 years old and if we have crossed that age we better hurry up and start at least now be wholehearted think of the poverty of so many believers around us and think don't criticize them just look and learn a lesson a little laziness in working out one's own salvation a little sleep in judging oneself being a busy body in other people's matters and my own stone wall is broken down and thorns have covered my life here's much scope for us to repent be wholehearted and diligent

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