



**A WONDERFUL DAY IN THE LORD
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PROVERBS

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We are happy you could join us for another week on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. As we are coming together this week, we are going to start a series on the book of Proverbs. Some of our ladies at the church are going through Proverbs. This will not in any way replace that, but maybe it will supplement some of the things they are doing if some of them want to watch. Most of you, of course, are not going through that series, so I am looking forward to looking at Proverbs.

One of the popular things right now is life coaches. Every once in a while, you hear that such and such a person is a life coach, or they are going to a life coach. A life coach is a person who is supposed to be an expert in life or certain aspects of life, and people go to these coaches to get insight and understanding about pretty practical things. Usually things about themselves, money, raising their children, discipline, and any number of things a person might struggle with. So, they go to this expert to get help, and maybe on some occasions they are helpful, maybe not. It depends. But wouldn't it be great if there was a divine life coach? One who could always give us practical advice, wisdom, and insight and never be wrong in any of that advice or insight?

Of course, there is such a divine life coach. It's found in the Scripture. The Word of God is our coach. It comes from Him, and it tells us how to live life. One book in particular, the book of Proverbs, is dedicated to wise living. The whole book is wrapped around this issue of how to live in such a way that we are living wisely before God. So, we are going to talk about some of these things. If you know the book of Proverbs, you know that what we find is that after chapter 9 it's pretty much a bunch of random Proverbs. It's not necessarily on any one particular topic. So, what we are going to be doing together is drawing up some of those proverbs related to various topics and just taking an overview. Not a deep insight, but an overview, of what God has to say about those particular things in our lives. I hope it's going to be helpful to you.

We're going to start with the issue of wisdom since that is what the book is about. As a matter of fact, the first nine chapters are a little different than the rest of the book, and it deals almost principally with wisdom, the value

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of wisdom, the hindrances to wisdom, and that type of thing. As we think about that, we start the book, looking together at chapter 1, and looking at the first several verses that talk about how to live wisely. We find in Proverbs 1:1-5, "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel." We know the author here is Solomon. He says, "To know wisdom and instruction, to discern the saying of understanding, to receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice and equity; to give prudence to the naïve, to the youth knowledge and discretion, a wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel." So, he opens up with this comment here about wisdom and he's writing these words to his son, so he is wanting him to live wisely and as God wants him to live. He is giving wonderful insights to his own children, and we are benefiting by what he says to them because God has put it in His Word.

He's going to talk about a lot of practical things. This is what sets Proverbs apart from much of the rest of Scripture. It deals with wisdom and wise living, but much of it is about simply practical living on a number of topics that we will begin to look at here this week. As we look at them, we will find that these insights are clear, helpful, relatively simple, and if we follow them, our lives will be better for it.

But there is a beginning place with wisdom and that is found in Proverbs 9:10. This is perhaps the key of the book, and so we want to jump on this very early. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." So, all true wisdom, God's type of wisdom, begins with the fear of the Lord. Now, we can be sharp or capable in many areas of life without the Lord's wisdom. There are a lot of unsaved people that are good in finances, for example. They are self-disciplined or things like that that are very helpful. But if we want biblical wisdom, God's wisdom, and we want the wisdom that helps us not only in practical matters and issues but also wisdom that will lead us to living for the Lord, we need God's wisdom, and that wisdom, it says here, begins with "the fear of the Lord."

The fear of the Lord is a topic that comes up often in this book, but it's talking about the greatness of the majesty and the beauty and the awesomeness of the Lord. As we contemplate Him, we can't help but fall

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before Him as our righteous Lord, Judge, King, Savior, and when we have that perspective toward God, wisdom flows out of that. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord, so that is the foundation for everything we will be saying in this series.

I hope you can join us as we move forward tomorrow in talking about wisdom. I hope you can be with us.

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December 6, 2022

Thank you again for joining us in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We began a series yesterday on the book of Proverbs, and as would be expected, our first subject was that of wisdom. We saw that the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." We are going to look a little bit more at wisdom. The first nine chapters in particular deal directly with wisdom. The other chapters can pick up on that as well, but those first 9 chapters are pinpointing wisdom. I want to talk about that a little bit.

Let's define wisdom for a moment. Wisdom is mastering the art of living according to God's design. That would be the wisdom we are talking about in Proverbs. It's not just being smart about various issues in life. That's helpful, and many of the Proverbs deal with that direct subject, but to be wise according to God's plan is mastering the art of living according to God's design. How does God want us to live? Well, much of Scripture deals with that very clearly, but no place better than the book of Proverbs. Our subject we are touching on first is that of wisdom because that is where the Scriptures begin. How are we going to obtain this kind of wisdom?

We are looking at Proverbs 2:1-5 and the first thing we know is that if we really want to be wise, we must seek wisdom. This is not something that falls off the tree and hits us on the head. It's something that must be sought. We have to desire it. So, he says in Proverbs 2:1-5, "My son, if you will receive my words and treasure my commandments within you, make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart to understanding; for if you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding; if you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will discern the fear of the Lord and discover the knowledge of God." We see early on that he is telling his son that if he wants to be wise, he needs to "seek for her as silver" or treasures. This is a beautiful metaphor because many people will do many things to receive great wealth. They'll seek it. They'll plan their life for it. They go to school for it. They'll do all sorts of things to obtain treasure. So, he says to use that same principle in searching for wisdom. Seek wisdom as if you were seeking some kind of financial treasure. Put your life and back into it. Go for it because it is so valuable. So, first, we need to seek it.

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Secondly, we need to recognize that it is the tree of life. I love these pictures and metaphors. In Proverbs 3:18 he says, "She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who hold her fast." This picture then of Scripture, of the tree of life, we trace that all the way back to the Garden of Eden where there was the tree of life. If Adam and Eve had eaten from that tree they would have lived forever in their sinful condition. So, God chased them out of the garden. So, this picks up on that issue and that idea, but this is a tree of spiritual life. This is not a tree of longevity in a physical sense. It is the sustenance. It is the essence of true life for those who grab hold of her. And all who grab hold of her, it says here, will be blessed.

Then he moves forward to Proverbs 4:11-12, and we see it is also the path to life. Not only is wisdom the tree of life, but it is the path of life. "I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths. When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; and if you run, you will not stumble." We are talking about wisdom here because of the need of the path of life. So, we get the picture here of stumbling through life. Life is difficult. There're a lot of obstacles in the way and things to fall over.

What we need is a path that navigates us through all the issues and things of life that get in our way of being what God wants us to be. Wisdom is that path. Stay on that path. The path of wisdom will head us in the right direction so that we live as God wants us to live.

Then we go to Proverbs 7:4. You're not really going to seek wisdom and stay on the path of wisdom if you don't love wisdom. He gives us another word picture here, "Say to wisdom, 'You are my sister,' and call understanding your intimate friend." He is talking about wisdom being like a friend or sister. Someone who is beloved to you, and you truly love. So, to embrace wisdom and truly go after wisdom and stay on the path of wisdom necessitates that we love wisdom. The more we know the wisdom of God, the more we should love the wisdom of God. It starts out with that choice to follow on that path and grab ahold of that tree of life. As we do so, we fall more and more in love with the wisdom of God, the divine wisdom that can never steer us in the wrong direction. Anyone who has that kind of wisdom loves it, and so these are the things we need in order to live a life of wisdom.

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I hope that gives you a wonderful day in the Lord and that you can join us again tomorrow.

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December 7, 2022

Thank you for coming together with us again today to look at God's Word and to discuss the issues related to wisdom from the book of Proverbs. We are looking now at some of the things that the book of Proverbs teaches us about wise living. There are many topics. The one we will look at today is advice. Those who are wise learn that the necessity for good advice is part of our lives. People that go it alone and take no other insights from anybody else and do not look at the Scriptures and do not talk to wise people usually fail pretty badly in life. So, Proverbs talks a lot about seeking advice. You and I need good advice to help us with the issues of life.

We start today with Proverbs 11:14, "Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory." Proverbs recommends abundance of counselors. We are not to simply do our own thing, but we are to be guided by other people. In the church for example, our church, we are led by a board of elders, by a number of godly men who want to serve Christ and come together and talk about issues that we need to talk about and come to a consensus about what we should do. We need the advice of one another. We need to challenge one another sometimes and question one another and even disagree with one another. That's all part of good advice. It says here that the "abundance of counselors" is needed, but of course, we are looking for good advice, not wicked or bad advice.

So, in Proverbs 12:5 he says, "The thoughts of the righteous are just, but the counsels of the wicked are deceitful." As we are looking for advice on how to live life, let's seek it from the right sources. Let's go to Scripture first, which is infallible, but even on a human level, we want to go to people that we know are understanding of Scripture and know the Word of God and are walking with God – that's exhibited in their lives. Those are the kind of people we want to go to because the advice of the wicked is deceitful just as it says right here. It will lead us astray. Don't go looking for someone who has failed in a particular area of life for advice. Go to someone who has succeeded and shown wisdom in their lives and choices. Sometimes, that particular thing hurts a little bit. We don't like to have people challenge us and criticize us, and we don't like to hear advice that

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we don't like. That's unfortunate because Proverbs says we should seek that.

Proverbs 27:5-6 says, "Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy." This is a hard one to grasp and it's a hard one to apply because we do not like anyone to challenge us because of our own arrogance. If a friend comes to us and challenges us or a decision we are making or the way we are living our lives and they go after us in some way, even in the most gentle and gracious of ways, it's easy for us to be wounded and to take that offensively. It tells us here that the wounds of a friend are faithful. It's the deceit of the kisses that do us harm. People that flatter us and tell us what we want to hear rather than what we need to hear. So, it's important that we listen to the advice of good friends who are willing to sometimes hurt us a bit in order to help us. Those are faithful and good friends because they put themselves on the line to try to help us. We always need to remember that. When someone comes to us and talks to us about an issue and they've put themselves out there to do that, treasure such people because they are good friends – even if we don't necessarily agree with their advice.

In Psalm 15:2, it says, "The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools spouts folly." We are now looking at the wisdom that God wants to give us here. As we think about advice, we need the advice of good people, and it will lead us, it says, to success. It will lead us to make good choices and live life the way God wants us to live. So, don't resist good advice. Go to the right sources. Seek godly counsel. We don't always have to necessarily follow that counsel but seek that counsel. Maybe you get advice from several people who may not agree. Sometimes that's very helpful in making good decisions. Sometimes it's helpful to even be challenged on that level so that we are able to not simply go blindly into the choices we make. We have help in making good and wise choices to live as God wants us to live.

I hope that's helpful to you. I know it's helpful to me.

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December 8, 2022

As we continue our look together at the book of Proverbs and some of the issues of life that we deal with, we remember that Proverbs was given to us to help us navigate through those issues of life in a way of wisdom. That way of wisdom is the art of mastery of life in such a way that we're living according to God's design. Wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord and understanding His majesty and His beauty and His judgment and His power. Then, it leads to the everyday practical issues of life. So, you and I want to explore those and embrace those.

We are looking today at one of the first issues that we might call sinful issues or problematic issues in our lives. There are going to be a lot of these in the book of Proverbs, but the one we will look at today and tomorrow is that of anger. Anger is a very common emotion and action on the part of people. Some people have more of a problem with anger than others. Some people express it differently than others. Some folks really blow up and they get loud and obnoxious and red-faced, and they show their anger in that way. Some people might stuff it down and claim they aren't angry at all, but they are frustrated and irritated and grouchy and they are expressing anger in that way. There's a lot of different ways to express anger. As I said, some people really struggle with anger more than others, but all of us deal with it from time to time. So, the book of Proverbs has a lot to say about anger. We are only going to touch the surface today and tomorrow as we talk about it, but I want to talk today concerning this issue of anger and looking at Proverbs 14:29 as to some of the reasons why we do get angry, on a very pragmatic basis.

Proverbs 14:29 says, "He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly." So, the first thing we know is that we get angry because we don't have much patience. When we think about that, that's pretty clear, isn't it? We don't like what's going on around us. We don't like how people treat us. We don't like how the world's going. Someone gets in our way or frustrates our plans. All sorts of things! It comes down to the fact that we don't have patience with other people, circumstances of life, or whatever and things are in our way and we don't like it. That causes us to be angry, frustrated, and irritated toward other people. What it tells us in this verse is that if you're slow to anger you have

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great discernment. If you're quick-tempered, you raise up folly. The quick-tempered person, one who flies off quickly, and is angry in a hurry ends up doing a lot of foolish things and often a lot of harm. They think they are doing well. When we are angry, we think we are saying wonderful things and doing wonderful things, and usually we are causing destruction. So, he tells us here that we need to grow in our patience toward the circumstances of life and people around us. Whatever gets in our way, that we are stumbling over, we need to have patience with that realizing that we too need to have people be patient with us.

Here's another reason why we get angry, in Proverbs 29:11, is pure foolishness. It says, "A fool always loses his temper, but a wise man holds it back." The foolish person vents himself. He blows up. He jumps on people and says things he shouldn't say even though he might think it's good to do it at the time. That's the foolish person. Foolishness leads us to say things and lose our temper along this line in a hurry. The wise man holds it back. It's not that he doesn't deal with it and that he just stuffs it away. He meditates on it and considers it. He doesn't just blurt out something and show his foolishness. He considers whether or not he should be angry at this moment. We do know from Scripture that there are times to be angry. There are issues of sin and injustice that ought to anger us as God is angered at those things, but to contemplate how to express that anger is a sign of a wise person rather than a fool.

Then in Proverbs 22:24, we have a very interesting verse of Scriptures. Proverbs and the New Testament tell us that anger can be learned from others. Not that we don't have our own issues with anger, but that if we hang around people that are angry people, their anger is likely to rub off on us as well. In Proverbs 22:24 he says, "Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself." So, he says that if you are going to hang out with angry people, don't be surprised if you become angry just like them. So, what's your company? Who do you hang out with?

I want to talk a little bit more about that issue tomorrow. We will pick it up tomorrow as we look at anger one more time.

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December 9, 2022

We're going to close out our week together in the Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast by looking at the issue of anger as found in the book of Proverbs. We are talking about walking in wisdom and the book of Proverbs is going to deal with many issues in which we need divine wisdom. One of those is anger. We looked yesterday at the causes of anger and why we get angry. I want to look more at how to deal with anger today. If we have anger in our heart and spirit, how are we to go about dealing with that in a way that is honoring to God?

In Proverbs 19:11 he says, "A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression." Let's start once again with wisdom. As we are being wise in our understanding of life, we are looking at wisdom, examining wisdom, dissecting wisdom, and that leads us to doing the same thing with all of these issues that we are going to be facing. So, we are looking at anger. What benefit does anger bring about? What good does it do to be angry? We have to determine, as I said yesterday, the proper times to be angry, but how do we express that anger and at what points do we get angry? So, he says here in Proverbs 19:11 that we need insight so that we are slow to anger. Not that we never get angry about anything, but our anger is meditated, slow, and a choice to be angry at the right time over the right things. It says, as it goes on, in the verse that it's an honor to "overlook a transgression." If you're going to jump on everyone who conflicts with or hurts you in some way, you're going to have a pretty miserable life probably because there are a lot of people in this world that are going to cross paths with us that aren't going to be on our team. So, it's a true honor for us. It's honorable to be able to say that we see that person as flawed. They said something they shouldn't have said and may have stepped on my toes a little bit, but I can overlook that at this point. It's no big deal. It's honorable to be able to do that.

Another thing we can do is develop self-control. In Proverbs 16:32 it says, "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city." It really is commending here the idea of self-control. Anger doesn't have to control us, but we can control anger. Just as one who rules their own spirit is greater than one who captures a city, which would take great effort. He says here you can control your

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anger and your emotions and your spirit. He encourages us to do so. That's how we deal with anger in that way.

Thirdly, we can grow in patience and hope. In Proverbs 20:22 it says, "Do not say, 'I will repay evil'; wait for the Lord, and He will save you." Here he is saying that a simple thing that many of us do that is very common, so Scripture talks about it quite often. This is getting even with somebody who hurts us. Getting a little bit of revenge because they have stepped on us. But, he says, don't say that I will repay evil. Rather, hope in the Lord and He will save you. So replace our desire for vengeance with hope in the Lord who will go to bat for us when it is appropriate, when it is needed. And he will do it perfectly.

One more passage of Scripture, one we looked at yesterday and left off with. That is Proverbs 22:24-25, talking about hanging around people who are angry. "Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself." Yesterday we looked at one angle of these verses. Today we will briefly mention the second angle. On the one hand, don't hang around with angry people or you will become like them. On the other hand, hang around peaceful people, people who have their anger under control. That will also be an encouragement to you to do the same thing. But, when Proverbs was written, we are talking mainly about personal everyday involvement and conversations with people and friendships. Today we are a much more complex society, and we have all this social media and all these platforms and all this media that is out there, and that also plays into this. If you're going to listen to things that are always angry and always looking for a fight and trying to find some fault with somebody, don't be surprised that you find yourself agitated, anxious and angry. It's alright to know some of these things and look into these things. Don't bury your head in the sand. But on the other hand, be careful with that and make sure you're not spending all of your time with a bunch of angry people and media.

Instead, look for people that are giving you good insight at how to live life God's way. Look for those that are expounding the truth of Scripture, for example. So, who we hang with and listen to is going to affect our attitudes, our anger, and so forth in life. So, find people that know how to

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handle anger biblically. Spend time with them in person and on the media as well.

This is a good start to the book of Proverbs I trust. So, you join us again next week, if you can, as we move forward in our study of wise living in the book of Proverbs.

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December 12, 2022

Once again, we thank you for joining us in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're looking at the book of Proverbs for the next several weeks together. We're looking at Proverbs by various topics. One of the topics we might expect Proverbs to cover, which is a book dealing with wise living, is that of money. There are very few things in life that get our attention more than money. We think about it. We have to have it. We need it for so many things. It's just part of our life. So, it's only proper and only right that the book of Proverbs has a lot to say about money. I want to spend about three days looking at some of the things that Scripture says about finances. We are going to start off by looking at, perhaps some negatives, or warnings we might say concerning money. Although Scripture talks a lot about money and what it can and can't do, it often warns about money because it is such a pull. It's a magnet toward things that are not so good.

We start off by looking in Proverbs 11:28 today. One of the reasons why money can lead us astray is that we tend to trust in it. We put all of our hope and all of our trust in finances and that, of course, takes us away from the trust that we should have in the only one that is trustworthy: God Himself. So, Proverbs 11:28 says, "He who trusts in his riches will fall," that's pretty clear, isn't it? If you trust in riches, you are going to fail. The very next part of that verse says, "but the righteous will flourish like the green leaf." As often happens in the Proverbs, there is a contrast. There's one thing put out, and the contrast follows it up. So, if you are going to trust in riches, now it doesn't say whether you are rich or poor – we will look at a verse about that in just a moment, but if your trust is in that and you are relying on money, on your wealth, you will fail. It doesn't mean that you will necessarily be poor. As a matter of fact, many people who trust in riches do very well financially. They have a lot of stuff. They make a lot of money. They are very rich. So, it doesn't say we will fail financially necessarily. But I think it is speaking of something far more important. Which is why in the very next line he says, "but the righteous will flourish like the green leaf." I like that word flourish. It's like the green leaf. What a beautiful picture. Flourishing we get this idea of just everything that could possibly be. So, those who are righteous flourish. We blossom. We become what God wants us to become. Rich people may or may not flourish, but if

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they trust in riches, we are guaranteed that they are going to fail as a result of that.

But, as we go back to Proverbs 30, we have a balance that is given to us. I'm grateful for these verses that the Lord gives us in Proverbs 30 for the Lord doesn't honor either poverty or wealth. Look at these verses with me. Proverbs 30:8, "Keep deception and lies far from me, give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion, that I not be full and deny You and say, 'Who is the Lord?' Or that I not be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God." These are some pretty wise words here. Solomon, if he is writing these particular words, is saying (according to the first part of Proverbs 30, there's another king, King Agur, who is actually writing these particular words), but he recognizes a danger on either side of the ditch. If we are too rich, we tend to be self-sufficient and we don't trust God. If we are too poor, we tend to blame God. So, he says that he doesn't want to be rich, he doesn't want to be poor, he wants to have what he needs, what is his portion so that he can live in a good balance with the Lord.

As we think about that, we go back to Proverbs 10:22 and he says, "It is the blessing of the Lord that makes rich, and he adds no sorrow to it." So, if you want to be blessed in this life, if you want to be rich in this life, according to Proverbs, that blessing comes from the Lord. It doesn't come from money. Money may add certain benefits. It may add options. It may be a blessing in some way, but can also be a curse. So, he says, if you really want to be blessed by the Lord, and you want to flourish, then you turn to Him who can give that kind of blessing and flourishing to you because only God can do that. Money cannot.

So, we started out today talking about finances and money and saw these warnings. Tomorrow we will follow up on that, so I hope you can join us.

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December 13, 2022

Thank you again for joining us on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are studying the book of Proverbs, and our topic today and yesterday and tomorrow will be money. Money plays such a very important part of all of our lives. Everybody has to have money. We have to have some resources. The poor often are scraping for money and often great burdens are on them because they lack it. The wealthy sometimes live for money. It becomes basically their god as they try to get more. They never seem to be satisfied with the wealth they have. Those in between can go either direction or maybe even some other direction. So, finances play an important role. So, we are not surprised that the book of Proverbs talks about how we should wisely handle money. We looked at kind of a negative warning yesterday and we are going to follow up on that today in Proverbs 21 and talk about some unwise ways of handling money. If we know the unwise ways, that might help us in choosing wise ways.

Why is it that many people just never seem to get ahead even if they have decent incomes and so forth? They just seem to never be able to get on top of things when it comes to money. Proverbs warns about a number of things. One is hasty schemes. In Proverbs 21:5 he says, "The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty." This is talking about all those kinds of schemes that are out there. The get rich quick schemes, the Ponzi schemes, gambling and so forth. These are any kind of scheme in which, with minimum amount of effort, we believe we can get ahead financially and hopefully we strike it rich in one quick blow. That's why the lotteries and gambling and these things that are too good to be true often catch people off guard and they get hurt. Sometimes, it's just a waste of a little money. Sometimes it's a big blow when we have some kind of Ponzi scheme that collapses and people lose, perhaps, even their whole life savings. One of the reasons is that they are looking to gain wealth quickly. He says here that when you are hasty you will come to poverty. So, for every one person who strikes it rich in a gambling situation or a Ponzi scheme, many thousands lose money and some in a very devastating way. That is not God's way of handling finances – chasing after these kinds of schemes.

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Here's another thing that is wrong in trying to gain wealth and another reason why we often fail and should fail – deceit. In Proverbs 21:6 it says, "The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death." So, now not only are the get rich quick schemes wrong, but even worse is deceitfulness to get wealthy. That's a temptation that many people face, especially if they are in a situation where they think they can get away with it. They think they can cheat in some way and gain wealth. There is that danger of the deceitfulness of wealth that will lead us to the pursuit of death. We think of the simple things like income taxes. Are we filing income taxes properly? Do we think we can get away with something, so we do? Or are we taking advantage of somebody at work in a situation where we think we can? These are all deceitful ways of trying to gain more finances that will lead in a wrong direction.

There's also misplaced values. In Proverbs 15:16, he says this, "Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and turmoil with it. Better is a dish of vegetables where love is than a fattened ox served with hatred." He wants us to examine our values here. What's more important? Almost always we will choose the riches, the treasures and so forth. But he says here it is better to have a little of the right thing than to have a lot of the wrong thing. It's better to have little and the fear of the Lord than these great treasures that bring about turmoil. Better is a simple meal, a dish of vegetables, where there's love than to have a great banquet where there's hatred.

He follows it up in Proverbs 17:1 where he says, "Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it than a house full of feasting with strife." Once again, it's better just to have something very simple when you have peace and love and fear of the Lord than to have all these riches that we think we have to have. So, when he is talking about this, he is trying to point us in the direction of proper balance and proper values. Having the values that honor God will be a safeguard for us and how we handle our money.

Let's start with that. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom in all areas including our finances. We are going to look at money one more time tomorrow before we move on to another subject. I hope you can join us.

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December 14, 2022

If you've joined us the last two days on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, you know we're talking about money as it is talked about in the book of Proverbs. Proverbs, being a book about wisdom, has wise teachings and instructions and warnings about all sorts of topics, and money has been our topic so far this week. We are going to spend one more day on finances. We've been looking mostly at the negative side of money, and the warnings that Scripture gives us. How do we get it, how not to go after it, and what it can do to us if we have wrong values?

Today we are going to flip over to the positive side because money is not all bad, and God has a lot to say about the gaining of finances as well. What are some biblical ways of gaining wealth? Does Scripture teach that? I think it does. In Proverbs 12:11 it says this, "He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who pursues worthless things lacks sense." We start with the positive. Remember that most of these Proverbs have a contrasting element to them. They state something positively and then say it negatively, or the other way around. It does that here. If you take care of your land and work, the first way of gathering money and gaining wealth is work, and that seems to be the primary teaching in the Word of God as far as gaining wealth of any kind. Work for it. Don't go after schemes. Don't be deceitful. Work, and work hard. He talks about taking care of your property. He's talking here in a farming environment – tilling the land. You will have plenty of bread. Just go out and do your work. You must work hard. You do that, and you will most likely do very well financially. If you pursue the things that are worthless, you lack sense, he says. He says not to chase after worthless things. Go after hard work. Do your job and do it well, and finances are most likely going to do well for you.

In Proverbs 13:11 he says this, "Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles, but the one who gathers by labor increases it." I think this is one of the verses in Proverbs that commends saving and even investing. I think there are some Christians who are almost allergic to that word investing almost like it is gambling. It need not be that at all. I think the Scriptures, and the book of Proverbs in particular, recommend that we save. So, we work hard, and we take care of our land, and the produce comes in. Probably over time

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there is going to be extra. Of that money that comes in that is above what we need to live on, the Scriptures talk about saving it. "Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles," so it's not of any real value. It tends to go away, "but the one who gathers by labor increases it." I like the way the New International translates this, "He who gathers money little by little makes it grow." That's a good way of thinking about it because it's just the opposite of those trying to get rich very quickly type of schemes. This is an individual who is gathering little by little. Saving a little here. Saving a little there. Gathering money over a lifetime. Putting it away for the proper use of funds. Not trying to necessarily become ultra-wealthy just for the sake of being wealthy or to be self-centered or selfish, but simply to be saving money for the future for the needs that are there. Proverbs says a lot about saving money for your children or your grandchildren and for doing the good things that need to be done.

In Proverbs 24:3-4, he says this, "By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; and by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches." So, the Lord does not despise us being able to have a nice house and nice things in that house. As a matter of fact, it commends it here. It says a house like that is built "by wisdom." Wise handling of money by working, saving, and proper and God-honoring investment will cause us to have these kinds of things that can be used for the Lord's glory.

In Proverbs 22:9, here is another way of gaining wealth, and this might surprise us, but it's through generosity. "He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor." God doesn't allow us to accumulate wealth simply for our own pleasures and desires and whatever else, but also that we might share. We can share with those that are less fortunate, those who have need. Also, of course, giving of our income to the Lord's work in direct ministry of one kind or the other. These are very commendable things. It says the person who does that will be "blessed." So, the Lord is more honored by us taking the money that He allows us to have and using it in wonderful ways and helping other people and reaching out to the lost and ministering in the church and helping people that have needs. That is a life of blessing. Those that live that way, not accumulating wealth for their own selfish purposes, but so that they can have money to share with others. That person is blessed by the Lord.

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So, these three days together I trust are helpful to you in understanding God's perspective on finances. Tomorrow we are going to move on to kind of a corollary of this and that has to do with the issue of work. I hope you can join us.

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December 15, 2022

Thank you once again for joining us in our broadcast. We're looking at Proverbs and we are looking at various topics that this book on wisdom gives us to ponder and the instruction it gives us for those things. We looked at money so far this week. We are going to move over to a kind of related issue. That has to do with work. We saw yesterday that one of the ways the Lord wants us to earn money is through hard work. Little by little, gaining, saving, and putting away. So, we are not surprised that Proverbs also has a lot to say about work.

Throughout the Scriptures, anywhere you turn, hard work and working in such a way that we are very diligent about our labor is something God commands. Doing it from the heart and for the Lord's glory and being the best workers/employees/employers that we possibly can be. Proverbs follows up on that theme as well, and we are going to look today starting with Proverbs 22:29, and we see that very thing that I'm talking about right here. God wants us to do our best. "Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men." There is something very commendable about someone who learns a skill and learns how to do it well and does it well. This is commendable to God and it's commendable to people. Such a person then will be skilled in their work, it says, "will stand before kings."

In Proverbs 27:23, he says this, "Know well the condition of your flocks, and pay attention to your herds;" that's another issue about work. If a person was a farmer or a shepherd and they didn't watch after their sheep and their flocks and so forth, if they didn't watch after their ground then it's all going to decay and go in directions they don't want it to go. So, he is saying to them to take good care of what you have. It's going to take work and diligence. If you're going to really take care of your flocks and take care of your property and do the right thing by these things, it will take some work. The better you do that work, the more likely it is that you will flourish in that process. So, he calls on us to be hard workers and to pay good attention to what we have. Don't be negligent. As a matter of fact, he calls the ones that are lazy and negligent in Proverbs sluggards. That's an interesting word, isn't it? Seventeen times or so, he calls such people sluggards. We are going to look at that issue, perhaps, tomorrow.

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In Proverbs 13:11, this is the verse we looked at earlier in the week, it says, "Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles, but the one who gathers by labor increases it." Once again, here's a hard worker. He's not trying to get ahead with schemes or taking advantage of other people or in a big hurry. They're simply doing their work well. As a result of that, they gain extra income, and they can put that away little by little and step by step toward the future. Work is commendable in that way.

Then in Proverbs 11:24-25, it moves to the issue of motivation, "There is one who scatters, and yet increases all the more, and there is one who withholds what is justly due, and yet it results only in want. The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered." It's going to the factor of motivation here. What motivates us to work hard? Some people can become workaholics. Work becomes their god. It's what they live for, and they neglect all other things because of it, even the important things in their life, such as the worship of God, attendance at their church and ministry, and even their own families because they are all wrapped up in their work and getting ahead, and it just becomes their whole life. But it says here that the one who "withholds what is justly due" only results in want. Talking about the person who takes advantage of other people. You can take advantage of other people in many ways, and one of the ways I kind of just indicated here, is if you are taking advantage of your family or the ministry for the Lord because you want to get ahead at work or because work has become too important to you, then that is not going to be the way that God wants you to prosper.

"The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered." Once again, he moves back to generosity. Why is it that we want to work and do a good job? It's to bless other people and it's to honor God. It shouldn't be just for us and our own desires and so forth. It's to be a blessing to those around us, and the hard worker blesses people if they have the proper motivation and the proper balance in their life. That work is respected by other people. You do a good job for other people. You're able to have resources that help other people, and generosity results in a blessing because we are hard at work honoring God, not honoring ourselves.

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I want to follow up on that tomorrow and look at the other side of this. The issue of the sluggard. It's a very interesting word. We will see what Proverbs has to say about it tomorrow.

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December 16, 2022

We are going to complete our week in Proverbs in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast by looking at the issue of work and especially in relation to the sluggard. That's a very interesting term, isn't it? It's used about 17 times in Proverbs to describe the individual who is lazy and is not productive in their work. God is very concerned that we work hard. We saw that yesterday. We put out our best efforts and that we are to be skilled in what we do. The opposite of that is the sluggard as described in this book.

Let's see some of the ways that the sluggard is described in the book of Proverbs. We start with Proverbs 26:13 and we see several descriptions here, "The sluggard says, 'There is a lion in the road! A lion is in the open square!'" The likelihood of a lion being in the road is not too big. It's not too likely, but the sluggard is always looking for an excuse not to do what they ought to do to get the job done. The weather isn't good. It's too hot. It's too cold. Something may be coming down the road. Whatever it might be, they are looking for an excuse. A lion in the road is a pretty big excuse and that's what a sluggard is like.

In Proverbs 26:14-15, they are lazy, "As the door turns on its hinges," I love this, "so does the sluggard on his bed." Back and forth. "The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is weary of bringing it to his mouth again." So, we have this person who is so lazy they are in their bed just tossing back and forth. Too lazy to get out of bed and do what they ought to do, just kind of like a door on hinges. They are so lazy that they put their hand down in the potato chip dip and can't bring it back. This is, of course, somewhat of an exaggeration, but you get the point of what Proverbs is saying to us about that.

On top of that, they often have a know-it-all attitude. Proverbs 26:16 says, "The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give a discreet answer." So, when you argue with a sluggard and try to talk them out of being so lazy, they always have a whole series of reasons why they can't get the job done or they can't go to work today and why they can't complete a project. They have this know-it-all attitude. They've figured out a way to get around work and they spend all that time lining up their

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reasons and they are very difficult to argue with because they think they know it all. It's not a pleasant person to be with.

Looking at Proverbs 10:26, the sluggard is also very irritating, "Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy one to those who send him." Who is more irritating than the one who comes to do a job and doesn't do it right? It's like "vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes." Just irritating. So, you send someone to do a job. They get there to do the job. They either don't do the job, they don't show up on time, or they don't do the job right and it's simply a source of irritation.

We look at Proverbs 20:4, and we pick up on another characteristic of the sluggard. "The sluggard does not plow after the autumn, so he begs during the harvest and has nothing." When the sluggard should be at work he is not. He doesn't want to overwork himself or tire himself out, so he rests. Then when the season goes forward, he has nothing. He hasn't planned ahead. He hasn't prepared or done the work he should have done and so therefore, he suffers in the long run.

Proverbs 21:25 says this, "The desire of the sluggard puts him to death, for his hands refuse to work; all day long he is craving, while the righteous gives and does not hold back." So, the sluggard, as described here, is not a person that doesn't want things, as a matter of fact he wants many things. He desires. He craves after things. He is simply not willing to put in the effort to get them. Therefore, he refuses to work, and he wants others to take care of him. Contrast that to the righteous who are working and out of the produce of what they get from the work, they give to others and do not hold back. It's not saying here necessarily that they are taking care of the sluggards. I think that it is often a big mistake to enable people not to work hard, not plan and prepare, and make it easy for them not to do a job. That's an anathema of Scripture. So, he is not talking about the hard workers taking care of the lazy people. He is simply saying that the hard worker has much that he can share. He not only has enough for himself, but he can share with other people.

So, the sluggard is a negative picture here of a lazy worker. The very opposite of what God wants us to be as His people. As I have said many times, I believe the Scripture teaches that you and I ought to be the best

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employees we can possibly be. Even if they don't like us or don't like our witness or the gospel we teach, they ought to know that we are doing our job well, we are a blessing in the workplace, we are hard workers, we are skilled, and we can be respected for that. That's what God calls for in wise living.

I hope these teachings this week have given you a wonderful week in the Lord and we will see you next week as we go back to Proverbs and look at some other topics.

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December 19, 2022

Thank you once again for joining us for our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're looking at the book of Proverbs. As you know, Proverbs are proverbs. These are general truths that the Lord gives us about the practical living of life with the underlying idea of wisdom. How do you live wisely in a world that is often very foolish? That leads us to our topic for this week. We are going to talk about fools. Not because the book of Proverbs is putting down people and calling them names, but because God doesn't want us to live foolishly. So, one of the devices in Proverbs is to compare and contrast different issues. In this case, comparing and contrasting wisdom with foolishness. By understanding foolishness and understanding what a fool is like, it helps us not to live that way as we want to live wisely. Many years ago, I did a sermon called fool proofing your life. How do you foolproof your life? Proverbs goes a long way towards explaining how to foolproof your life. So, we are going to look at that today and begin that by looking at the three Hebrew words for fool, translated as fool, in our Bibles for that particular issue of foolishness.

The first one is *kesil*. It's found 49 times in the book of Proverbs. Proverbs 15:14 says, "The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on folly." The word fool, used 49 times, it's the most used word, means to be dull or close-minded. So, the foolish person is one who simply does not want to know. They do not want to learn. As we will see later throughout the week they do not want to change. They feed on folly. The human being in their default mode is foolish. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, as we are told. Foolishness is the way the unbeliever lives. Foolishness is the way a Christian can live if they don't live according to the Word of God. Foolishness is our default mode and we feed on foolishness. That's why we run into so many issues. We are so easily deceived because of that.

The second word is *nabal*. Remember that there's a man back in the encounters of David before he became king that he ran into. This man was being foolish, and the story did not end up well. His name was Nabal. I have a hard time believing that his parents actually named him that, because the word means a boor, or insensitive to wise things and to the things of God. Did his parents look at him and name him that? I suppose

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it's possible, but I have a bit of a problem believing that. Most likely this was a nickname for this foolish man, or maybe a name some called him behind his back. Maybe because he lived that way for a while, he kind of relished it. Maybe he liked it. I don't know. I don't guess we can know. But the word itself is only found 3 times in Proverbs and it speaks of this boor, this insensitive person, especially one who is insensitive to the things of God.

Then we also have another word that is found 71 times. It is actually found more often than *kesil*. It's '*ewil*,' and it means lacking sense. A person who lacks sense is a fool. We see it throughout, but I want to take you back to Proverbs 1:7, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction." There's our word. As I said, a person who lacks sense. So, since the book of Proverbs has a lot to do with practical living, he is saying that people who are foolish and live out their foolishness simply lack sense. They look at life as it is. They make observations, and then they make wrong choices. That's a foolish person. That's true in all these practical ways that Proverbs will deal with, but it's fundamentally, and primarily also involving our foolish reactions and relationships with God. We look at God, we examine God, we observe God, we might even do so through His Word, then we make the wrong choices. If we do that, we are living out the life of a fool. So, God does not want us to be fools, obviously, so He talks about what a fool is.

Tomorrow and the next day we are going to look at some of the characteristics, as found in Proverbs, for a fool. I hope you join us, not because you like this topic necessarily, but because none of us wants to actually be fools. So, I hope you can join us.

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December 20, 2022

Thank you for joining us once again for our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. Edwin tells me this is our 700th broadcast on this particular platform. So, we have been doing this awhile. We started at the beginning of the pandemic, and we just haven't stopped. I hope you are getting something out of it and enjoying it. For many of you, I know you start your day by listening to these five minutes or so of opening the Word together, and I hope it's helpful to you before you also move on to your deeper studies and deeper reading of the Word of God.

We're looking at fools in the book of Proverbs and what a fool is like. We are looking today and tomorrow at the characteristics of a fool. What is a fool like? Not so we can poke fun or look down upon such people, but so that you and I do not become foolish ourselves. By knowing what a fool is like, we can also, by contrast, know what a wise person should be like. Proverbs goes both directions on those kinds of things.

We are going to start first, with our first characteristic found in Proverbs 12:15 and that is that a fool refuses to learn and refuses to change. "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel." So, again, in typical Proverbs fashion, we have this contrast to help us understand what he is saying. The fool is right in his own eyes. He is never wrong. He doesn't see himself as wrong. He will resist, as we will see as we read further in Proverbs, he will resist those who try to correct him, reprove him, even challenge him on a minor level because they are right in their own eyes. If you are right in your own eyes and believe that you are always right, then you are never going to change.

That takes us to another similar Proverb that goes along with that. This is very graphic and yet one that is probably best known in the whole book. Proverbs 26:11, "Like a dog that returns to its vomit is a fool who repeats his folly." There's an interesting thought there. If we know dogs, or if we have had a dog, we find that no matter how cute they are and how much we see them as almost like part of our family, we find they do some pretty gross things at times. One of the grossest is to throw up. Then you would think that's done and they are going to walk away, but they return to it and even lap it up. All of us cringe when we think about that, but that's

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what dogs will do sometimes. He says that is what a fool is like here. He repeats his folly. He throws it up. So that's a gross and awful thing, but then turns right back and does the same kind of thing again. So, a fool doesn't change. They don't see a need to change even when things are messed up. They don't get the point and they continue to live in the same fashion.

Proverbs 14:9 gives us another characteristic. They are complacent and they scoff at sin. "Fools mock at sin, but among the upright there is good will." To scoff at sin and make fun of sin and see it lightly and even laugh at the idea of certain sins is a sign of foolishness. It's not a sign of having good humor. It's a sign of being a fool. A foolish person doesn't recognize the gravity of sin. They don't see their own sin as they should. They don't see the sins of others as they should. When we realize that it cost the Son of God His very life to redeem us from sin, that certainly should give us a gravity toward sin and the ugliness of sin. The fool doesn't get it. The fool is complacent with their own sinfulness and the sinfulness of others around them and even at times will mock that sin.

Let's look at one more characteristic today. Proverbs 20:3 tells us that the fool causes strife in his foolishness. "Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, but any fool will quarrel." So, one of the characteristics of a foolish person is that they like to cause trouble and quarrels. They like to be involved in some kind of argument. Are you the kind of person who is at a family gathering, or group of individuals at work, or church, or wherever, and you're the one causing friction and rousing up things that cause division and quarrels and that kind of thing? If that's the kind of person you are and you like that kind of thing, then that's a sign of foolishness. We may all at times for good reasons, or bad, be involved in a disagreement or conflict. That's part of life and Scripture deals with how to handle that a great deal. But to enjoy that and be that person who is always at the heart of quarrels and disagreement and disruption is a sign of a fool, not the sign of a wise and godly person.

So, these are some of the characteristics of a fool that Proverbs looks at with us. We are going to look at three more tomorrow. I hope you join us as we continue this search.

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December 21, 2022

We're continuing our look at the book of Proverbs and looking at the issue of a fool. Again, we are talking in the context of fool proofing your life. God does not want us to act foolishly. God does not want us to be characterized as a fool. He wants us to live wisely, and He wants us to be characterized as wise people. So, throughout Proverbs, we have these contrasts to help us.

We are looking at the ugly side of things and what a fool is like with the hope that we recognize when we are living foolishly, and we deal with it and do not continue down that road. We looked at some characteristics of a fool yesterday, and we are going to look at three more of those today.

Proverbs 10:23 tells us that a fool enjoys being foolish. "Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool, and so is wisdom to a man of understanding." Misbehaving, evilness, wickedness, sinfulness, is like a sport to a fool. Think about a sport. Why do people play sports? They play sports because they enjoy it. It's fun. It's something they like to do because it's entertaining to them. So, the picture here is of one who enjoys and gets his kicks out of being foolish. That is in the context of wickedness. So, doing evil things and wicked things and watching others do wicked things and being involved in that in some way or another is something that the foolish enjoy. Watch yourself for that. Do you get your jollies out of foolishness? Do you find that you see sinful things as humorous? Do you joke and jest about foolish things? Scripture in the New Testament warns about, of course, jesting, and I think that's what it's talking about – making fun or getting our laughs out of sinful behavior. A fool does that. Not a wise person.

Here's the second thing also found in Proverbs 10; a fool will come to ruin. Proverbs 10:8 says, "The wise of heart will receive commands, but a babbling fool will be ruined." In Proverbs 10:10 he says, "He who winks the eye causes trouble, and a babbling fool will be ruined." Twice here in these two verses he says, "a babbling fool will be ruined." In Proverbs 10:8, "the wise of heart will receive commands," he is talking about a characteristic of wise people in that they are willing to listen to others and they are willing to take commandments from those in a position over them. They are

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submissive to those kinds of leadership. That's a characteristic of wisdom. The fool on the other hand simply likes to babble. They like to argue. They like to throw in their two cents and go off trail and follow rabbit trails to who knows where. That's a characteristic of a fool. In Proverbs 10:10 he says, "he who winks the eye causes trouble." In ancient times, winking at other people was not a sign of flirtation, it was a sign of being insincere. It was a sign of deception. It was saying one thing and meaning another. Such a person, he says, causes trouble, and again, a babbling fool will be ruined. That kind of lifestyle of being insincere and not listening to other people, simply wanting to hear your own voice and babble on are all characteristics of a fool, and it will lead them to ruin as the Scripture says here.

Probably the most fundamental aspect or characteristic of a fool is found in Proverbs 1:29, and we are not surprised by this. Another characteristic of a fool is they do not fear God, "Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord." The word fool is not found here, but a characteristic of a fool has already been discovered and that is that they hate knowledge. In other words, they don't really want to know the truth about a certain thing. They want to hear what they want to hear. They want to be told they are doing the right thing even if they are doing the wrong thing. They do not want to be corrected. So, it says here that because they hated knowledge and truth and didn't choose the fear of the Lord, the fear of the Lord is found quite often in the book of Proverbs, and we will deal with that in the future, but it's the idea of recognizing the sovereign majesty of God and who He is in all of His awesomeness, and a fool does not want to see that. The fool wants to see himself as enthroned, not God as enthroned. They like their own judgment. They want to despise God's judgment. That's a characteristic of a fool. Perhaps a key characteristic of a fool. Let us not be foolish. Let us fear the Lord.

If you do so, I guarantee you that you will have a wonderful day in the Lord. I hope that's true of you.

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December 22, 2022

We've been looking at the characteristics of a fool as found in the book of Proverbs this week. We have looked at some of the meanings of the words for fool. We have looked at six different characteristics of fools with the idea that we don't want to be foolish ourselves. We want to be wise. We want to live as God wants us to live – in wisdom.

Now, we are going to talk today and tomorrow about how to deal with fools. We have fools in our lives for example. We have people – looking at others in our lives and not ourselves – who are living according to the characteristics found in Proverbs as foolish. We are going to have people in our lives, unfortunately, that meet those characteristics, and so the wonderful question is how do we wisely deal with such people? Proverbs doesn't leave us empty-handed with that question. We have several things we can do in regard to foolish people.

We are going to look first at Proverbs 26:4, and we are going to say it this way; one of the things we should do when dealing with foolish people is to speak the truth, but do so in love. You will probably recognize that phrase from the book of Ephesians 4 – speak the truth in love. Proverbs 26:4, "Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will also be like him." It's easy when we get into conflict or some kind of discussion that turns the wrong direction with foolish people to become like them. We get down on their level and become angry and speak foolishly to them just as they have spoken foolishly with you. That simply doesn't help. Don't answer a fool according to his folly. Don't speak like a foolish person. Don't become a fool in order to deal with the fool or you will become just like that person. That's what he's saying here. Foolishness does not combat foolishness. Instead, we need to deal with people wisely. So, speak the truth in love. If we have to deal with a foolish person, and we really do have to correct them or rebuke them or whatever, we need to speak the truth and tell them what is true, but let's do it in love. Let's lovingly correct them, rebuke them, speak to them, but do so in truth. Not shirking the truth, but also doing it in love. When that happens, we are going to find that people don't always like that no matter how gently, clearly, and lovingly you speak the truth in love, many people will not like that and unfortunately, most fools will not.

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Proverbs 17:12 says, "Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, rather than a fool in his folly." So, don't be surprised when, like somebody who meets a bear in the woods which has cubs, you find this foolish person turns on you. They do not appreciate what you're saying, and they turn on you and begin to attack you. Don't be surprised by that. Once again don't get down on their level. Don't become like them, but nevertheless, at the same time, we need to deal with them in a wise way. We must take the chance that they are going to be very unhappy with us and turn against us.

Proverbs 23:9 says something very similar, "Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words." That's bothersome to us, isn't it? If we are speaking wisdom and trying to help someone really understand something and we are giving them truth or speaking wisely and doing it according to the manner that God wants us to in love, when we do that we would hope they would see the point and maybe even be appreciative that we bothered to help them and correct them or give them instruction, but unfortunately that isn't common. I wish it were. It's not common even among Christian people. Often, the very first reaction we get from people when we are trying to help them in this way is pushback of one kind or another. So, that's what it says here. "He will despise the wisdom of your words." Again, that's hard, isn't it? Those are hard words and that's why many of us will shirk our responsibility here and we will just simply not deal with the fool at all. I guess there are occasions when we have to simply ignore them. We can't do anything about them, but often the Lord gives us that opportunity to speak with wisdom.

In Proverbs 27:22, another negative here with the foolish person is they may not change no matter what you do. This is a very illustrative illustration here. "Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his foolishness will not depart from him." That's kind of a funny picture, but also a very serious one. Even if you pound away at somebody like you are crushing grain, you may not change that person at all. His foolishness will not depart from him. That's a sad picture of a fool. Of someone you are dealing with their foolish behavior and you're hoping to bring clarity and wisdom to them, and yet no matter what you do and what you say, they simply will not listen, and they will not change.

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So, that's not a really pretty picture here that we have looked at today. In other words, we can't always change foolish people. As a matter of fact, often we will not. Often, we will get pushback and even attacked when we try. That's why most people don't try. Yet if we love them and we do care for them, we're not thinking just about ourselves but also about what is good for them. There are many times when we will need to reach out and try to help somebody in these kinds of circumstances. When we do, it may not go well, but we need to speak the truth in love because we love them, and we want to be helpful to them.

Tomorrow we will follow up with one more picture of dealing with foolish people and what God's Word has to say about that in the book of Proverbs.

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December 23, 2022

We are going to look at foolishness one more time this week. We have been on the subject of fools and foolishness found in the book of Proverbs all week and we have looked at characteristics of fools. We have looked at the Hebrew words for fools. We have been looking yesterday and today at the issue of how we deal with foolish people in our lives. How should we go about trying to help them? What is the wise way of doing so? Proverbs is helping us to not only examine our own selves but look at the potential that we are fools ourselves and need to change and deal with that and helping us to deal with people in our lives that might unfortunately fit those characteristics.

We are going to look at some more things Proverbs says about dealing with fools that are in our world. This one today is a little different and that is that we should simply stay away from them. Yesterday we dealt with those fools in our lives going the wrong direction and how we can help them. We are not wanting to be derogatory by saying that. These are characteristics of somebody who is living in unwise ways, and we are trying to help them. That's how Proverbs is using the word. Let's not pigeon-hole people as fools because they are not like us, but when we recognize that they are going in the wrong direction, how can we help them? That was yesterday's discussion.

Today we are looking at people in our lives that would be characterized by foolishness, but we can't help them. There's simply nothing we are going to be able to do to help them. They might be in our work world where we don't have the position where we can challenge them. It might be that we have simply lived with them or been around them for years and years and nothing changes. It might be in our school situation or our friendships. So, what should we do in those circumstances?

Proverbs 14:7 informs us that there are times when we simply need to stay away from such people. "Leave the presence of a fool, or you will not discern words of knowledge." The things we are going to look at today kind of overlap, but he is saying here that if you are in the presence of a fool, if you are hanging around people that live foolishly, think foolishly, process foolishly, then you are going to start processing like they do. You

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are not going to discern the words of wisdom and of knowledge because your mind is now going to be shaped by the way they think. So, if we recognize that in our own life, because of the people that we are hanging with that our mindset and thinking process has become like that, we might simply have to stay away from such people. We kind of watch that in our world right now when we have so many polarizing ideas running around out there, conspiracy theories and ideas that are not based upon necessarily the full facts, but rumor and so forth. Be careful that you don't hang out with people living and thinking like that so that you don't become like that in your own thinking process. Think wisely. Think biblically. Process your thinking through the Words of Scripture and it might be necessary to stay away from such people.

In Proverbs 13:20, it goes to our behavior. It says, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm." Here we have this very simple Proverb and principle of life found also in the New Testament that who you hang around with and run with will shape the way you live. So, the last verse we looked at is more of our thinking process. This verse is our behavior. If you are going to hang around with wise people, by the definition of wisdom in Proverbs – people who live wisely and live biblically – then you will likely start living more like that. But, if you're going to hang around with foolish people and that's going to be your companionship and your friendships and fellowship, don't be surprised that you start behaving like them. We all know there are circumstances in our lives when we don't have a choice. There are work circumstances. There's schooling. There are times when you're going to be involved with people that are characterized as fools according to the book of Proverbs and you can't do a lot about that, but you do have discernment and discretion with others in your free time, and your friendships and those you choose to be with. So, if you find that you're hanging out with people that live foolishly, be very careful because you will take on their characteristics and Proverbs warns us about that.

In Proverbs 9:8, he goes a little different direction and says, "Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you, reprove a wise man and he will love you." Speaking once again about dealing with fools, he says that if you reprove or try to correct a wise person, you will find that he'll get wiser still. Another Proverb says that he will love you. That's a characteristic of

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wise people. When you correct them, they love you better because you were willing to step up and take that chance to correct them. They're going to love you more. That's a characteristic of a wise person. And if they heed your wisdom and you're giving them true biblical wisdom, they will be wiser still. Proverbs 9:9, "Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, Teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning." A wise person wants to become wiser and wants to live more wisely. Therefore, you have helped them in that endeavor, and they will love you more for it and they will gain insight. On the other hand, a fool or scoffer will hate you for reproof. A scoffer is one who makes fun of wise living. So, if you go to such a person, and that's a characteristic of a fool, and you point out something that is obviously foolish and wrong in their life, they are not likely to thank you for that. They're going to, as it says here, hate you for it. We talked about that a little yesterday. We're not going to be congratulated for stepping up and trying to help somebody who is living foolishly. Nevertheless, that doesn't mean you shouldn't do it, but it does say here to be very careful in the process of doing so. And you're going to learn something else in this process. You'll learn in your world who is wise and who is foolish. You'll learn that when you correct a fool, that they do not gain wisdom, they resist, they push back, and they might even hate you for it. That's a fool, and now you know how to identify that person and how to go about trying to be in their life.

If you correct a wise person and they love you more for it and they gain insight from that, you now know you're dealing with a wise person. This is just wise living. Proverbs tries to take us there. We realize the kind of people and identify the kind of people in our life, so we know how to deal with them. At the same time, we love people who are fools in our life because we even love our enemies. We may be able to help them, and we may not be able to help them, but we want to because we love Christ, and we love His Word, and we love those people. So, we want to help them if we can. These teachings in Proverbs help us get a good handle on how to go about doing that.

I hope this has helped you in your understanding of fools and foolishness in our lives and in the lives of those around us and how to deal with that. We will see you next week as we continue our study of the book of Proverbs.

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December 26, 2022

We once again come together for our devotional time with our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are going to continue the theme we looked at last week which was foolishness. We are spending just one more time on that. I know it's not the most popular subject in the world, but it is an important one and Proverbs has so much to say about that subject which is, of course, the exact opposite of the person who walks in wisdom – which is the theme of the book. Sometimes it's good to know the opposite so we can know the positive, and we have that in spades in the book of Proverbs. We looked last week at fool proofing our lives so we are no longer under the sway of foolishness, no longer living foolishly, and I just want to look at one more thing with you today concerning that. That is the steps away from foolishness. We have identified foolishness and so forth. We have looked at many different issues about it, but I want to look today about how we want to move from foolishness if we recognize it.

The very first thing I would say regarding that is that we do have to recognize that we are living foolishly before we will ever change. The thing is that we don't want to ever admit that we're living foolishly and we certainly don't want to think we are fools even by the biblical definition because a fool is one who is living out of touch with God and living unrealistically and not in reality with the way of God. In Ecclesiastes, which Solomon also wrote, he mentions one place where he calls it insanity. That's a person who simply does not live in reality with the way God has created His universe, how He has created us, and how we are to function. That's really a fool. We have to recognize that we are one before we are going to make any steps toward changing.

So, we have looked at some of these qualities of a fool and the characteristics of a fool. I would encourage you to go back and review those from last week and maybe in addition to that, simply look up the words fool, folly, and foolishness, simplicity, or being simple in a concordance and then look up those verses and see what God says a fool is like and how foolishness is exhibited. Then, if you recognize yourself in those descriptions or even partially where some of the things it describes are things you are doing, you're on the right track toward changing.

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Realizing what you are and that you have these characteristics will not change you per se. The next step is to repent and that's always the case in Scripture when it comes to sin. When we recognize any form of sinfulness, whatever that might be, and really see that, the next thing we must do is to repent or turn from that type of behavior and lifestyle. So, we come to Proverbs 9:6 for that and it says this, "Forsake your folly and live, and proceed in the way of understanding." So, in a typical proverbial fashion, as we find in the book of Proverbs, he gives us the negative first and then the positive. The negative is to "forsake your folly and live." So, that's another way of saying repent. You're going this direction which is wrong and a foolish direction, and you now recognize it for what it is. You're no longer covering it up. You're no longer making excuses for it, you recognize it for what it is. That could be any number of foolish behaviors. So, once you recognize that, it says you forsake it. That is that you turn from it. You abandon it and you turn in a different direction. So, you're going the wrong direction, and you turn around and you go the other direction. That is what he says in the latter part of the verse, "proceed in the way of understanding." You've turned away from the path of foolishness and now you're walking down the path of wisdom, or the path of understanding.

Next, we move from repentance to change. Really, change is a process. He talks about the next thing we should do and that is to learn the way of wisdom in Romans 9:9-11, "Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man and he will increase his learning. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you." He talks about learning the way of wisdom. That begins in Proverbs 9:10 with the whole key verse of Proverbs, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." When we recognize that God is magnificent, awesome, and splendor and we recognize all of these things, then that is the very beginning of wisdom because now we realize that God's way is the only right way and our way is always foolish if we do not go His way. Therefore, we now move in a direction of following the way of God and walking down the pathway of God step-by-step, moment-by-moment throughout our lives and we learn the way of wisdom. That includes changing bad habits and moving to proper biblical patterns of life. That's how a fool becomes a person who is wise.

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So, we leave the topic of foolishness today, and we are going to talk about friendship for the rest of the week. I hope you can join us.

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December 27, 2022

On our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, we had been looking at the issue of foolishness for the last six days. We are going to go to a happier theme for the rest of the week. We are going to look at the issues of friendship. Almost everyone wants to have friends. There's no command, by the way, that says that we must have friends. Of course, the definition of friendship is not always easy to come by either. There are a lot of commands about one another, fellowship, taking care of others, loving others, and we have the joy of others loving us. But when we think of friends, sometimes it's a difficult thing. I think that when Facebook came up with this idea of having friends who would be part of your network on Facebook, that was a stroke of genius because now we have these friends out there who are supposed to care for us. Now, it was a stroke of genius because we can now say we have 100 friends or 500 friends or whatever, it was also a mirage of sorts because most of those people that we would call friends on Facebook are not friends at all. We don't even know many of these people and we don't really care much for most of them, and most of them don't care much for us. They're just acquaintances, or communication contacts, or whatever. But that word friend has been hijacked by Facebook, I think, and is confusing to many people today.

Yet friendship is something that many people want, and a lot of people don't know how to get it. I'm reminded of a song written by Simon, of Simon and Garfunkel, concerning friendship. It's kinda sad, but I think it's where an awful lot of people are. Let me read a few of the lines. It says:

A winter's day
In a deep and dark December
I am alone
Gazing from my window to the streets below
On a freshly fallen silent shroud of snow
I am a rock I am an island
I've built walls
A fortress deep and mighty
That none may penetrate
I have no need of friendship, friendship causes pains

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It's laughter and it's loving I disdain
I am a rock I am an island
And the last stanza reads:
I have my books
And my poetry to protect me
I am shielded in my armor
Hiding in my room safe within my womb
I touch no one and no one touches me
I am a rock I am an island
And a rock feels no pain
And an island never cries

That's a very sad picture of a very lonely man who needs friendship but doesn't know how to find friendship and has come to the place in his life where he is better off without it because whenever he has placed himself in a position of having friends, apparently, those friends turn on him and hurt him. So he has decided that friendship is not for him. He is not going to reach out. He doesn't want anyone to reach out to him. That's a sad place to be and I don't think it's a place where God wants us to be.

Where does He want us to be? In Proverbs 18:24 we see this verse, "A man of too many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." I'm going to look at this verse a little more closely later, but I do want to talk about it for a few moments. The book of Proverbs talks about a person who can have too many friends, and we will talk about that later in the week as to having the wrong kind of friendships that are not helpful to anybody and do not solve any problems, so that's not what we are looking for. But we do have friendships that are commended in the book of Proverbs. Friendships that we need to make our lives what they ought to be. What those are we look for and what kind of friend we ought to be is even more important, and we want to look at that as well. When it says here that "there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother," that should warm our hearts, shouldn't it? To have somebody in our life, or several people that we know are this kind of friend that will stick with us thick or thin no matter what, no matter what our problems are, no matter who we are, even when we are not being very friendly, we have this person that sticks with us. That's a heart-warming thing, isn't it? It's something that I think most everybody wants to have and yet many don't

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know how to develop that kind of friendship and a lot of people, sadly a lot of Christian people, don't have those kinds of friends.

Proverbs addresses the issue of friendship probably as clearly as almost any place else in Scripture. So, tomorrow I want to look at that with you. I want to look at some of the qualities that we should look for in a true friend. So, join us tomorrow as we look at some of those qualities.

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December 28, 2022

Thank you again for joining us for our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are looking at the theme of friendship as found in the book of Proverbs. What we are doing today is looking at some of the qualities of a good friend that are identified in the book of Proverbs. I know a lot of Christians want friends, and a lot of Christians pursue friends, and a lot of Christians don't have much in the way of friendship. So, while that is subjective, and different people have different ideas of what that looks like and even what they want, when we look at friendship – which is commended but not commanded in Scripture and in Proverbs – we find some qualities we should be looking for. So if you want a friend, and if you seek a friend; what should a friend be like? Let's take a look.

Proverbs 18:24 tells us to be loyal. We looked at that verse a bit yesterday. It says, "...but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." So, the very first thing is loyalty. You cannot really have a true relationship of any depth without loyalty. Of course in a marriage, that's number one. Hopefully, if you are married, your very best friend of all is your spouse. That's the way I think it ought to be. And at the very heart of our relationship with our spouse should be loyalty. You can't have much of a marriage and have disloyalty within that bond. So, loyalty is very important, and a friend that sticks closer than a brother is a beautiful way to describe that!

The second quality is the quality of love. Proverbs 17:17, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Also in a marriage, love is key. So, we would recommend that obviously for our friendship with our spouse in marriage, but he is talking more broadly here. He's not talking about a marital relationship per se, he's talking about friendship. He says here in this verse, "A friend loves at all times." I think that is very precious to recognize. It's easy to love people when things are going well and we are having a party atmosphere, but "at all times" a friend loves. When we aren't very pleasant and we aren't at our best and we are going through difficult times and maybe when we even lash back at the person who is trying to be our friend, yet they love us anyway. That's the kind of friend that we want to have. That's the kind of friend that we want to be. I want to emphasize that as we go through these things, not just what kind of friend we are looking for, but what kind of friend we ought to be. We're to

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be ones that love at all times. It says, "a brother is born for adversity," so to have a friendship with someone who is there for us at our difficult times, when things are really going hard and that person reaches back out to us and shows a special love when we are having a most difficult time. That's a true friend.

In Proverbs 27 we see some more qualities of a friend, and one of them is honesty. Proverbs 27:5-6 we need a friend who is honest with us, "Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy." "Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed." A real friend is one who can openly challenge us. We don't often look for that in a friendship. As a matter of fact, it takes a real friend to take the chance to challenge us, rebuke us, talk to us about when they think we have gone wrong. We often think that's an enemy and someone who is against us and contrary to us, but Proverbs describes such a person who is willing to take the chance to challenge and rebuke us as one that truly loves us and the wounds they might cause momentarily are wounds of a friend. They are faithful wounds. They are not deceitful. They're not flattery. They're challenges for our good. That's the kind of friend we need and the kind of friend we need to be. Someone who will be honest with us. Not mean-spirited, of course. Not lashing out. Not being harsh, but someone who speaks the truth in love. That, I believe, is the true definition of a quality of a truly good friend that we ought to have.

Then, one more thing here in Proverbs 27:9, he says, "Oil and perfume make the heart glad, so a man's counsel is sweet to his friend." If we are putting together once again speaking the truth in love, here's a person who speaks to us. Even his rebuking of us is like "oil and perfume" to our hearts. Too much perfume can give us a headache, right? But the right amount smells sweet, he says, and it speaks to our hearts. "So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend." He's not talking about this person that every time they see us they want to challenge and rebuke us and all that. We're not going to have friendship with that kind of person for very long, but when needed, when they come along and speak the truth as we saw in the earlier verses, they do so in a sweet manner and a way of love. That kind of person is a true friend.

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I encourage you to look for friends that have these kinds of qualities. These are the ones we want in our life, and once again, these are the kinds of qualities we want to have in our own friendships for other people. Sometimes that makes it hard to stick by somebody when they're not doing well – to speak into their life when they may reject that – those are hard things, but a true friend will be that kind of person. I hope we can examine these things carefully as we think about who we need as friends, but also as we think about what kind of friend we need to be.

I trust these words today will enable you to have a wonderful day in the Lord.

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December 29, 2022

We're continuing our study today on the book of Proverbs concerning friendship. It's one of the few books in the Bible that actually addresses the subject directly. We are looking at some of the qualities that make a good friend for us and also for ourselves to be that kind of person that is a true friend for others. We saw some of those qualities yesterday.

We are looking in a different direction today. We're looking at some of the friends that we should not have. The type of people that do not make for good friends and the type of people we want to stay away from.

We are looking at Proverbs 22:24-25, it says, "Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself." This is an important verse because if the people you run with, the people that you are friends with, are angry people, mean-spirited, or harsh, you want to get away from those especially when you have the same propensity. If you lean toward anger yourself, or if you lean toward harshness and being a cynical mean-spirited person, you want to be around people that are not like that. I know I have had some friends over the years, and I still have many friends like this whose sweet disposition and kindness is a challenge to me. Sometimes it's a rebuke and a magnetic – I want to be more like that because I'm around people that I recognize have these calm, sweet and gracious attractive spirits. But, if I'm around people that are mean, or naturally angry and lash out and are harsh or that are picking on other people, then I can easily pick up on those same disciplines and ideas. That is not what I want to do and not what you want to do. So, Proverbs is very practical here. Stay away from such a person because it says you may learn his ways. So, stay away from an angry person.

I know we can't always do that. There are circumstances in our lives and work and family situations in which we simply have no choice but to be around people that we wouldn't normally be around. When we are talking about friendships – people that we really choose to be with and spend our time with – we want to look for people with sweet, common, and gracious spirits, not angry spirits.

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In Proverbs 24:1-2 it talks about not envying different ones. It says, "Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them; for their minds devise violence, and their lips talk of trouble." So, don't be jealous of evil people. If you see in a person the quality of something that is sinful and you like that and want to be like that because for some reason that is attractive to you, it tells us don't do that. Don't be around that and don't envy that. Don't desire to be with them. So, once again, stay away from people who have sinful traits in their lives that attract you. We all have different attractions, different things that we find interesting or fun or whatever, and if you are around people that are like that and you know that what they're doing is wrong, then stay away from them. You see that sometimes, for example, in teenagers. They hang around their friends who are like them. I remember one time being a camp counselor for the summer. I had a new set of kids that showed up each week from junior high and up, and it was amazing how several, maybe one hundred or more kids, came to camp all at once and on the first day, the difficult kids, the stinkers, found each other. I don't know how they did that. They didn't have signs saying I want to cause trouble, but somehow within the first day, they all found each other, they ran in a pack, and they caused mischief and trouble for other people. Don't do that. Don't look for somebody who is going the wrong direction and join up with them. Stay away from them. Proverbs makes that abundantly clear in this passage of Scripture.

Then going back to our passage earlier in Proverbs 22:10, to actually aggressively remove them from your life. It says, "Drive out the scoffer, and contention will go out, even strife and dishonor will cease." That might have a broader application, perhaps this has the application of some kind of assembly or grouping of some sort in which you have someone who is scoffing and causing disruption and conflict and quarrels, and maybe it's talking to the leader to get rid of those people so as not to allow them to spoil the rest of them. But I think it also has applications for us in our friendships. If we are gathering with a group of people that are causing this kind of disruption, "drive them out" it says. Get rid of such people, or perhaps remove yourself from such people if you possibly can because they will cause disgrace and you don't want to be part of that disgrace.

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On a positive side, however, we should be striving for wisdom. Looking at Proverbs 2:10-15 it talks about the value and greatness of wisdom, "For wisdom will enter your heart and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; Discretion will guard you, understanding will watch over you, to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things; From those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness; Who delight in doing evil and rejoice in the perversity of evil; Whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways." What he's saying here is he is describing a person going the wrong direction, a fool, as described in the book of Proverbs. He is saying that wisdom will deliver you from such a person. The key is to have that wisdom that God wants for us. When we have the wisdom of God, beginning with the fear of the Lord, then we will more readily recognize foolish people. People that cause problems. People that lead us astray. People that we really do not want in our lives. So, the real key to not walking in foolishness and not developing friendships with people that will lead us astray is to walk in the way of wisdom.

This has been the teaching all the way through the book of Proverbs, hasn't it? You and I ought to desire, with all of our hearts, to walk in the ways of God, in the ways of wisdom, and if we do, as we walk in the ways of wisdom, then that will guard us and protect us from the ways of foolishness. That's our safeguard.

We are going to look at one more situation concerning friendship tomorrow, then we will finish with this topic. I hope you can join us as we do that tomorrow on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast.

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December 30, 2022

We have been talking all week on the subject of friendship and we are going to look at it one more time today. We are going to look at some very practical advice regarding friendship as found in the book of Proverbs.

Looking at Proverbs 3:27-30, I am going to turn it around a little bit today. We have been talking mostly about the qualities of a good friend and what we should do if we have bad people in our lives concerning getting rid of various people that would cause trouble – the kind of friends we don't want to have. I want to talk today largely about us and our friendship. The kind of friend that we ought to be. I think a lot of problems that people have when looking for friends is they are looking for someone who will come into their life to bless them, to help them, and to be there for them and comfort them whatever they are looking for. As a result of that, they become very needy and many people don't want to be around them. They don't want to be their friends because they realize this person is pulling from them, drawing from them, and they are not giving a whole lot back. The key to friendship, and I think the key to true love which should be at the heart of friendship, is the fact that we want to be a blessing to others. We want to help others. We want to be a true biblical friend for others. When we are that kind of person and we are reaching out and trying to be of help and friendship and blessing to other people, we will find ourselves immersed with good friends. Maybe so many friends we won't even know what to do with them because there are so many in our lives, but you're going to find a lot of people who will be your friend because you are a friend. Not because you're needing their friendship, but because you are reaching out in true love and friendship to them. So, I want to talk about that for the rest of our time together.

Here should be our goal: Proverbs 3:27-30, "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, 'Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it,' when you have it with you. Do not devise harm against your neighbor, while he lives securely beside you. Do not contend with a man without cause, if he has done you no harm." The picture here is us reaching out to them.

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Especially the first line which sets the agenda, I think, "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due." Can you do good to someone? Can you look around you and see that there is someone in your life that you can do good to? They may not be the easiest person in your life. They may not be the person you naturally gravitate toward. That's not what he's talking about here. He's talking about doing good simply because God has called us to love, not only Him, but our neighbor. When we are loving people like that and we're looking for opportunities to do good to others, others will see that in our lives and they will recognize the kind of person that we are and the kind of person that we ought to be. We are going to have people that want to be our friends as well as us being friends to them.

In Proverbs 15, our behavior affects others. One of the best-known verses, I think, in the book is Proverbs 15:1, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." When we are thinking about friendships, do we recognize how we affect others with the way we speak? You will find, and I've actually seen this tested in my own life, that when somebody comes to me, perhaps upset and angry with me, possibly justifiably, and I do not retaliate but I respond in gentleness, their anger often mitigates in a hurry. They just turn, sometimes almost on a dime, because they may have come looking for a fight and I'm not there to fight. Instead I'm giving them a gentle answer and that kind of turns their anger. Now, if I respond in kind and I have a harsh word for them, that will stir up anger.

So, what kind of friend should I be? I should be a friend not looking for a fight. Not looking for a problem. I should be a friend who is speaking graciously even to those who, perhaps, are not being gracious with me.

In Proverbs 15:18, speaking of how we are to respond to people, it says, "A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute." So, that's kind of the same as what Proverbs 15:1 said but in a little bit of a different way. If you want to cause trouble, if you want to have war in your camp, then be a hot-tempered person. Be easy to fly off the handle and to speak harshly back to someone who has spoken harshly to you. "But the slow to anger calms a dispute." To simply not get angry very quickly and be gentle with that person is the kind of friend that we ought to be.

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Then we go to Proverbs 25:17, and here is a very practical piece of advice that is kind of different from the others. It says, "Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house, or he will become weary of you and hate you." That's almost a humorous remark, but I think it has a lot of wisdom to it. Sometimes when people want friendships so badly and they kind of overwhelm a person, those people pull away from us. It's not that they don't like us or don't want to be around us, but perhaps enough is enough. Let them want to be around us and not be overwhelmed by our presence. What an interesting verse. "Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house." Don't make a habit of going over too often or too much. Don't overwhelm and smother people less you are more than they want to have in their life. Be a friend, but don't overwhelm. Don't smother. Reach out. Love. Be the kind of person that would make a good friend and you will find that you will have many people that will probably want to be your friend as well, but if they don't reach out to you and you don't develop a lot of friendships, that is not the biggest problem in the world. Scriptures call for us to love one another even when others don't love us.

So, I think as we close out this subject of friendship: we should be a good friend, love one another, and reach out in every possible way we can to demonstrate the love of Christ in the wisdom of Christ. If others don't reach back out to us, then they don't reach out, but we have followed what the Lord wants us to follow and we're being the kind of person and friend God wants us to be.

I hope you have many good friendships in your life, but I hope that most of all you are a good friend.

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January 2, 2023

Thank you for joining us for another week of our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are looking at the book of Proverbs. If you want to turn to Proverbs 3 today, we will be looking at that particular section of Proverbs. Proverbs is a book that helps us in so many ways. It's very practical and full of wisdom. That's what it's about – the wisdom of walking God's way. There probably is no better known and loved portion of Proverbs than Proverbs 3:5-7. People have memorized this. They put it on plaques. They sometimes call it their life verses. Sometimes it's misused, but it is a wonderful passage of Scripture.

Proverbs 3:5-7 reads like this, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil." You see why, if you haven't been versed in this passage before, why it's so loved and so valuable. It talks to us about our need for guidance in life and the Lord's provision in that. As we think about it, we look at these verses telling us that our understanding is inadequate and therefore we need God's and we need to acknowledge Him in that. And it says here that He will make your paths straight, or lead you in the right way, which is very valuable. The point is, and where people sometimes go astray, when we trust in the Lord, He will give us some kind of supernatural and mystical guidance through our feelings, insights, thinking, or even dreams, and that is definitely not what the passage is talking about. It is telling us that there is a way to go. A right way to go and it's a path that the Lord leads us on, and that path is outlined for us in the Word of God and in particular in the book of Proverbs. The Proverbs are teachings that show us the pathway of God. How God wants us to live and the results of living that way and the consequences of not living that way.

So, understood properly, we are not wise in our own eyes as is said in the next verse, "fear the Lord," one of the major themes in Proverbs that we will be looking at next week, "and turn away from evil." So, there is this powerful passage. Part of that guidance from God has to do with what we call discipline and that's going to be our keyword for the week. That's what we are going to be looking at. It's not always a welcomed term or idea.

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Very few of us like discipline. We don't like to be disciplined by others. We don't necessarily like to discipline ourselves. The word itself is the idea of being trained, and although most of us recognize the value of a good coach who would train us in a particular area of discipline, we often rebel against that. Yet, when we come to the book of Proverbs, the Lord talks about the value and the importance of discipline. It talks about God's discipline for us, that's what we will look at for the next couple of minutes. Then it turns a lot to the issue of parental discipline of children. We will spend three days on that. Finally, we will look at the proper response to discipline, and then there are consequences of an improper response.

So, as we are looking at God's discipline of us, we have already looked at these great verses in Proverbs 3, I want to look at Proverbs 3:11-12 where Solomon says this, "My son," he is apparently addressing his own son, "do not reject the discipline of the Lord or loathe His reproof, for whom the Lord loves He reproofs, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights." So, we are off to a good start as he tells us, concerning God's handling of our lives, God's reproof of our lives, God's discipline of our lives that our tendency in our sinful, rebellious nature is to reject whatever the Lord brings our way that we don't like. Any reproof or correction to the direction that we're going, any area of discipline of that type, tends to be rejected in our fallen flesh. But he says don't do that and don't reject this discipline of the Lord or hate His reproof of us, instead recognize the motive behind what the Lord is doing. The Lord loves those he reproofs. The only reason why the Lord bothers to correct us, reproof us, and discipline us is because of His infinite love for us. He cares so deeply for us that He does not want us to go in the wrong direction. He wants us to stay on His path. Just like a father loves his son so much that he disciplines his son, so God loves us so much that He disciplines us.

So, that's God's discipline in our lives. We ought to love it, and we ought to invite it. We are going to turn tomorrow and the next two days after that at mirroring God's discipline in our families as parents discipline their children. We will see you tomorrow.

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January 3, 2023

Thank you for joining us once again in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. As we are marching through the book of Proverbs, we are looking at various themes that are found in the book of Proverbs. As we mentioned early on in this study most of the Proverbs are random. They're not a contextual type of thing where you have a particular subject and 15, 20, or 30 verses that deal with that subject. They are Proverbs written in random order. So, to put it together in a theme, we have to be selective and jump around and see what the Proverbs teaches us concerning various issues. The issue we are looking at this week is discipline.

Yesterday we looked at God's discipline for us. The Lord loves us so much that He desires to keep us on a straight path: His path. The only right path. At times He needs to correct our walk, our lives, in order to keep us going that right direction. If we're not corrected by God in that way, we tend to wander off and chase all sorts of wrong things in wrong directions, so the Lord pulls us back to the right path as we saw in Proverbs 3 yesterday.

The next few days we are going to look at how we are to mirror God's pattern of discipline as parents. So, many of you that are listening to this broadcast are parents, or you have opportunities to be influential over parents, and the book of Proverbs has an awful lot to say about parenting and how we are to raise our children. One of the major tools that God gives us to do that is discipline. We will look at some of the principles concerning discipline as parents for our children in Proverbs.

The first thing we would say is that we need to mirror God's pattern. If God is the perfect parent, then we could do no better than to be like Him, right? We should pattern our raising of our children, including in the area of discipline, as we see God doing with us and those that He loves so much. So, we are looking right now at Proverbs 13. We are going to look at two principles concerning parenting and discipline found in the book of Proverbs. In Proverbs 13:24, he says this, "He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently." This is one of the verses used for corporal punishment which is kind of on the outs among most people in America and the world today, even among many Christians. The idea is that if you spank a child, for example, that you are abusing that

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child. While we would admit that you can abuse a child through spanking because you spank with wrong motives, for example, you spank in anger or you spank too harshly, that can be abuse, and we have to always be very careful that that is not what we do. But the Proverbs are talking, when it speaks of the rod, about corporal punishment and one, but not all, of the tools that God gives us for disciplining our children, involves corporal punishment. So, spanking a child is not an evil thing. It's not a bad thing. It's an honorable thing when done as God wants us to do it. It's one of the means by which God has historically, throughout the ages, helped us to be parents that raise children who walk with God.

So, when he says here, "He who withholds his rod hates his son," that's just the exact opposite of what most people believe today. People teach today, even among Christian circles, that if you spank a child that's an act of hate or anger, and it can be as I just said a moment ago, but it does not need to be whatsoever. As a matter of fact, Proverbs says here, that if you don't deal with your child in this way, then you hate your son. Not that you love your son, but that you hate your son. I think the idea is this, one reason why many parents will not spank a child or deal with them in a very strong way of discipline, because spanking is not the only tool here, but one of the reasons they don't want to do that is they are concerned that the child may not like them and that the child may even hate them because of the strong discipline brought into their lives. Yet, when we turn it around in Proverbs, it says that if you don't discipline your child as you ought to discipline them, we hate them. Then it goes to the other side and says, "But he who loves him disciplines him diligently." So diligent discipline is a means of showing love, not a means of showing hatred as the Proverb says here.

One more principle, discipline gives hope. Proverbs 19:18 says, "Discipline your son while there is hope, and do not desire his death." While there is hope, discipline your child. I think the idea is this, as we discipline our children, we give them hope because we are helping to correct their behavior that they need corrected, and down deep inside, they probably know that but are unable in themselves to make that correction. By helping them as parents by disciplining them and correcting them, it enables them to have hope that there is change possible. Change that is beneficial and good for them.

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So, those are two of the principles that we have concerning discipline with children as parents. We will look at a couple more tomorrow. I hope you can join us.

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January 4, 2023

We're happy you are taking a little time to join us this morning as we open the Word of God for about five minutes or so to discuss issues, right now in the book of Proverbs. We're looking at themes developed in the book of Proverbs and the issue this week, the theme we are looking at, is the area of discipline. We have looked, first of all, at the discipline that God brings into our own lives because He loves us and wants to correct us so that we walk in the paths that are straight, the paths He has set before us. He loves us so much that He does not allow us or want us to wander, and He will bring discipline into our lives to draw us back to the straight paths. So, we have seen that discipline on God's part for us, and then we find that we are now given instructions on how to mirror that type of discipline as parents raising children. I trust many of you watching this currently are parents as well as those who may have some influence in that regard.

We're looking at the next principle today and that's found in Proverbs 22:6. We looked at two principles yesterday, those being that discipline reveals love and gives hope. In Proverbs 22:6, we're going to look at the most well-known verse in Scripture, I suppose, on the issue of discipline and raising and training children. That's Proverbs 22:6, and we find that discipline provides direction. It says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it." Like I said, this is probably the best known and most treasured verse in the book of Proverbs, maybe the whole Bible, when it comes to training children because it seems to give us a promise that our children are going to turn out alright if we just train them properly. So, it's a good time for us to mention that the book of Proverbs is exactly that. It is a book of Proverbs. General truths. General teachings that when followed properly usually end up with certain results. Proverbs are not promises. I really want you to catch that. He is not promising in this verse, and many other of the Proverbs, that if you do x then y will result, or that there will be that exact correlation. It is not a promise that if you train up a child in the way he should go, which is also the same way that God is training us to go, back in Proverbs 3:7, that that child eventually will be okay, "when they are old they will not depart from it." It's not a promise.

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So, let's think that through for just a moment or two. If it were a promise, then any person who raised a child who went astray would have to look back at themselves and say I've done something desperately wrong or my child would not be that way. They would carry a load of guilt for the rest of their lives that is unwarranted, probably. Now we all admit this: none of us are perfect parents. We all fail. We will look back, after we have raised our children, as I have done, and we look back and wish we could erase different things we did and said. We wish we had a restart button. We know we are not perfect parents. We know we make mistakes. We will never be able to train our children perfectly, and we know that. It's only by God's grace that anyone walks with Him. But, we are still called to do the very best we can with what we know and our instruction in Scripture.

The good news is, this is a general Proverb that says in a general sense that a child raised and trained properly will ultimately turn back to that, so even if a child strays during part of his/her life, many times they do return to the ways of the Lord and had they not had the proper training in childhood and the background and the Scriptures and seeing an example of godly living in the lives of their parents and other Christians, they would have nothing to fall back on, and so this training is not lost even if a child strays for a period of time and we never know in this life. As long as there is life, there is hope. We never know if those children might come back. The discipline we give them, the training that we give them, is for direction in life and that's an important thing we should remember.

Secondly, Proverbs 22:15 we have another of the principles concerning discipline and that is that it can save their lives. It says, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him." The principle may be said better as this proper discipline drives folly out of the heart of the child.

Here's another verse of Scripture that I would say is rejected, neglected, ignored, or challenged by almost everyone in the world, but even among many Christians. That is the fact that folly resides in the heart of a child. A child is born foolish. That's hard for people to imagine especially when that child is young and seems to be just the sweetest little thing they could possibly be, but buried deep in the heart of every child is the idea of foolishness, going the wrong direction and making the wrong choices. We

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are born with a sinful, corrupt nature. Proverbs makes that clear in its own way.

“Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child,” but “the rod of discipline will remove it far from him.” So, one of the tools, not the only tool, but one of the tools that God gives us to drive folly and foolishness out of the heart of our children is proper discipline. Other tools are the instruction of His Word, the model or example of our own lives and having them around others within the body of Christ who are living for the Lord. Various other tools are there, like prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. But one of the tools we are given is the proper discipline of our children, which includes at times – especially when they are young – a corporal discipline, and that is a means that God gives us to help us discipline our children so that they might walk with God.

So, don't neglect that. Keep in mind that your children are not born wise. They are born foolish, and the Lord gives them parents to help take away some of that foolishness from their lives through discipline and instruction. So, discipline plays a major role in that.

We will look at a couple more of the principles concerning parental discipline tomorrow. I hope you can join us.

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January 5, 2023

I hope you have your Bibles with you this morning. We are looking at the book of Proverbs and we are looking at the theme of discipline in the book of Proverbs. The discipline that starts with God's discipline of us as He corrects us so that we might stay on the right path. Then, the discipline that parents should mirror of God's discipline as they raise their children. We should discipline and train our children in patterns that God has given us in the way in which He deals with us, His children, whom He loves. So, we are looking at some of those principles and we have already looked at four principles concerning discipline found in Proverbs. First, we have seen that it reveals love. True discipline reveals love because we love our child so much that we want them to walk on the right pathway. It also gives hope because it allows a child to see that as they are disciplined and trained and changed, their pathway is straight and life is working out much better for them. It gives them hope. A third principle is that it provides direction in our lives. It trains us to walk in a way that we wouldn't normally walk because that is not our normal bent. So, it trains us. Fourth, it drives away folly. Our normal bent is toward folly and foolishness. So, foolishness is bound up in our hearts and so discipline drives it from us.

Here's the fifth principle. Proverbs 23:13-14 tells us that it saves their lives. "Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with the rod, he will not die. You shall strike him with the rod and rescue his soul from Sheol." So, rather than discipline killing or abusing a child, it helps the child. It rescues them from the consequences of their own sinful behavior. Sin is not only bad and awful; it also carries with it consequences. Some much worse than others, of course, but if we can spare a child that sinful behavior and that consequence; how much we have loved them! How much we have demonstrated and shown them true love through that discipline. So, he says not to hold it back and resist. You will help them and save them from Sheol. Sheol in the Old Testament was death. It is just a picture here of basic, all-together destruction. It will save them from a life of disruption and destruction.

Another principle is found in Proverbs 29:15 and this verse says, "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother." The next principle is that it gives wisdom. Not only are you

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correcting a child from folly and going the wrong way, but you also instruct them through that correction in the right way to walk and live and that is the way of wisdom in the book of Proverbs. If we do this, this particular verse says that a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother. What a sad thing. We think that by not disciplining a child and letting the child do his/her own thing, that somehow we love them more that way. That's not what the Bible teaches. If we love our child, we discipline them and help them go the right path. Those who do not do that are inviting a lifestyle of that child that will eventually turn back on the parent and bring them shame, hurt, and pain because that child is going their own way: the wrong way.

That leads to another principle here that's kind of on the backside of that in that a child that is properly disciplined brings comfort and delight to their mom and dad. Proverbs 29:17, "Correct your son, and he will give you comfort; he will also delight your soul." What parent who raises their children would want to raise a child to give them pain and unhappiness throughout the rest of their life? You raise a child for eighteen or twenty years, that child goes out and then turns bad and goes the wrong direction and does shameful and awful things and it brings back pain and hurt and suffering to the parent. That is not the goal of any parent that I could ever imagine. So, it says here, to correct and he will give you comfort. The goal here in this regard is that I'm going to raise a child so that they will walk in the ways of God. Because they are walking in the ways of God, that will not only be good for that child and their life going forward, but that will come back on us as a parent and bring us joy and happiness and comfort and a good relationship with your children as they grow up to adulthood themselves. We will be able to have good friendships and joyful memories with our children because they are giving us comfort here. But, a child who gets his own way as it says in Proverbs 29:15, "brings shame to his mother". That's the opposite of this. The one who does his own thing and walks in folly and lives in foolishness, you can almost guarantee will bring shame, hurt, and pain to their parents and later, life.

Discipline, as this final principle that we will look at in Proverbs tells us, is geared to help our children to walk in wisdom, walk the pathway that God has laid out for them, and we're in teamwork with God to raise a child like

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that. A wonderful result that comes back to us as parents who do that is to have children who bring us comfort and not shame.

So, these are wise words in the book of Proverbs and some very powerful principles that we should pay very close attention to. We're going to close up our week concerning discipline by looking at some of the responses to discipline, both good and bad, that are found in the book of Proverbs. I hope you can join us tomorrow.

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January 6, 2023

We are looking together at the book of Proverbs concerning the theme of discipline this week. We have looked at God's discipline of us and why He does it out of the motivation of love and keeping us on the right path. We spent three days looking at principles that reflect God's love and discipline for us that parents should follow in raising their own children. We will close up the week by looking at the responses to discipline, both good and bad.

We're starting here with Proverbs 6:20, and one of the responses that God would have us have to discipline is to heed it, or follow it. Look at this verse, it says, "My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; bind them continually on your heart; tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake they will talk to you." This is very similar to what we see in Deuteronomy 6 when it talks about telling the people of Israel to go into the land and when they go into the land here is what they are to do with the Word of God, and how their parents should train their children to handle the Word of God and live by the Word of God. This is very, very similar to that Deuteronomy 6 passage. He is talking now, directly to the recipients of instruction and discipline. He says, "my son".

How are we as children of parents to handle the discipline and instruction that comes our way? Even as children of God, how are we to handle God's discipline and God's instruction in our lives? He tells us here, and he is talking to his son in this case, and he is saying to listen to what your father has to say and listen to what your mother is trying to teach you. When he says to "tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you;" these are all pictures of how influential these teachings and instructions given by a godly mom and dad should be in our lives. Remember, as we said a couple days ago, these are Proverbs. They are not absolute truths. So, that means that not every child has a parent that is going to lead them in the way of righteousness. Sadly, many children have delinquent parents. Many children have godless parents who are actually teaching them to go the wrong direction. It's just sad and ugly and breaks our hearts to know that that is true. But, it is true. Those kinds of parents will not lead you into the way of righteousness. But

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the parents, who in themselves are heeding the instruction and disciplines of God, can now take those same instructions and disciplines and talk to their children, guide their children, and train their children in those things. So, as parents do that, the wise child will listen, pay attention, heed, and follow that kind of instruction. They will be blessed for having done so.

Here's another response we are given to discipline and that's Proverbs 12:1, "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid." Here is our second response. We are to love discipline, proper biblical training, godly training, and proper correction and reproof. If you hate correction, he says you're "stupid". That's pretty clear, isn't it? If you won't be corrected and won't let others speak into your life and show you areas where you're wrong when you're going the wrong direction, that is foolishness, that's stupidity. But the one who loves discipline and accepts correct discipline from God through His Word, godly people, from parents; that individual is one who loves knowledge. They love truth and that will reflect in every area and aspect of their life.

Here's one more response. Those were two positive responses. Now, there is a negative one mentioned in Proverbs 29:1, "A man who hardens his neck after much reproof will suddenly be broken beyond remedy." That's a sad verse, isn't it? The person who constantly resists and hardens themselves against proper correction and instruction from God and godly people, including parents; the one who does that will suddenly be broken beyond remedy. So, the consequence of rejecting the truth is ruin. The consequence of rejecting proper discipline and instruction, from God or those who are godly, is to invite ruin into our lives. Pay close attention to that because when we resist, out of pride or anger or whatever is going on in our hearts, someone who is trying to help us walk in righteousness, or even God Himself and His Word; when we resist that, the option is ruin. It will lead to the consequences of destruction in our life. That's an awful consequence. No one, of course, wants that; but many invite that by resisting the proper correction, training, and discipline that the Lord provides to us in His Word and through His godly people and godly parents.

This has been our discussion on discipline. I hope it's been helpful. I trust you will have a wonderful weekend in the Lord.

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January 9, 2023

Well, we are ready for a new theme in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are in Proverbs, but we are looking at different topics that are in the book of Proverbs, and one that I think is often minimized or ignored today is the issue of the fear of the Lord. We want to talk a whole bunch about the love of the Lord and the compassion of the Lord and the mercy and grace and all those things are, of course, wonderful themes. But the fear of the Lord is not absent in Scriptures and it's very important and it's very important in the book of Proverbs.

The fear of the Lord is found about thirty times, directly as far as the terminology, in the Old Testament. It's not found as often in the New Testament, but it is found in 2 Corinthians 5:11 as one of the motivations for why the apostle Paul does what he does. So, it is not absent from the New Testament, and it should be part of the Christian life and the Christian experience. We are going to spend this week looking at the fear of the Lord as found in Proverbs. The book deals with three major questions about the fear of the Lord.

We will begin today by looking at what it is. What is the fear of the Lord? If you have your Bible, we are going to be in Proverbs 3:7 in just a moment to see some ideas about what the fear of the Lord is. The fear of the Lord in Proverbs, and in other places, is not so much defined as it is described. So our definition is going to draw from the descriptions of what it is and what it's not and what it does. So, we will start off with the idea of what is the fear of the Lord? What is this description?

I'm going to give you a quote by Jonathan Edwards. He is a well-known American Puritan who is very famous. Some believe he was the greatest theologian that America has ever produced. He said this about the fear of the Lord, and I think it's very good, "If men fear God as they fear the devil, they flee from Him, but if they fear Him as He really is then they will flee to Him." That's a good quote because that really gets the essence of what the fear of the Lord is about. If you think that fearing the Lord is such that you cringe at the thought of Him, you're afraid to approach Him in prayer, for example, that you live under the shadow of the judgment of God; then you don't understand the fear of the Lord especially as related to the Christian.

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We know of the wrath of God. That's real in Scripture, and God's wrath comes on people who are in disobedience to Him. But that's not what the fear of the Lord is supposed to generate in our lives. When we truly understand the fear of the Lord and who He is, we will be drawn to Him because we will adore Him, and we will worship Him and we will realize He is worthy of our love. If we fear Him as we fear the devil, like he says, we will run because we are afraid of Him and afraid of what He will do to us. That's the wrong understanding of the fear of the Lord.

Proverbs 3:7, let's take a look at the first part of the description of the fear of the Lord in this well-known passage. It says, "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil." So, the first thing we get, the first description of what the fear of the Lord means in Proverbs is that it is the way of the Lord. To fear Him is to walk in His ways. It is to turn away from evil and it's to not be wise in our own eyes. The opposite of that is believing that we're right and that we're going in the right direction without any need of His leadership or His instruction. That is a person who does not understand what the fear of the Lord is all about. If you truly fear the Lord as the Scriptures define that and describe that, then you will recognize the great importance of walking in His pathway as He leads us.

The next verse, Proverbs 3:8 tells us some of the results of fearing the Lord are very therapeutic. It says, "It will be healing to your body and refreshment to your bones." A lot of people would run from God thinking that the fear of the Lord is a cringing thing and we want to stay out of His radar. We don't want to even be noticed by God if possible; yet this passage tells us that when we are walking in His way, in the fear of the Lord, that our bodies will be healed and we will have refreshments in our bones. I don't really think he is talking about physical healing. I think he is giving us a metaphor of that here. This will be therapeutic to your life. It will give us refreshment. It will give us healing in all the right ways because we are walking in His pathways because we fear Him.

We are going to follow up on this tomorrow and look at a couple more descriptions of what it means to fear the Lord. I hope you can join us.

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January 10, 2023

Again, thank you for joining us on this short broadcast that hopefully starts your day well with the Lord looking into His Word. The goal is to give you a wonderful day in the Lord as you approach His Word and as you approach Him and benefit and are fed by the Scriptures. We're looking at the fear of the Lord today and all week. We started yesterday by looking at some of the descriptions of the fear of the Lord. As I said yesterday, the term fear of the Lord is not so much defined as it is described. How do you know that you're walking in the fear of the Lord? What would be the signs of that? We looked at the first one yesterday with that one being that we're not walking in our own wisdom. We are not wise in our own eyes. So, those who are fearing the Lord walk His way. We recognize His way is the best way. We're not resisting that and we're not rebelling against that and therefore we recognize His greatness, His awesomeness, and we walk in that. That's the first description.

Today in Proverbs 8:13, we look at another description, and that is that we will hate evil. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate." So, he is looking at a negative thing here. So, you know you fear God and you fear the Lord properly when you hate the things that God hates. We can turn that around and say that we know that we fear the Lord when we love the things that God loves. So, in proverbial form as found in the Scriptures, we can have the negative and the positive. The negative is found here. We will hate evil. We will hate the things that God hates. So, as we go through the Scriptures, we find many, many places where we see the things that God despises. The sinfulness of humanity. The evilness that goes around. The wickedness. All these things God hates, and all these things God will ultimately bring His judgment upon those who live this way in this kind of sin. So, God hates these things. God despises these things. The Lord Jesus went to the cross to pay for our sins. His judgment will come upon those who reject the mercy and atonement of the cross. So, God hates these things.

So, our question is; do we hate the things that God hates? I know that we're not always in perfect sync with God and there are times even when we hate something we still do it and God forgives us of those times when

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we repent of those sins. But, overall, the overarching direction of our life should be that we hate the things that God hates and we're dealing with those things moment-by-moment in our lives.

Again, we will turn it around. We should love the things that God loves. What does God love? Of course, Scripture is clear about many of those things as well. God loves the righteous person who is living in righteousness. God loves a cheerful giver. God loves those who live for other people unselfishly as Christ did. God loves the world because He loves humanity. God loves people. Do you love people? Do you care about the lost? Do you care about those around you in need and those who are hurting in one way or the other? God loves these kinds of things and many others. So, do you love what God loves and hate what God hates? A third description as we look at that is Proverbs 14:2. That is that the fear of the Lord is revealed in our walk and how we walk. It says, "He who walks in his uprightness fears the Lord, but he who is devious in his ways despises Him." So, our everyday life, our walk, it says here demonstrates whether or not we fear the Lord. To walk in uprightness then is to basically walk in obedience. So, here is how God has pointed us. This is the direction He has taken us. Here's what He says we are to do and here's how we are to live. If we are walking in that way, then we are walking in uprightness. So, we are living out the life that God saved us to live. When we are doing that then we are walking, in essence, in the fear of the Lord.

On the other hand, the negative is the one, "who is devious in his ways despises Him". So if we are trying to trick God, which is impossible by the way, if we are trying to work around God and do our own thing and not obey Him, then we are first of all deceiving ourselves, and secondly we despise Him, he says. So, we can't say we love God or we fear the Lord and yet disobey Him in our lives. We cannot directly rebel against Him. To do so reveals not the fear of the Lord, not the love of the Lord, but that we despise Him.

So, that is our third description here of the fear of the Lord. We're going to look at a little more of that tomorrow, so you come with us and we will take another look at this subject of the fear of the Lord.

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January 11, 2023

This week we are looking at the subject of the fear of the Lord as found in the book of Proverbs. It's a subject that comes up often in the book. We have looked at the descriptions of the fear of the Lord, not so much the definition as the descriptions of what it is like, and what we would be like if we fear the Lord. Just a quick review:

1. We would be one not walking in our own way. We would be not wise in our own eyes, but we would be following the Lord and walking in His path.
2. We would hate evil and love good. We would hate what God hates and love what God loves.
3. It would be revealed in how we walk. Largely we would walk in uprightness, or obedience. We would follow in His ways. We would obey what He has to say. We wouldn't do that perfectly. We know that. But if we were really walking in the fear of the Lord, that would be our endeavor. That would be our desire and we would try to walk upright before Him in obedience.

Today we want to talk about the second question that comes up in Proverbs. The first question is what is the fear of the Lord? The second question is why should I do it? Why should I walk in the fear of the Lord? I'm going to go to Proverbs 9:10 and say that we should walk in the fear of the Lord because we understand who God is. The more we know who He is and the more we understand Him and recognize His magnificence, His splendor, and His awesomeness, the more we will biblically, clearly walk in the fear of the Lord. I think the first thing we look at here is the fact that He is holy. It says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." That is probably the most important word in Proverbs on the fear of the Lord. You can't be wise without the fear of the Lord, so we need to have His wisdom, and we cannot be wise unless we are walking in His way and in the fear of the Lord. Then he goes on and says, "and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." So, not only do we know Him, but we know Him as holy. Holy is the idea that He is not like us. He is totally different from us. We usually think of it in moral ways. He is pure, and without sin.

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That is absolutely 100% true. He is pure. Totally pure. Totally holy, totally righteous, without blemish of any kind. He is not like us whatsoever. That's the basic essence of the word holy. So, we walk in the fear of the Lord because we know He is nothing like us. We try to make God in our own image all the time. The Lord condemns that in Scripture. He is not like us. Whenever we think He is like us, we tend to go astray. He is holy. We walk in the fear of the Lord because of that and because of the wisdom that comes with that.

Secondly, we walk in the fear of the Lord because we know that He is sovereign. In Proverbs 16:4, "The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil." Now, that doesn't use the word, fear of the Lord, per se, but notice the idea here. The Lord controls all things. Everything is made for His purpose. Nothing happens that doesn't fulfill in some way His purpose, even though at first, in our own observations, we don't always understand how that works. But God has His own plan, and that's what makes God different from us. God is sovereign. God is in charge. God is in control. Nothing slips through His hands without Him knowing it or without His control over it. God is absolutely sovereign. Even over the wicked for the day of evil. God has a plan for wicked people, and He will deal with wickedness. Just think of the other side of this. If God was not sovereign, then we have a universe that is not under the control of God and is just random chance, and even perhaps, could overthrow God if He is not sovereign in all things. Even evil, somehow fits His purposes though we may not comprehend all of that, we know the glory of that and the greatness of God Himself in that.

He's also a compassionate God. Look at Proverbs 22:22-23 where it says this, "Do not rob the poor because he is poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate; for the Lord will plead their case and take the life of those who rob them." Again, the term fear of the Lord is not found here, but the concept of God's compassion for the poor; compassion for the weak and needy is found all the way through the Bible. When we fear the Lord and walk in His way and think in that regard, we realize that one of the great attributes of God, the very nature of God, the very essence of God is love and compassion. So, as we walk with Him, as we fear Him properly and are drawn to Him, we are drawn to Him not only because He is holy, but also because He is compassionate. He is a God who is absolutely, thoroughly

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loving us in all ways, and in ways we can't even imagine. That should draw us to Him. We're drawn to Him because of His sovereignty. We're drawn to Him because of His holiness and we're drawn to Him because of His compassion. And therefore, we fear the Lord because this is the kind of God we worship. This is who He is. This is the essence and essentialness of God Himself.

I'd mention one more thing here, and we won't go to proof text. If we think about it, He is also a God of wisdom. The first nine chapters of Proverbs are talking almost completely about wisdom, the relationships we have, life with wisdom, and so forth. Many believe the wisdom there is the personification of God or perhaps Christ. Either way, it is an essential part of the nature of God. God is all wise at all times. He is omniscient. He knows all things. He understands all things. He sees all things, and He is all wise in all ways. So, those first nine chapters talk about us walking in wisdom. We're drawn to this God because of His nature, who He is, and one of those pieces is His wisdom.

So, why do we fear Him? What is the reason behind that? These are some of the reasons and I hope you can contemplate some of them today, and I hope they give you a wonderful day in the Lord.

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January 12, 2023

I hope you are enjoying our discussion of the fear of the Lord as found in the book of Proverbs. We have been looking at that this week and we have seen what it is, a description of the fear of the Lord. We have also looked at some of the reasons why we should fear the Lord. Primarily it's because of our understanding of who He is. When we understand His glory and His splendor and His awesomeness, then we begin to fear Him in a proper sense. As quoted from Jonathan Edwards on the first day of this week, it's not a fear that pushes us away from God. It's a fear that draws us to Him because we know who He is and we know of His greatness. Therefore, we want to be more and more like Him, and we want to be closer to Him as a result of a proper understanding of the fear of the Lord. So, we are not cringing before Him, we are drawn to Him because we are His people and because of His great love and great personhood and who He is.

We are going to look at some of the results of that. What is it like if we fear the Lord in our life? We start with Proverbs 28:14, "How blessed is the man who fears always, but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity." The person who is living in the fear of the Lord is living out a blessed life. They're living under the favor of God in a very special way. The person that does not, it says here, faces calamities of all kinds. When we are not walking God's way, when we're not being drawn to Him, when we're not living under the fear of the Lord, then we will suffer the consequences that are in a life that rejects Him, a life not walking His way, a life that doesn't properly obey and follow Him. There's all sorts of consequences and issues that come up, unnecessarily, because we are not walking in His way and living out a life that is truly blessed from God's perspective.

What are some of those blessings as found in the book of Proverbs? Let's take a look at a couple of those. We look at Proverbs 10:27 and it says this, "The fear of the Lord prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened." He says it will prolong life, now remember these are proverbs not promises. Everybody who fears the Lord and walks in a godly way does not live longer than people who don't. That is not something we see in experience and in life and it's not true on a regular basis. I think he is saying though that there is something about this that does enhance and

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prolong life. Even the insurance companies know that if people are not taking part in various issues like smoking, and drinking heavily, and these kinds of things that harm the health of an individual, they are healthier and they tend to live longer. So, I think he is speaking of that. But, I think he is also talking about the quality of life. The years of the wicked will be shortened. They're not always shortened in longevity, but the life of the blessed person is so much more enhanced and blessed than the one living in sin and who suffers the consequences of the choices they have made in their lives as a result of that.

We move on to Proverbs 14:26-27 where we have a couple of other results, Proverbs 14:26 says, "In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and his children will have refuge." So, the fear of the Lord gives us confidence. It doesn't give us self-confidence necessarily, but it gives us confidence in Him because we know He is capable, able, sovereign, wise and loving. What could give us more confidence than to know that we are in the very hands of that God? So, it gives us true confidence in the life that we live. That's a blessed life, isn't it? Whether we live one hundred years or twenty years, that's not as important as the life that we live and the life we live as we walk with the Lord in this way, in the fear of the Lord, is one of confidence.

It's also a safety. Look at Proverbs 14:27, "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may avoid the snares of death." The fountain of life is a positive here. Once again, the quality of life that God gives us because we are walking in the fear of the Lord, and then the opposite side is that one may avoid the snares of death. So, the consequences of living in a life contrary to God are the snares of death. The pangs that are unnecessary. When we walk in the fear of the Lord, we don't have to suffer those kinds of consequences.

One more thing I would mention on the blessed life here that can be ours is that we are walking in wisdom. Remember Proverbs 9:10, it says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom?" We cannot have true wisdom in living life, living the wise life, living the life that – as God intended for it to be lived – is only possible for the one that fears the Lord. So, that is a blessed life. If we follow our own natural bent in life, we might do some good things and enjoy certain things, but we're also going to make a lot of

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blunders and mistakes that are unnecessary if we were walking in His way in the fear of the Lord.

So, a blessed life is also a wise life as well. So, God wants us to walk in wisdom and have that kind of a life. These are some of the results of living in the fear of the Lord and walking in that way. We will look at one more aspect of the fear of the Lord tomorrow so I hope you can join us.

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January 13, 2023

We're going to conclude our study of the fear of the Lord in the book of Proverbs today. We are still looking at some of the results of walking and living in the fear of the Lord. We looked at a few yesterday and the fact that we are blessed in a number of ways – not only in longevity, which is a possibility that Proverbs mentioned, but also in the quality of our life that God gives us. We find we have confidence because we know this one who is so unbelievably awesome and powerful and wise. He is our God and we have safety as a result of that as well. Then we looked at wisdom. We have the wisdom of the Lord, and we walk in His wisdom because we know the one who has wisdom is wise and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Let's finish up today by looking at some more starting in Proverbs 3:7, looking at direction. As a result of the fear of the Lord, we have direction from Him. It says, "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil." We have looked at this verse earlier in the week, but it's such an important one in our discussion. Without the fear of the Lord we don't have proper direction. We may think we're going the right way and therefore make some right decisions or make some wrong decisions. But the point is that we are not on the pathway that God wants us on. So, when we have the fear of the Lord, we are being led by Him. Not in a mystical, subjective way, but we're in line with the teachings of Proverbs in this context. We're in line with the teachings of Scripture. We're walking a pathway that He has lined out for us in His precious Word. You cannot walk that way if you don't know His Word. You will not walk that way if you don't live in the fear of the Lord as we have defined it this week. So, we have this direction.

In Proverbs 19:23, we also have satisfaction. He says, "The fear of the Lord leads to life, so that one may sleep satisfied, untouched by evil." Think about that for a moment. What a joy that would be to sleep satisfied knowing that, when we hit the pillow at night, our lives are full of satisfaction because we are walking in the fear of the Lord. We know that no life on this earth is fully satisfied, and that there is always more to look at and more to challenge us. There's always this struggle and that struggle, and full and perfect satisfaction awaits our eternal life with Him in glory.

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But we can have a very large measure of satisfaction right here and right now in our lives because we are living in the fear of the Lord. To live in the fear of the Lord is knowing that we are going His way, living in His wisdom and honoring the one who is wise, great, and awesome. As a result of that, we can truly be satisfied as we lay our heads down at night.

Also, maybe a corollary of that is contentment. In Proverbs 15:16, it says, "Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and turmoil with it." So, life is not measured by how much we have and how much we own. If we have a lot of resources, that's good, and hopefully we use those for His glory, and hopefully we walk in the fear of the Lord even if we have tremendous resources. But it's better, it says, if we have little if we have the fear of the Lord. Your life is going to be content because we have what really matters in life and not what people tell us matters. As a matter of fact, that's part of the wisdom that comes with the fear of the Lord – realizing what's truly important, to value what God values, to love what God loves, to hate what God hates. That will give us that kind of contentment it is said in this verse.

Also, in Proverbs 16:6, it says, "By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil." Now, here is another wonderful result; because we know the fear of the Lord, we resist evil. Evil is deceptive. It promises that which it cannot deliver. It deludes us. It deceives us. It draws us into its net. Scripture has all sorts of pictures and metaphors of the danger of evil. So, to be walking in the fear of the Lord is the greatest safeguard there is, when it comes to sin and evilness, because it keeps us on the right path. It keeps us aiming toward Him and keeps us focused on the God that we love and the God that loves us rather than being side-stepped and side-tracked and getting our eyes off of Him and onto all these things that are the wrong direction. So, this is a good verse for us. The path of uprightness is a highway of life it says in Proverbs 15:19. That's the highway we want to be on. The highway of life. The highway that is living out the fear of the Lord.

So, I hope this week that as we contemplate the fear of the Lord, not that you necessarily have it all together, but nevertheless, you have a better understanding of the fear of the Lord. I hope it gives you a wonderful

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weekend in the Lord as you contemplate His greatness, His love and as we walk this way.

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January 16, 2023

Welcome again to our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're working our way through the book of Proverbs, as many of you know. We are looking at various themes that are found in the book of Proverbs. Proverbs is different from any other book of the Bible in that, starting with chapter 10 in particular, we just have proverbs that are not promises. Proverbs are general statements of truth. They're not promises and don't always guarantee what they seem to be saying. But they are telling us that this is how life generally works: if you do this, this will happen; if you do the other, the other will happen and so forth. So, we learn a great deal of wisdom from the Proverbs. There's one subject in particular that is grouped in one location in the book. We have a running theme. Most of the Proverbs, if you get two back-to-back on the same theme, that's unusual. Usually it's one verse, then another verse on a totally different subject. There is one theme that Solomon wants to address, and he addresses it in the first nine chapters quite often, and especially in chapters 5-7. That is the issue of morality or immorality. We should keep in mind that several times, especially in the early portions of the book, he says something like, "my son," and maybe even on occasion, "my sons". So, we think, at least to some degree, that Solomon is addressing this whole thing to his son, or if he had more than one son, we don't know who that is. We only know of Rehoboam, but he is giving wisdom to his son. He wants his son to know how to navigate life in all these areas that we have been talking about for the last several weeks. He also wants his son to be able to handle the issue of morality, or immorality. So, he really loads up on that subject in chapters 5-7. This is an important subject for all generations and people and certainly for us today. So, we are going to spend this whole week looking mainly at chapters 5, 6, and 7 and what Solomon has to say to his son about that subject, and to us as well.

We're going to start today with Proverbs 7, and we are looking at some word pictures that he is giving us of somebody who is getting caught up in an immoral type of situation. We're going to look today at the first picture, and that is of the young man who is going to get caught up in this. Once again, Solomon might have in mind his own son, not that his own son was doing this, but he is just wanting to relate to his son. He wants his son to know this could happen to him. So, he starts out in Proverbs 7:7 by

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describing this young man who is playing with fire, literally, as we will see in some other verses later in the week. We start in Proverbs 7:6 with Solomon, perhaps, looking out the window of his house, "For at the window of my house I looked out through my lattice." Whether it literally happened, or he is just giving us a picture of what could happen we don't know, but he is looking out the window and what does he see? In Proverbs 7:7, he sees this young man, "And I saw among the naïve, and discerned among the youths a young man lacking sense." So, he sees a young person, and in this case it's a man, and he calls him naïve here. Another translation is simple. So, they are playing with something they don't understand, and they do not realize the consequences of what they're doing, so he calls this young man naïve. Again, he is talking to a young man because I think he is talking to his sons. This man was undiscerning. He hasn't figured it out. He is making some really bad calculations with his life. He also says concerning this young man that he, "lacks sense." To lack sense in Proverbs 7:7 is the idea of someone who simply does not get the picture.

In Proverbs 6:32 he says something very similar to that. He says, "The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; he who would destroy himself does it." There's the point then. The same person, this one who commits adultery, lacks sense, and they destroy themselves in the process. He's very concerned about that.

In Proverbs 7:8, he says he sets himself up, "Passing through the street near her corner; and he takes the way to her house." So, this young man just might be walking near the location of someone that could entice him. Maybe he doesn't necessarily mean to go there, but the next thing we see, he is on his way to her house.

Then we find out in Proverbs 7:9 that he is being deceptive, "In the twilight, in the evening, in the middle of the night and in the darkness." So, he is trying to cover up what he is doing. He's hiding. He doesn't want anyone to see what he's doing. He knows it's wrong. Whenever we're hiding, we know we're wrong. So, he knows he's wrong, but he doesn't want to get caught. He doesn't want to be seen, and so he has learned to be deceptive. One of the most awful things about sin is that in order to

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carry it out, especially on a regular basis, we have to learn to be deceitful in the process. That's an ugly thing to learn. We don't want to learn it.

So, that's our first picture. The picture of a young man on his way to disaster. We're going to pick up tomorrow with two other pictures that fill out this story line that Solomon is giving us. So, join us tomorrow and we'll continue this story.

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January 17, 2023

Thank you for joining us today in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We began to look at a storyline yesterday concerning a young man. Perhaps not necessarily Solomon's son, but someone he is kind of using as a picture for his son, Rehoboam, and telling him to not be like that. He is showing a bad example, what you do not want to do, and he is developing a storyline for us. The first picture of this young man, as he says in Proverbs 7:6-8, is that he is a simpleton, naïve about what's going on. He is deceiving himself and trying to deceive other people. He lacks sense. He is setting himself up for sin. That's what's going on in the first picture of this story.

The second chapter has to do with the lady herself. We see in Proverbs 7:10, "And behold, a woman comes to meet him, dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart." We start with the fact that this woman is going to try to entice him and draw him in. She is dressed as a "harlot." As we follow through on the next few verses, it would appear that she's not really a streetwalker or prostitute, she's probably a married woman. She has a home, probably a husband, perhaps some children, and so this is not her lifeline, but she has, for whatever reason, decided that she would dress in this inappropriate way and she would flirt in this inappropriate way. She is wanting to entice this young man to herself. So, that's our picture of our lady. We find in Proverbs 10 that she is cunning of heart. She's sharp. She's smart. She's a trickster. So, she knows what she's doing. For whatever reason and methodology, she's learned to be cunning. So, she knows how to set a young man up. She knows what she needs to do and to say to draw him to herself. So, she is using all of her wits and all of her abilities to do that.

Then it talks about her attitude in Proverbs 7:11, "She is boisterous and rebellious, her feet do not remain at home." Boisterous is the idea of causing a great commotion. So, not only is she on-the-spot loud perhaps in that sense, but she's about to cause a great deal of problems for somebody. Her own home, perhaps, if she gets caught. This young man's life could be absolutely devastated and ruined by this situation. In that sense she's boisterous. She's also rebellious. She knows what's right. She knows that the things she is attempting to do or is involved in is wrong.

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She knows that, but she has chosen to rebel against what she knows. Her parents taught her the right things. Her spiritual leaders taught her the right things. If she has read the Scriptures she knows the right things, but she chooses to go a totally different direction and she does not want to do that which is right.

So, this is the picture of our lady at this time. It's an ugly picture of a woman who is, perhaps, more sophisticated, more in-line with the ways of the world, and she is about to set up a young man for a horrible fall.

Then we go to the method. What method does she use? That's our third picture and chapter of this story. We see in Proverbs 7:13-15 that she seizes him, "So she seizes him and kisses him and with a brazen face she says to him: I was due to offer peace offerings; today I have paid my vows. Therefore, I have come out to meet you, to seek your presence earnestly, and I have found you." She is saying to him that she has done her thing spiritually. She's done her peace offerings. I'm all dressed up and so forth and I've come out here today and I'm flirting with you. She seizes him, it says, it doesn't say exactly what that looks like, perhaps she hugs him or whatever. She kisses him. So, she is drawing him in through these methodologies.

In Proverbs 7:21, she entices him, "With her many persuasions she entices him." So, she is trying to draw her net around this young man. She wants him to come to her and to be involved with her. So, she knows how to do that, perhaps through words, perhaps through actions as we have seen, but whatever, she is enticing him.

Finally, it says, "with her flattering lips she seduces him." So, she is now speaking and saying the things that he wants to hear. Saying things that would cause him to let down his guard. If he has any hesitation about involvement with her, she's minimizing that. Perhaps she's telling him it's not a big deal, not a big commitment or anything that really matters and that it's just a fun evening to enjoy one another and not worry about. I don't know what she said, but she is somehow enticing him and seducing him and unfortunately, our young man is going to fall. That is what Solomon is warning about, this kind of set up.

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So, that's the storyline. Tomorrow we will pick it up and start looking at some of the consequences that result in the fall of this type of individual. So, you join us tomorrow as we look at these things.

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In the book of Proverbs, Solomon is drawing for us a picture of a naïve, young man who lacks sense, doesn't know what he's getting into, but is setting himself up for a great fall into the sin of immorality. He has run into a woman who is willing to entice him and seduce him and take him along this road to destruction. Solomon is warning this young man and talking about this young man, probably because he is a father of a young son. We don't know of any other children for sure that Solomon had, but we know of the one son who would replace him on the throne. So, most likely he is addressing his warnings to Rehoboam, his son. As he does that, he has laid all this out and now he moves forward with talking about how this works out.

We're in Proverbs 5:3-4, and he wants to kind of flesh out all of this a little bit more and give some warning to his son about how this all kind of works out. So, in Proverbs 5:3-4 he talks about this young man being set up. It says, "For the lips of an adulteress drip honey." It's very enticing. What this woman has to say and how she entices this young man is very appetizing. Honey is sweet, and what she says and what she offers seems to be the most wonderful and enjoyable thing imaginable. "And smoother than oil is her speech." So, she is well-versed in what to say. She knows exactly what to say to catch his attention, draw him to herself and minimize any potential damage or danger he might face. So he is very good at pointing out what this woman is doing and how she is going about doing it.

We also find that she promises what she cannot deliver in Proverbs 5:4, "But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword." Look at the contrast. She is promising something sweet, something enjoyable and wonderful. She's going to give him a great time and experience, and he's going to really like what he gets involved with. But, the reality is just the opposite. It says here that in the end, "she is bitter as wormwood." Now, wormwood is basically a picture of something extremely bitter. So what seems to be sweet in reality, and in the long run is very, very bitter. So, he wants his son to see that. "Sharp as a two-edged sword," meaning a two-edged sword cuts both ways, so no matter what she says and does, in the end he is going to get cut. He's going to get hurt. He's going to be damaged. So, he's warning him that no matter what

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she says or how well she says it, what she is inviting him to enjoy, he will not ultimately enjoy it. This is a picture of sin, in general. Immorality in particular here, but sin in general, promises what it cannot deliver. It promises happiness and brings sorrow. It promises thrills and brings destruction. It promises success and ultimately leads to utter failure. Sin cannot deliver what it promises on, but it promises very well. Immorality, perhaps, is one of the most enticing of all sins once people get caught up in it because it seems, for a time, to offer the very things that somebody thinks they want without realizing the dangers that are in front of them and without realizing the ultimate payload. So, this is a wonderful picture of that.

In Proverbs 5:5-6, he also says that her feet are unstable, "Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold of Sheol." Sheol is a word for the grave. So, where does her ultimate direction lead this young man? Not some form of heaven; not to the great promises that she has given; but to death and Sheol. He's using this, probably metaphorically. He may not physically die as a result of what happens here, but his life is being destroyed. He's headed toward a grave in which there is this destruction, this ruin of a life. That's the direction of immorality. The direction of immorality is never toward the good. It's always toward the evil and the bad and the destruction and the ruin, and he says that very graphically in that verse.

Proverbs 5:6, "She does not ponder the path of life; her ways are unstable, she does not know it." Here we get just a little sympathy for the lady. Yes, she is drawing away this young man, and yes she is doing a great deal of harm to his life, so much so that it's being depicted as death or the grave. So, she may very well ruin this young man. At least for a time, and perhaps for the rest of his life. Who knows?

We do pick up a little sympathy for her as well. She is not without concern for her life. It says here in Proverbs 5:6, "She does not ponder the path of life." She has not truly considered the direction she is going. She too is naïve and simple. She too does not know the ends therefore of the way that she is going with this young man and his life. It also says, "Her ways are unstable, she does not know it." So, while she thinks she is on the right path and headed the right direction, she is not, and she is headed down an

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equally ugly and ruinous path as this poor young man is, and she doesn't know it. Just like the naïve young man who does not realize what he's into and what the results will be, she too does not realize what she is doing to herself and what she is doing to this young man. She is in the process of perhaps ruining two lives, two souls, and on top of that, they both come from backgrounds. She has a family, perhaps a husband and children. They could be very much devastated when this all comes about, and then him, he has a family that loves him. Perhaps the picture seems to be of a single man, but nevertheless, he has relationships. He has a mother and a father, brothers and sisters, and many that love him. So, two lives here are going to be ruined, plus extended lives as well. She doesn't know it and he doesn't know it. They're simply following the direction that will lead them to ruin. It's a tragic picture, isn't it? God doesn't pull any punches here. He speaks through Solomon to warn us of the dangers and the ugliness of immorality.

I hope you and I pay careful attention to how the Lord guards us and warns us in this passage of Scripture. We will look at some consequences of immorality tomorrow.

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January 19, 2023

This week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast we have dedicated ourselves to looking at the issue of morality or immorality as found in the book of Proverbs. That is pretty much covered together in a discussion in Proverbs 5-7.

We are going to start today in Proverbs 2 by looking at some of the consequences of immorality. There are some grave consequences, and we are going to look at a number of them very quickly today. Solomon shows a picture in Proverbs 2:18-19 of a sinking house, "For her house sinks down to death and her tracks lead to the dead; None who go to her return again, nor do they reach the paths of life." First, it's like a sinking house. Like being in a house on top of a mine shaft that is caving in and you're sinking down into that depravity of death that comes with immorality. None who go to her, it says, will ever return again. In other words, the consequences of this kind of action can be long term and, in many cases, people never recover from this type of sin in one way or another.

Secondly, there is groaning at the end of things. Proverbs 5:11-13 says, "And you groan at your final end, when your flesh and your body are consumed; and you say, 'How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned reproof! I have not listened to the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to my instructors.'" So, we groan at the end. Now, what looked enticing and fun and wonderful and exciting at first ends up, at the end of the game, bringing nothing but groaning and sadness. Why didn't I listen to my mom and dad? Why didn't I listen to my church leaders and people that tried to guide me in the right direction? Why didn't I do that? Now, all I have is sorrow and groaning as a result.

In Proverbs 6:26, it says that this individual is basically reduced to a loaf of bread. You've heard that term. It comes from here in Proverbs 6:26, "For on account of a harlot one is reduced to a loaf of bread, and an adulteress hunts for the precious life." Reduced to a loaf of bread, what an ugly picture. Bread is made to consume, so we are reduced to something that is just consumed, and there is nothing more left of us.

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Then in the next verse, he talks about being burnt by this sin. He says in Proverbs 6:27-28, "Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Or can a man walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched?" Almost everybody who plays around with immorality thinks that they will escape unharmed. They're going to get by with something. They're going to be deceptive. They're going to hide. They're going to have their moment, and then they are going to move back, and nobody will know. By the way, all of this is applicable, not only to physical contact with another person, but also with things such as pornography that is pervading our world today in unbelievable ways, even in the Christian community. Be very aware. All these things are very applicable to pornography as well as physical action. But he says here that this person apparently thought that they could get by with it. No harm done; nobody is going to catch up with me. But he says clearly, "can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned?" Try that at your fireplace or a campfire. Take some coals and take them into your lap and sit there for a minute or two and see what happens. Well, you probably won't do that because you already know what's going to happen. You're going to get burnt, and you may get burned extremely badly if you did that. So, that's the exact picture here. We know better than to take fire and put it into our lap. We know what's going to happen. So, why are we so naïve to think that we can play with the fire of sexual sins and not suffer the consequences and be burned by them? It's a wonderful picture. Proverbs 6:28 asks the same thing, "Can you walk on hot coals?" I don't think you can without your feet being burned.

We are given another picture in Proverbs 7:22 when he talks about an ox to slaughter. It read this way, "Suddenly he follows her as an ox goes to the slaughter, Or as one in fetters to the discipline of a fool." An ox is a powerful animal. It can overrun its trainer easily, but it can be led by a little boy with a hook in the nose of that ox because the ox doesn't know what's up. He doesn't know where he's going. He doesn't know he's being led to slaughter. So, he doesn't know that someone is taking him down the road to slaughter him. He just thinks he is going for a walk, and that's exactly the picture that we're given here of immorality. To give in to immorality is like an ox going to slaughter. We know where you're going. Solomon is warning, here's where you're going. Don't do that. Don't be taken in by that.

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One more picture, Proverbs 7:23, is like a bird in a snare, "Until an arrow pierces through his liver, as a bird hastens to the snare, so he does not know that it will cost him his life." Here's a bird. It sees some food, and it goes down and grabs that food not knowing that it's a trap. The trap is sprung, a snare is sprung, and he's caught and cannot get out and is going to die. So, with immorality, he does not know, this person walking into immorality, does not know that it will cost him his life. No bird would scoop down and grab that morsel of bread or whatever if it knew that it was going to die as a result. No one committing adultery, or immorality, or involved in pornography would chase after such a thing if they knew it was going to cost them their spiritual life. But because they don't know that and they don't believe that, they often fall for that trap.

So, here's a number of consequences. Each of these consequences should serve as a warning to you and me not to be involved in these types of sins. I certainly hope that this is instructive and helpful to all of us. We're going to end the week tomorrow by looking at some of the ways we can avoid such sexual sins. Hopefully that will be even more helpful than what we've said so far this week. Join us tomorrow.

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January 20, 2023

One of the subjects that Solomon deals with in the book of Proverbs is immorality. He is warning his son, it would appear, about the dangers and the consequences and so forth of immorality. So, we have been looking at that subject this week.

Today, we are going to finish up by looking at some of the means of victory. Solomon has been warning and showing the consequences and so forth, but there is a way around this sin. We don't have to fall for this. We don't have to suffer the consequences, and he gives us some means of victory in these chapters.

We are looking at Proverbs 7:24 first. The first thing we can say is start with your heart. "Now therefore, my sons, listen to me, and pay attention to the words of my mouth. Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths." The first step in any sin, really, but immorality in particular, the first thing we should do, is look into our own hearts. The sins of the spirit, someone has said, almost always precede the sins of the body. In other words, the things that we do sinfully with our bodies or with our speech or whatever, those sins are almost always preceded by thoughts in our minds and emotions in our hearts. These are things we have already thought about and contemplated, considered, or perhaps even experienced in our hearts and minds. So, we start there. We look deeply in there and we say, "That is not how I want to think and not how I want to live." I would encourage you here on this front, don't involve yourself in literature and movies and podcasts or whatever else that might be corrupting morally and might lead you in a direction of sinfulness in this regard. Don't fill your mind and heart with these kinds of things, because that is going to take you to the next steps that lead you to actual physical actions that will bring about the consequences that we have already looked at. Start with your heart and deal with that before God first.

Secondly, continue with your feet. We back up to Proverbs 5:7-8 here and notice some verses. He says, "Now then, my sons, listen to me and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house." So, remember the first day we looked at this, we saw a young man who was naïve, he's simple, and he's walking

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down a way where he shouldn't be. He is coming close to a corner or a house that he knows someone is there that could be an interest to him and entice him. So, Solomon is saying here to that same kind of individual, "Don't go near her house." Physically, you don't have to go there. In other words, often our sins are the result of setting ourselves up. We put ourselves in a position in which sin is very enticing and simple to do, and easy. We need to guard ourselves. We need to guard our computers, for example, to stay off the sites that we need to stay away from. Put safety features on there or put your computer in the living room where other people will see what you're doing. Same thing with your phones and so forth where much danger can be. Don't put yourself in a position where it's really easy to fall. Stay away from her door. So, start with your heart and continue on with your feet.

Then, if you're a married person, Solomon recommends very highly here in Proverbs 5:15 to draw closer to your own spouse, "Drink water from your own cistern and fresh water from your own well. Should your springs be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be yours alone and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed and rejoice in the wife of your youth." This is a beautiful thing to say and remind us of. When we're married and we have been married for a while, we might start looking around and say well there's someone over that that's a better catch than my wife or my husband. Someone who is more attractive, someone who laughs at your jokes again, someone who seems to us to be a better fit. Folks, those are traps, those are lies, those are deceptions. The better choice then, instead of being drawn toward such an individual, is to draw toward your spouse and enjoy their love and draw closer to them emotionally and physically. Don't waste your life on someone who is not yours. Draw to your spouse at that time.

And then, one more thing he says in Proverbs 7:1-5, live in wisdom. Of course, this whole book is about wisdom, but listen to this, "My son, keep my words and treasure my commandments within you. Keep my commandments and live, and my teaching as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to wisdom, 'You are my sister,' and call understanding your intimate friend; that they may keep you from an adulteress, from the foreigner who flatters with her words." The wisdom of God is a great safeguard against all sins,

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and in particular, the sin of immorality. Live out the wisdom of God as found in His Word, may you bind those in your hearts and bind those in your life. Make them the central piece, "the apple of your eye", so that you are enticed by God's wisdom and not by the sinful lusts and desires of the world.

So, this whole week has been about this issue of us protecting ourselves from immorality, and I hope this has been helpful, and I hope it gives you a wonderful life in the Lord as you live your life purely before Him. We will see you next week!

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January 23, 2023

Today we are going to begin another week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are still in the book of Proverbs and looking at some of the things Proverbs teaches us. As we have been doing this, we have been looking at a topic. Proverbs is not topical in the sense of jumping on a subject and having a lot of passages or verses about it. It scatters them throughout, so we have been looking at topics as we kind of lump them together from different sections of the book. Today and the rest of this week we are going to look at people. There is nothing more important in our lives than people, except for the Lord Himself. People can drive us nuts, and they can give us the greatest joy of all. So, people are a vital part of most of our lives and that's how God planned it. George Bernard Shaw suggested many years ago, "If the other planets are inhabited, they must be using the earth as an insane asylum." So, he didn't have much good to say about people including probably himself, but there are a lot of different kinds of people on the planet. The Proverbs do not just have a wide, broad brush and say that everyone is this way or that way, as a matter of fact, there are a number of different types of people that Solomon, in the Proverbs, is talking about. We are going to look at some of those today. We are looking at the kind of people we should be with and the kind of people we should stay away from.

We're going to start today by looking at some of the people that we should gravitate toward. These are people that are considered wise. The wise people he says, fear the Lord in Proverbs 9:10. We've read that verse a number of times in our study together, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." So, wise people fear the Lord, which means they give Him the highest of honor, the highest respect, they understand His glory, they understand His judgment. If we travel throughout the Old Testament looking at what people do who fear the Lord, we will find that they have great courage because they understand the Lord. They live properly as God wants them to live. They live in purity. They live in wisdom, and they hate evil. Those are just some of the characteristics of a person who is considered wise.

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The second kind of person, or second characteristic let's say of the wise person, is they listen to instruction. Looking back at Proverbs 1:5, it says, "A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire guidance." So, a wise person will recognize that they don't know everything, and they will seek out those that know more than them, those that are wiser than them and those that can give them proper instruction. That's a sign of a person who loves the Lord and is walking in wisdom. They are a person who understands the need for more wisdom, and they go to the right sources.

In Proverbs 13:20, we find they also associate with other wise people, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm." So, as often is the case, he has a positive and the negative. If you want to be wise, hang around with wise people. Don't hang around with foolish people because you are going to suffer the consequences of their foolishness. You're gonna get caught up in the things they do and you'll pay the price. So, a wise person wants to hang out with, be with, enjoy the company of, and learn from other wise people.

Fourth, the wise person will flee from sin. Proverbs 13:14, "the teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, to turn aside from the snares of death." So, the instruction of the wise gives us the fountain of life. It keeps us in a situation in which we understand and live out the life that God has for us. If we don't have that, we will turn aside to the snares of destruction, those traps that lead us to destruction. He calls it death here.

One more verse we would look at is Proverbs 16:23. He talks about our tongue. This is a subject that, as we have already seen, comes up a number of times in the book of Proverbs. He says, "The heart of the wise instructs his mouth and adds persuasiveness to his lips." The wise person is learning to control their tongue and discipline their speech. They don't just say what comes to the top of their mind and blurt it out whatever the consequences might be. They have learned to use discernment with their tongue and with their speech. So, some of the people that we live with are wise people and these are characteristics of wise people that we should be around, and they will help us live wiser lives as well.

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We are going to go the opposite direction tomorrow and look at the wicked. We hope you can join us tomorrow as we look at the opposite of the wise person.

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January 24, 2023

Thanks for joining us for our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are in the book of Proverbs, and we are looking at relationships this week. People. People are our greatest joy in many ways, and they can also be a tremendous sorrow for us, a disappointment for us. It's hard to escape people. Most of us don't want to, but some do. Some become hermits, either in reality or functionally, therefore they try to stay away from any kind of contact with people because people are too complicated. As a matter of fact, a lot of people that don't go to church who claim to be Christians would say they don't go to church because they just have been disappointed by people, they don't want to be around people, it's too difficult to have these relationships and those types of things. Of course, that's anathema to Scripture that calls for us to be involved with people, to minister to them, to receive their rebuke or harshness on us, maybe unkind things. But God uses those things in our lives for His purposes, so people and relationships are very important, and most would not want to live without them.

We're looking at different kinds of people. Yesterday we looked at the wise and how we want to live wisely and be around wise people who will help us live that way. Today we go to the opposite extreme, which Proverbs does all the time giving us both the good and the bad. Here we have the opposite, and that is those who are wicked. Those who are not living wise lives, but evil lives, foolish lives as is evidenced by how they are living.

We look at Proverbs 6 today where we will look at some characteristics of these kinds of people that we probably want to stay away from unless we are able to minister to them and help them. For the most part, however, these are people that tend to harm us and tend to drag us down with them. So, we must be very careful with that and not be naïve (a subject we will talk about later in the week). In Proverbs 6:12 we look to see what wicked people are like. What characteristics do the wicked possess? One, is that they are liars. It says, "A worthless person, a wicked man, is the one who walks with a perverse mouth." A perverse mouth is a mouth that speaks evil. A mouth that lies. A mouth that is crooked. A mouth that says things that are unkind and untrue, that twist the truth and turn it to their own advantage. Those are the kind of people that are described here as

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wicked. We see what they say. We see the use of their language. We can tell whether or not they are wise or foolish or wicked on the basis of how they speak. So, our tongue gives us away, doesn't it? As Jesus says, our tongue reveals our hearts. So, it's not the problem with what we say. The problem is much deeper. It's in our very hearts, and if we see ourselves speaking in ways that reveal wickedness or evil, then we need not only to change our speech, we need to take a good look at changing our hearts. That's one evidence of a wicked person; how they speak.

Secondly, they are deceivers. We see in Proverbs 6:13, "Who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, who points with his fingers." These are the descriptions of an individual who is not being forthright, and who is being deceptive. So, when it says that he winks with his eyes, he is not talking about someone flirting, he is talking about someone who is not being consistent, and who is not being honest. So, they made a deal, but the wink tells us that they are not being forthright about that. They might flatter somebody, but the wink gives them away that they didn't really mean what they had to say. The wink probably isn't seen by the people they deceive. The wink is seen by their buddies or other people, so they know they are being deceitful and not doing the right thing, but they think they are clever and think they are getting by with something. They're the kind of person that closes the deal and smiles all the way through it and turns right around and tells everyone else how they took advantage of someone. These are wicked people. These are the kind of people you don't want to trust your life with, and our world is flooded with such people. Much of our industry, sales world, advertising and so forth is run by people that are deceiving us, or at least trying to do so in order for us to buy a product that we probably don't need, to impress people that we probably don't really care that much about to begin with. Be very careful with deceptive people.

There's a third characteristic, in Proverbs 6:14, they invent ways to do wrong. "Who with perversity in his heart continually devises evil." Here's a person not content with doing the everyday type of sinful things. They are looking for opportunities to invent ways to do certain things. They are very creative at doing evil. We see this all the time with these scams that people have on the phone or other media. We see these folks who are inventing ways to take advantage of people that don't know any better. They prey

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on the weak. They prey on the people that get caught up in these things. I get a text many mornings of the week telling me that I need to do such and such on my phone or I'm going to lose some kind of service. I know immediately, because of the way it goes out, that this is a deception. If I give in to that deception, then I'm going to be taken advantage of and I'll probably pay a cost. So we have to be so very careful because the wicked pride themselves on being deceptive. If they would use their creative energy to do good, they could do much good, but they would rather be deceptive.

Fourth, they are devising contentions. This goes along with that same verse, "Who spreads strife." They like to cause trouble. They like to cause trouble between other people and make other people unhappy and miserable. They are divisive. They cause trouble, and they don't mind doing that at all. As a matter of fact, it's kind of their bread and butter.

So, you can tell a wicked person because they are not looking for harmony. They're not looking for unity or to bring happiness to people. They are looking for ways to bring difficulty into people's lives. So, we can tell the wicked by the fact that they don't tell the truth, they're liars. They're deceivers and they are looking for ways to be deceptive and to trick people and take advantage of people. And, they devise ways to harm people and be contentious with them and bring contention between other groups of people. These are the wicked, and Proverbs outlines them, details them, and describes them so that we know the kind of people that we need to stay away from.

So, these are the two groups we have looked at so far this week. The wise that we should emulate and follow and gravitate toward and the wicked that we need to identify and stay away from. We will move on to another kind of person tomorrow. I hope you can join us.

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January 25, 2023

As we continue our look together at different relationships and different kinds of people that come into our lives, we are kind of just examining all these different types that Proverbs identifies. We've looked at wise people, and of course, the whole burden of the book of Proverbs is to call us to wise living. The Lord wants us to be wise and live according to His ways. He wants us to live in the fear of Him. The Lord wants us to live that out practically. That's what a lot of Proverbs is about, practical living. The Lord wants us to live very practically with wisdom, even in the common, everyday events of life. So, the wise was our first group of people that we looked at.

Secondly, we looked at the wicked; those who are not walking with God. As a matter of fact, it is their design and desire to live wickedly and to ignore Godly wisdom and go about things their own way and to bring trouble, often not only to themselves, which they don't do by design, but trouble to other people. In their wicked living, things tend to boomerang on them, and they live out the consequences, ultimately, of their own foolishness and wickedness. So, that's another kind of person, a person we want to be aware of and stay away from if at all possible. At least be alert to them.

Now, he is talking to a third group, maybe a middle ground here between the wise who are walking God's way and the wicked who are intentionally walking against the will of God. That is the group we may call the naïve. The naïve individuals as found in Proverbs 1; he says, concerning them, that these are the people he is writing to. He is talking to people that are naïve. We are talking about individuals who maybe have some understanding of the things of God, but for whatever reason, they haven't processed these things in a proper way. So they're not taking the wisdom of the Scriptures and the wisdom that God has given us in life and appropriated it to their circumstances very well. They have not learned how to do these things. Maybe they were never raised that way, because remember much of the Old Testament and much of Proverbs go back to the home life of parents teaching their children how to live in a proper, wise way. If they're not teaching them even the practical things of life and the godly things of life, then we can expect that most people are not going

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to be living properly. These are the naïve people, and much of the burden of this book is towards the middle ground people, inviting them to a better way of living.

As a matter of fact, there's a number of ways here. In Proverbs 8:5 for example, wisdom calls out to the naïve and also to the fools. It says this, "O naïve ones, understand prudence; and, O fools, understand wisdom." So, in this chapter, we are looking at wisdom being personified. Some think that this is a personification of Jesus Himself, of Christ who is the embodiment of wisdom. I'm not sure if that's true or not, but at least we get the idea. This is the wisdom of God, and wisdom personified is calling out to naïve people and is saying for them to come follow her, come her way, don't go the other ways. Learn from me, the wisdom of God. Also, fools are here as well, and fools as we have seen throughout the book of Proverbs, are those that are spiritually foolish usually and have rejected the ways of God, they don't want to follow the ways of God. Sometimes they're fools in the sense of the practical issues of life that they don't grasp. But either way, they are foolish people and wisdom calls out to them to follow her and to walk in the ways of wisdom. So, wisdom is calling out. Wisdom calls out to all of us. God in His wisdom calls for us not to be naïve, not to be ignorant of the things that matter, but to understand and to increasingly understand the wisdom and the way of God.

In Proverbs 14:15, wisdom once again invites the naïve, "The naïve believes everything, but the sensible man considers his steps." So, he kind of contrasts two groups of people here. "The naïve," he says, "believe everything." So, they are easily taken in. They are easily deceived. "But the sensible man considers," he takes steps of wisdom that we have been seeing here, he understands and he analyzes very carefully.

Going to Proverbs 1:4, he says he has written this book, "To give prudence to the naïve, to the youth knowledge and discretion." In Proverbs 1:22 it says, "How long, O naïve ones, will you love being simple-minded?" So, he writes to these individuals telling them not to stay in that state. To some degree, we are all born naïve. As young Christians, we are all naïve to many things, but we don't want to stay there. We want to grow in wisdom. We want to grow in the knowledge of Christ. We want to grow in the

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knowledge of the Word and move from being naïve to being wise and making certain we don't fall into the trap of the wicked.

So, we've had the three groups now: ones that are wise, ones that are wicked, and ones that are naïve. Now we will look at two more yet this week. I hope you can stay with us for these studies.

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January 26, 2023

We're continuing our study today of the book of Proverbs and the subject of people and the relationships we can have with people. Again, as I've said throughout the week, we love people and not many of us would want to live without good relationships with somebody. To be totally alone is a very difficult thing, and yet we are seeing an epidemic of loneliness in our world today, especially in the western world. We don't live in communities like we used to live. We don't have extended family living with us, perhaps, as we used to have. About 25% or more of the households in America are with one person in that household. That's up double digits from just a few years ago. We are increasingly a people that are living alone and in some cases without relationships. Because a person lives alone, or is single, doesn't mean that they don't have relationships, but we do find people very lonely. As a matter of fact, in England, they recently developed a whole cabinetry position apparently for loneliness. Somebody actually has that position to work on loneliness in that particular country. So, loneliness is a problem. Most of us certainly don't want that loneliness, and so we seek out relationships. As we seek out relationships, we sometimes seek those that are wise and helpful and beneficial, as we've seen, but sometimes we go the other way and seek out those that are not wise, but those that are actually wicked and evil, and we begin to take on some of their characteristics. When there's a whole category we looked at yesterday of naïve people who kind of fit in the middle there. They're not wise and they're not wicked, but they're easily swayed by whatever group they are hanging with. They don't have a proper grounding in the wisdom of God and the things of God and the Word of God that enables them to make good discerning choices. As a result of that, they are kind of pushed back and forth with whatever wind of doctrine or philosophy or person who comes their way. Proverbs warns us not to stay in the condition of being naïve.

We are pushing forward, and we will finish up today and tomorrow by looking at a couple negative characteristics. Today we look at the fool. Fool is a common term in Scripture, and Proverbs makes plenty of use of it. What is a fool? Here we are not talking about somebody who is intellectually inferior. As a matter of fact, it could be a person who is quite brilliant. They may have a huge IQ. They may be very successful in the

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business world or whatever endeavor they go after. So, in that sense, they are not foolish at all. Nevertheless, the book of Proverbs often calls certain groups of people foolish. So, what are they like? We are supposed to stay away from such people. So what kind of people are we to stay away from who are foolish? We don't want to become or be foolish ourselves, or continue in foolishness. Let's look at some of the ways that Proverbs describes a fool. We will look at three of these today and finish up tomorrow.

First, they despise wisdom. In Proverbs 1:7 it says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction." The first characteristic of a biblical fool is one who despises wisdom and instruction. Don't tell them what to do. Don't try to help them. Don't give them insight. They already know everything. That would be the ultimate fool. More importantly, in the context of Proverbs, we're talking about one who does not want to know the wisdom of God. So, you run into a fool when you try to show them God's way versus the natural way of living life, and they get their backs up and get angry. They don't want to talk to you. They start making fun of you or maybe even call you names or whatever because they do not want to be shown a different direction. They are not interested in the wisdom and the direction of God no matter how carefully and graciously it might be presented to them. That's because they actually hate it. They hate it because it isn't what they want to do. It isn't the natural bent of their own heart and soul. They want to go this direction and the Word of God, and the wisdom of God says "No, you must go that direction," so they hate that direction of God. It gets in their way and interferes with their lifestyle, and they despise it. So, that's a biblical fool; one who does not want the wisdom of God. More than that, they despise it. They hate it, and they do not desire it at all.

Secondly, in Proverbs 17:24, we find that they kind of live in a fantasy world because they reject the wisdom of God and must come up with their own ideas. They live in a kind of world that doesn't fit reality. "Wisdom is in the presence of the one who has understanding, but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth." The picture he is giving here is that this wise person understands things God's way, but the fool is kind of looking off in the distance and dreaming up things they want to do. They have a goal in front of them, but it's a goal that does not fit the reality and wisdom of

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God. Yet, you cannot convince them that the direction they want to go is not the direction that God would have them go. It's going to end up in failure. It's going to end up in disaster, but they have this dream world of sorts. It's not wrong to have goals and dream dreams and have ambition. That's not what Proverbs is saying. The Proverbs is warning about this person that doesn't live in the reality of the world that God has made and the reality of the wisdom that God has given. Someone has said that if you go against the grains of the universe that God has created, you're gonna get splinters. But, the foolish person doesn't see that and doesn't recognize that, and doesn't accept that. They're gonna go out and do their own thing no matter what the consequences because they have rejected the wisdom of God. They hate the wisdom of God and have devised their own.

We go to Proverbs 15:2 and we find that they're also out of control. "The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools spouts folly." Here again, in a typical contrasting fashion, we have these two different kinds of people. "The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable," so, the wise person not only knows wisdom and lives wisdom, but they are trying to instruct others in wisdom. They make it acceptable. They make it palatable. They try to teach it. That's what a wise person does because, not only are they wise, but they are usually loving people. They want other people, their family members, their church friends, people in their life, they want them to have the life that God wants them to have, so they instruct them in that way. Not so with the foolish person, "But the mouth of the fool spouts folly." Notice that the fool doesn't mind speaking his mind. As a matter of fact, he likes doing that a lot. The word spouts the idea of just spouting off and just saying whatever they want to say. The fool does that and what they're spouting out and teaching and instructing others to do is described here as folly, which is of course the same idea of foolishness. They're trying to get people to follow in a way that is foolish, and they're willing to instruct them, teach them, and convince them of the way of living in foolishness. That's what a foolish person is spouting off.

So, those are three characteristics of a fool that God gives us in the book of Proverbs. We don't want to be foolish. That's why He describes these things. We don't want others that we care for to be foolish, so we try to teach them the right way to go. Now, tomorrow I'm going to look at two more characteristics of the foolish person with you and also look at the

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person who goes even one step further. So, we will close out our study of looking at people tomorrow looking at those characteristics. We will see you then.

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January 27, 2023

We're going to close our week talking about people and the different kinds of people in our world and lives. We are also looking at ourselves with these things as well. We're going to close out by looking at a couple more characteristics of a fool. We spent all week looking at different kinds of people from the wise to the naïve to the wicked and to the foolish. As we continue looking at the foolish person, this is a person mentioned many, many times in the book of Proverbs as simply the one who does not want to follow wisdom. They do not want to live God's way. They do not want to tell other people to live God's way. As a matter of fact, they are doing everything they can to draw people away from the way of God. These are foolish people, and these are the kind of people we don't want to be, and these are the kind of people we want to stay away from in life if we can. If we can't, because of circumstances, we want to be aware of them and their game plan and the damage they can bring about in our lives. So, we looked at three characteristics of fools yesterday.

Let's look at a fourth one now. In Proverbs 26:6, we find that a foolish person can be identified by the fact that they really cannot handle responsibility properly. In Proverbs 26:6 it says, "he cuts off his own feet and drinks violence who sends a message by the hand of a fool." So, it's talking about them trying to work with a foolish person and perhaps giving them responsibility, you send a message by them. But you're really causing yourself a great deal of harm because it's like cutting off your own feet, it says. This message is not going to be delivered properly. There are going to be some hang ups. Something goes astray, and so you are like cutting off your own feet if you send it by a fool. So, in other words, this foolish person may have a lot of bluster about how well they can do this, that, or the other, but when it comes down to it, they are very unreliable. It is very painful to try to depend upon unreliable people.

In Proverbs 26:10 he says this, "Like an archer who wounds everyone, so is he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by." So, he gives a different metaphor now. We have an archer who has a quiver full of arrows and he is shooting those arrows indiscriminately. So, as people go by, he shoots, no matter who it is. It could be a bad person, could be a good person, it could be anybody. He's indiscriminate. He has no discernment or

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discretion. As a result, that is what a fool is like, he says here. He says, "he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by." You hire somebody and you don't know anything about them – their background, whether they're reliable. What do you expect when you go out and have hiring practices like that? So, you can't rely upon foolish people. They're going to do more harm than good. That's a qualification of the characteristics of foolish people.

Then in Proverbs 27:22, they're almost impossible to change. That's another characteristic. It says, "Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, yet his foolishness will not depart from him." What an ugly picture. You have this individual and you're doing everything in your power to change this person. You're trying to get them to see the folly of the direction they're going. You're showing them the wisdom of God. You spend a lot of time and a lot of effort on this kind of person, but at the end of the day nothing changes. You can spend hours, weeks, months, decades trying to help a person who is a fool and does not want to change and at the end of the day, they don't change. It's a very frustrating thing, but you can identify a fool by noticing that they are not changing. When to give up on a fool is hard to know sometimes, but there comes a day when you're wasting your energy and time and you're better using your time with those who desire to change and who want to do better.

One more word, even a step further than the fool, we would say would be the scoffer. In Proverbs 24:9 it says, "The devising of folly is sin, and the scoffer is an abomination to men." If a fool is one who does not want to go in the way of God and wants to live out his own wisdom and his own dreams and his own folly and sometimes draws people to themselves as well, the scoffer is one that makes fun of and depreciates verbally, and with their lives, the things of God. They're actually putting down, in any and every way they can, the wisdom of God and those who walk in the wisdom of God. They're more than happy to harm those that live wisely. A scoffer is our final characteristic here. The scoffer who has gotten so hardened to the things of God and the wisdom of God that to them it's an issue of making fun.

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We've looked all week at relationships and at people. Some of these people we want to gravitate toward and that's especially the wise. Others, like the wicked, foolish, and scoffer, we want to stay away from, or we want to definitely watch out for. The naïve, we want to help them. We want to draw them into the way of wisdom, to walk the way God wants them to walk, to keep them from going down the road of foolishness and folly. So, this week as we have looked at relationships and the people, I hope these wise words from the book of Proverbs have been helpful to you. We will see you next week as we look at another subject in the book of Proverbs.

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January 30, 2023

As we begin another week of our wonderful day in the Lord broadcast, we are coming toward the end of the book of Proverbs that we have been studying for several weeks now. We have been looking at topics as we have run into them. We are kind of doing a scatter-gun approach today and the rest of this week. We're going to look at some topics that are different each day. These are things that we are kind of pulling in that Proverbs addresses. Not in a huge way, but definitely addresses these particular topics. So, they're not going to be related except that they are general issues that people in this world face one way or the other.

The very first issue we will talk about today is the issue of alcohol. In the Word of God, alcohol is mentioned all the way back to almost the very creation. We know that when Noah came off the ark, it wasn't too long before he ran into trouble with alcohol and got drunk and caused all sorts of problems as a result of that. So, alcohol is not prohibitive in Scripture. I think if the Lord had asked me, which He didn't do, if He ought to simply just prohibit all alcoholic beverages, I would have said, "Go for it!", because it causes so much damage. I know in various cultures and so forth that it is very common to drink alcohol, and it's becoming more and more common, even among Christians in America. Yet, as I look at the damage that it does, I think we ought to take a very cautious approach to alcohol. Proverbs does exactly that. So, while it's not prohibitive, the Scriptures definitely talk about the dangers of it and give us wisdom concerning alcohol.

In Proverbs 20:1, it tells us this, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise." Basically, although once again, it doesn't prohibit all drinking, it does tell us that intoxication or drunkenness is stupid. It is simply unwise. There is nothing good that comes from it. So, no Christian should ever desire to be intoxicated. No Christian should ever go that direction because it's foolish and is very opposite of wisdom that is the theme of the book of Proverbs all the way through.

Then in Proverbs 21:17, it goes a little further and tells us of the danger of actually falling in love with drinking. As we look at our culture and how

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many people want to talk about drinking and how enamored they are with this, that, and the other concerning alcohol, we have to take these verses very seriously. "He who loves pleasure will become a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not become rich." So, he starts off by pointing out that the love of alcohol will be detrimental to your future and your life. Further on in Proverbs he goes on to say that if we live in this way concerning alcohol, it is something that will come back to cause us great harm in many, many ways. So, it warns us seriously of these things.

In Proverbs 31:4-7 we find that alcohol impairs our judgment. That's one of the dangers of it. "it is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to desire strong drink. For they will drink and forget what is decreed, and pervert the rights of all the afflicted. Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to him whose life is bitter. Let him drink and forget his poverty and remember his trouble no more." He's not just saying to give alcohol to those who are having problems, but he is basically saying that those who have responsible positions in this life need to be very careful of their intake of alcohol. Those that have nothing to live for it's not that big of a deal, but those that are leaders, those that have something to live for, those that are setting an example, should be very, very careful about it.

In Proverbs 23:19-21, he says, "Listen, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way. Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine, or with gluttonous eaters of meat; for the heavy drinker and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe one with rags." Down in Proverbs 23:29-30, we have this description of one who labors long over wine, we might say. It says, "Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long over wine, those who go to taste mixed wine." So, almost all the teaching of Proverbs concerning alcohol is in the state of warning. The dangers of allowing alcohol to become something that we actually love, something that becomes a dominant force in our lives, something that can lead us to bad choices and being with the wrong kind of people, is all in the mode of danger. So, we have to be very careful with alcohol because of the danger that it presents. Proverbs is very clear about that.

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I hope this is insightful and very helpful as you think about it. We will look at another topic tomorrow.

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January 31, 2023

This week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast we are looking at some general topics that Proverbs addresses. These topics are not addressed as much as Solomon addressed these other issues that we have spent our time looking at, but he definitely addresses them and gives us wise instruction and insight into these issues. What we will look at today is pride. Some would say that pride is the chief of all sins and at the root of all sins. Although I'm not sure we can biblically defend that, I do believe it's hard to identify any particular sin that does not relate to pride. That's because pride, at the essence, is self-centeredness. Pride is the belief in me and myself, and that I can do it and I don't need help from anyone else, not even from God. So, in arrogance and pride I am self-sufficient. The Scriptures are anathema on self-sufficiency in that sense. The Lord doesn't want us to be dependent people and incapable of doing things we should do for ourselves, but at the same time, the Word of God teaches us to be dependent upon Christ, first of all, and on His Word and on the people of God. So, pride definitely causes a lot of problems there. Sometimes we think and we talk about pride of ownership, pride of taking care of our property, our job and work ethic and so forth. Is there something wrong with that? I would say yes and no. It's wrong when it is once again self-absorbed and all about me and that I do a good job at work because I want people to know I do a good job. I take care of my property because I want the neighbors to drive by and say what a wonderful yard and landscaping job this guy has done and so forth. So, pride, in that sense, can be wrong. That is the essence of pride. Let's look at a few verses.

In Proverbs 11:2, it says, "When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the humble is wisdom." So, in typical Proverbs fashion, we have the good and the bad. With arrogance comes disgrace. So, those who place themselves up on a pedestal and try to see themselves as better than other people may get by with that for a time, maybe even a lifetime, but ultimately, it brings the consequences of disgrace because that is not how God wants us to live. Remember that the essence of Satan's fall, as far as we know from Scripture, if Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 are talking about the devil himself, is his pride was the fall of him. He wanted to be above God. He was the greatest of all creatures that the Lord had created up to that

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point, and yet he felt that he needed to be better than even God himself. That brought him down and destroyed him. So, pride in that sense is always wrong.

In Proverbs 16:18 it tells us that pride will lead to destruction. It says, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling." We are well aware of this first part of this verse. Pride goes before the fall or destruction is how it's said sometimes. If you want to destroy yourself or do harm to yourself, then be a prideful person. Be a person that is so self-absorbed and full of themselves that they think they are untouchable and can get by with anything and defeat anything and win at anything. That is a recipe for disaster according to Scripture.

In Proverbs 26:12 we go further, and it says that it brings hopelessness to us, "Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him." So, while we might think that it's pretty cool to be wise or proud of ourselves, the Lord says no and that there is more hope for a fool than him. When we think we have got it all together and we need help from no one else including God, once again, we are simply fools who don't know that we're fools.

There is one more verse on pride that we will look at today. Proverbs 29:23 says, "A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor." A man's lofty pride will bring him low – remember once again the devil. He had the highest position in God's hierarchy of the time. The highest of all the angels as far as we can tell. Yet, he wanted to be something better than he was and something better than what God had designed him to be and even better than God Himself. The end result was not that he attained a higher position. The end result was that he was brought low. Even to the lowest point of becoming the devil. Remember he wasn't created as the devil. He was created, perhaps with the name of Lucifer – that's not something we're sure of, but possibly the name of Lucifer and he became Satan or the devil because of his pride. We do not want to follow his example. We want to follow in the example of Christ who is the very epitome of humility.

We will talk about humility later in the week. I hope you can join us.

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February 1, 2023

We're looking at some random issues that are brought up in the book of Proverbs. Not necessarily major themes of the book of Proverbs, but definitely themes and things that you and I need to know about. The one we are looking at today is carried over from yesterday and that is the issue of pride. We talked about pride yesterday and pride is defined as self-absorption. Most people would not say they're proud. You could pin them down and call them proud, and most people are going to resist that particular handle. No one, at least very few people, see themselves as proud. Yet, the Scriptures all the way through talk about proud people. Proud people, by definition, are those that leave God out of their lives, go their own way, think their way is the correct way to go rather than God's way, and as a result of that, they live this proud life that they don't even recognize. We will look tomorrow at humility, the very opposite of pride. But today is pride because it's so important that we take a look at this to know what it is. We must also recognize it when it pops up in our own lives because we all deal with pride, even if we call it by some other name. We will look at what God has to say about.

Proverbs 8:13 says, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil," so those who truly fear the Lord and recognize His greatness, His authority, His magnificence, those people hate evil, and so that's what we should do. We should be those who hate evil. Then he says, "Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate." So, now God is speaking here, and He is saying that if you are one who fears Him and hates evil, if that's what you proclaim, let me tell you what I hate. Then He says, He hates pride, arrogance, the evil way, and the perverted mouth. I think those are all interrelated, although they are different things, they are interrelated. He starts with pride and that is the self-absorption thinking that we have it all together and need no one else. Arrogance is, perhaps, a synonym for pride, but again, it puts me out there in front. I'm above other people. I'm smarter. I'm sharper. I'm more capable. I'm more whatever, and that's a synonym, I suppose for pride, or at least a carryover from pride. Then there's the evil way. So, this pride and arrogance leads us down a pathway. It's a pathway that we think is right because we are wise in our own eyes as Proverbs 3 says, but it's a way that is evil. It's a way that is wicked and a way that is away from the ways of God. Then, that carries

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over also to what we say. Proverbs, as we have seen before, says a lot about our speech. Our tongue as James tells us is a deadly fire that's almost impossible to tame. The thing is that our tongue tells on our heart. So, these things, this pride, arrogance, and evil way is reflected in what we say. We tell on ourselves by our very words. The Lord says He hates these things. So, if you hate what God hates, and you should, and if you love what God loves which would be the opposite of this, then we will hate pride in all of its different forms as it comes into our lives and into our world.

In Proverbs 21:4, he says it a little differently, saying much the same thing but differently, "Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, is sin." He makes no bones about it here. He says that he hates pride and now he comes right out and says that it is sin. Sin is one of those many words that explain the behavior that is wicked in our lives. It's a word that is the idea of missing the mark or coming up short of what God wants us to be and do. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." So, we see the picture of someone with a bow and arrow and they are shooting their arrow, but the arrow misses the mark and comes up short and goes wide. That's what sin is. He says all those that have this proud heart and pride in their lives and their lives are being led by arrogance, the lamp of the wicked, that is the pathway of the wicked. When they are living that way, that is missing the mark that God wants us to live. That is sin. So, as we finish this subject of pride, what we do know is that God hates it, and God calls it sin. All those who want to follow Him will want to be very careful to notice pride in our own lives and do all we can to root it out of our lives through the power of God's Spirit and His Word.

Tomorrow we will turn to the other side of the whole picture and look at the issue of humility. I hope you can join us.

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February 2, 2023

In our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast this week, we are looking at the issues that just come random in Proverbs. The last couple days we have looked at pride. Pride is brought up a number of times in Proverbs. It is, if not the key sin of our lives, certainly at the foundation of many because it is basically self-absorption. So, we've spent two days looking at pride and how God hates it and how God identifies it as sin. We're going to turn in the other direction today and look at humility. God calls us, not to pride, but to humility.

In Proverbs 11:2, it says, "When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the humble is wisdom." So, pride brings dishonor. We've seen that this week. But with humility, or humbleness, is wisdom. So, the wise person is the person who desires to be humble. By humble we don't mean someone who doesn't believe they are capable of doing anything. It's a person who is others oriented and recognizes the need, the dependency on God Himself. It's the person who doesn't lift himself up as if they are something above other people or something special. They recognize their strengths where God can use them. They also recognize their weaknesses. In all things they are submissive to Him and living in obedience to Him. That's a humble person. It says this person, the humble person, has wisdom. They are living in wisdom. Remember the key theme of Proverbs is wisdom. Through God's inspiration of Solomon, He is talking over and over and over about the need for godly wisdom and practical wisdom to live as God wants us to live. Humility is at the heart of that.

Look at Proverbs 15:33 now. It says that humility will bring honor, "The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility." So, we are back to what we talked about yesterday. The fear of the Lord leads to something. It leads to the instruction for wisdom. So, those that truly fear God, honor Him as He is meant to be honored, adore Him for who He is, understand that He is the ultimate authority and judge over all things. Such a person, it says, once again, is going to have wisdom and that before honor comes humility. I think the problem is, the prideful person gets that backwards. The proud person is looking for honor. They want their rewards. They want to be recognized. They want other people to think they're something special and so they seek that. That's their goal.

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The book of Proverbs says that before honor comes humility. In other words, the truly honored person, the person who receives the honor that only God can give is a person who is living humbly. We may not get the accolades of the world. Other people may not know all the things that we do. We may not get all their treasures and rewards, but we will get them from the one that matters. God Himself will honor those who humble themselves before Him. Proverbs 29:23 says, "A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor." The proud person becomes low as we saw yesterday. The humble person will obtain honor; the kind of honor God wants us to have. Again, it's not necessarily what the world wants, not necessarily what the proud person is after. As a matter of fact, in many ways, you can tell your own heart here by what you're seeking. What kind of honor do you really want? The honor that comes to the humble from God or the honors that come from mankind because they think we're something out of the ordinary or something special.

Then in Proverbs 22:4, we find that the humble person receives reward. It says, "The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life." You notice this theme of the fear of the Lord keeps showing up. There is a reward for the humble, and those people, again, are linked with the fear of the Lord. So, those who fear the Lord are also those who are humble. You really can't have it without the coupling of those two together. If you fear the Lord, you honor Him. You see Him as supreme, and you give Him glory. If you're proud, you have a hard time doing that. You want to share the glory of God. But, the humble person has no problem there. They're more than pleased to give God the glory. As a matter of fact, the humble person's life is lived for the glory of God. So, it says here that they will receive a reward. It says, "riches, honor and life," again, these are Proverbs, and he is not promising us that we will become rich and so forth if we follow Him, but we will be rich in the things that really matter. We will be rich in the things of God. We will receive the honor that only God can bestow, and we will find true life. The life that glorifies and honors God not that glorifies and honors us. That is the humble person. The very opposite of the proud person.

We will look at one more subject tomorrow as we close out our week on these random subjects in Proverbs, so I trust you will be able to join us again tomorrow.

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February 3, 2023

We're so happy you can join us again on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're just trying to help you get started with your day with the Word of God and looking at various themes and Scriptures that will, I trust, warm your heart, draw you closer to the Lord and help you walk before Him as He wants you to walk. We're coming to the close of the book of Proverbs. We have another week or so, maybe, looking at some of the themes in Proverbs. This week we have been looking at some odds and ends. The issues we are going to look at today are that of testing and temptation. The word for testing and temptation are pretty much the same. As a matter of fact, in Greek it is the same word, to test or to tempt. So, people have asked what the difference is between being tested in our faith and being tempted to evil. That's basically the difference. It's the direction we're being drawn. God never tempts us for evil, the book of James tells us. He never draws us to do sinful things. He does test us. He tests us to reprove us, improve us, draw us into maturity, and so forth. Temptation is the opposite. It is drawing us into evil. It's the pull toward sin. God never does that, but our flesh does it. The devil does it. The world does it, and so we are looking at what Proverbs has to say about this subject.

We start with Proverbs 17:3, "The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests hearts." So, we have the promise and the affirmation that God will test hearts. God doesn't want to leave us where we are. God wants to take us, when He saves us from an unregenerate state, and begin the process of reforming us, changing us and transforming us into His own image. So, He is at work in us. One of the ways that He does that is to test us. Not because He needs to know how we're doing, but because we need to know how we're doing. So, even when we fail a test, that is a good barometer for us to look at our own selves and see how we are progressing in the Christian life. If we fail, we need to recognize that and move forward. If we succeed, then we know that God is producing in us His fruit and that is an encouraging thing as well.

Let's turn to the other side of temptation here and go to Proverbs 1:10. We find that temptation is the pull towards evil, the pull towards sin. He says here, "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent." Now, if temptation is

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pulling us toward evilness or sin, how do we combat that? How are we supposed to stand against temptation? Proverbs is giving us some very practical insights on how to do that, and the very first one is basically to resist. Do not go there. In Proverbs 1:10, he says, "If sinners entice you, do not consent." Just say no in a sense. In Proverbs 1:15, he says, "My son, do not walk in the way with them. Keep your feet from their path." So, you don't have to go down that pathway with sinful people. You don't have to allow them to drag you down in the spiritual mud. Nor do you have to lie to yourself to drag you there. You can resist by God's strength and God's power; you certainly can resist.

In Proverbs 4:23-27, he gives us some practical steps in this regard. He says, "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth and put devious speech far from you. Let your eyes look directly ahead and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil." Now, we don't have time to look at all these verses and instructions, but there is a lot of practical insight and help here on how to deal with temptation in our lives. Very direct. Very black and white in a sense. Don't let your eyes look there. Turn from the path of sin. Don't turn to the right or the left away from God's ways. So, there are very definite steps God gives us on how to handle these things. Very practical things.

So, we want to pay attention to that because sometimes we think we're victims. We're victims of ourselves. Victims of our backgrounds. Victims of our circumstances and we have no choices. So, we allow ourselves to be drug into something that could be very destructive. God is saying that you do have choices. By God's strength, power, Word and God's people, you can have victory over these temptations. Now, if you don't win the victory, you will face consequences.

We go back to Proverbs 1:31-32, because He wants us to know about these consequences. He says, "So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way and be satiated with their own devices. For the waywardness of the naïve will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them." So, again, the Lord doesn't pull any punches here. He's saying that we reap what we sow. If we're going to allow ourselves to go into various forms of

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temptation and sin, and temptation itself is not the sin, it's giving into the temptation. If we allow ourselves to do that, there are consequences. This is not just an oops or mistake, this is sin. If we sin, there are consequences. If we stay in our sin, there are deeper and more profound consequences, and Proverbs talks about that quite often. So, we have to take this very seriously because sin can be very destructive. The whole nature of sin is to destroy and lead to death. So, as Christians, and as those who love God and want to honor Him, our joy is to stay away from these kinds of things so that we might live to honor the Lord Jesus.

I hope this study this week will give you a wonderful weekend in the Lord as you consider these truths and the various topics we have covered in the book of Proverbs. If you can, go back and relook at these. Study them and apply them to your life. We'll catch you next week as we come to a close of the book of Proverbs.

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February 6, 2023

We welcome you once again today to our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We have spent several weeks together looking at the book of Proverbs and seeing all the different topics that the book of Proverbs addresses. I trust those have been helpful in your spiritual life and in your understanding of the way the Lord wants you to live in wisdom.

We're going to spend this week talking about matters of the heart. That is, as we look inside ourselves, the issue of the heart. I want to address that, and I want to look at what Scripture has to say about it. One of the areas where we usually connect the heart with an issue is that of marriage. We think of Valentine's Day, for example, and the hearts and the heart candy and the heart pictures and cards, and all that related to a romantic type of love that is best given in marriage. So, let's start this week by looking at marriage, not that that is everything concerning the heart. It is much broader than romantic love, or marriage, but that's where we will start this week.

I'm going to read just a little bit from a book you probably know about and have read, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Ichabod Crane is an unusual character. He is quite spooked by the noises of the night. He is concerned about goblins and witches and so forth, but the book says this, "Yet daylight put an end to all these evils, and he would have passed a present life of it despite the devil and all his works if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts and goblins and the whole race of witches put together, and that was a woman." So, the author of *Sleepy Hollow*, apparently had an interesting view about women.

Yet, love and marriage, man and wife, men and women, have all been part of the life that God put us here on earth to enjoy. So, as we think about marriage, I just want to look at a few things that are very different from what we might find in *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* which gives this negative view of a man falling in love with a woman. Instead, what does Scripture have to say about this? So, let's take a look at a few things here. What are some qualities of a good marriage?

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We start with Proverbs 5:18 and see first of all, faithfulness is one of the key components of a good marriage. "Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth." Now, he is talking here in the context of possible immorality or infidelity and a young man who is starting to go down the wrong pathway. One of the remedies to that situation is for him to be faithful to his wife, his spouse. Remember, Solomon is writing to his son, so he is using examples that would be applicable to his son's life. So, we could turn this around to the other direction, where if he were writing to his daughter, he would say it a little differently, but I think you get the point. So, faithfulness is the hallmark of a good marriage. It's really a hallmark of any good relationship. It's a hallmark of the relationship that is good between us and God. Here in this case, he is telling this young man to be glad in the wife of his youth. Don't let your eyes, heart and mind stray in a wrong direction. Stay faithful to the one that the Lord has brought into your life.

Another quality is in Proverbs 10:12, and that is that a good marriage is made up of love and forgiveness. He says this, "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions." Marriage puts us into a relationship where forgiveness is not uncommon, right? We have many opportunities to wrong one another and hurt one another. If we become bitter and get our backs up and let these types of things stir up strife, as it says here, our life will be pretty miserable. Instead we find that love covers all transgressions and that love and forgiveness is one of the key qualities in any good marriage and really any good relationship.

In Proverbs 19:14, he continues on with this and he says, "House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord." I think another quality here that he would be stressing is to value your marital spouse. Value your wife in this case. If you're a woman, value your husband. Many good things are given to us by God. Sometimes it can be wealth, an inheritance. It can be many things, but a wife who has insight is from the Lord. That is a good wife. Value such a woman because it's a gift from God. Looked upon like that, that gives us a good foundation for a good marriage.

So, we have started off this week by looking at marriage and some of the qualities that would give us a marriage that would honor God and bring us

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happiness. We will look tomorrow at more general teachings concerning the heart itself. I trust you can join us then.

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February 7, 2023

This week we are looking at the matters of the heart involved in the book of Proverbs and what the Lord's Word teaches us in Proverbs concerning our hearts. When we think of the heart, we often think, of course there's the physical organ, but that's not what Scripture usually talks about. We usually think of the heart as part of our being that is emotional. So, we talk about loving somebody with all of our heart. We don't say that we love somebody with all of our big toe. We don't say that we love somebody with all of our kidney, but we say that we love them with all of our heart. So, we have this idea that the heart is all emotions and pouring out of the heart are these emotional feelings that we hope are love. Although we could also have other emotions coming out of the heart as well. And, to be truthful, there are emotions that make up part of the inner heart that we're talking about. The word heart is used in Scripture as a much broader meaning than emotion. It includes everything in our inner being, our immaterial being. So, it is different from the physical being. It's the inward being. Who we are in ourselves and really, who we really are. So, as we think about that, we find that the heart, because of its very nature, being our inward nature, is made up of three basic components. Intellect, emotion and will. Again, we usually think of it as emotions, but that is only one of the three components. I want to show that this week and look at what Proverbs has to say about these different components. Today we will look at the intellect. The heart implies also, the mind; the way we think; the way we process different things. So, it's not necessarily emotional but it's not without emotion. That's what is really neat about the heart. It involves all three of these elements, so it's not isolated as here's the intellect, here's the emotion, here's the will, it is a combination of all three working in tandem. Now, we can isolate them out for our own study right now in looking at Proverbs.

Looking at the intellect which is part of the heart, we're going to start with Proverbs 4:23 where it says, "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life." So, he is giving us a warning here in a sense. Our inward being is the heart. That's how the inward being is being described here. We are to watch over it with all diligence. How careful we must be in our thinking, our emotion and our will. We need to be careful because out of it springs, it says, "life." So, it's out of the heart, as Jesus

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told us later, we do all sorts of things good or bad, because that's what's inside of us. And that comes out eventually through our speech, our behavior and so forth. So, even if others don't see what's going on inside of us right now, it's in there and ultimately, it is exposed. So, watch over that because that will determine who you become and how you will live your life. It will also determine whether your life will be, perhaps a miserable life, by making wrong choices or a wonderfully happy life because we have followed the Lord. So, it's the inward being. It needs to be guarded.

In Proverbs 16:1, we see this intellectual aspect of it, it says, "The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." He's talking here about the plans of the heart. The thinking. Before you ever make a choice and before you really ever have a particular emotion involving that choice, you are making plans. So, if you were planning to go on vacation, you might map out the directions, where you're going to go, the sites you're going to see and the places you're going to stay. Those are plans, but he's talking more about the everyday plans of life. How you map out life is part of the heart. It's intellectual. The plans of the heart. So, deep inside of ourselves, of who we are, we are intellectually thinking, processing, and making plans. Those plans, he says, belong to man. Those are from our heart and we need to recognize that.

Our problem is in Proverbs 22:15, that we are born naturally foolish in all aspects of our inward being. It says, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him." We're naturally born foolish. We naturally need to deal with that foolishness. One of the reasons the Lord gives us parents, hopefully wise parents, is to drive that foolishness from us. We need good parents to help shape us because naturally, we are born into foolishness. The good news is that we can change. In Proverbs 23:12 he says, "Apply your heart to discipline and your ears to words of knowledge." So, if we are born foolish, that can change. We can train our hearts, in this case, our intellect, to think differently, to process differently and ultimately feel differently and make choices differently because we can discipline the heart. That's very good news. We're not a victim of our nature. We may be born with a foolishness within us, but that foolishness can be challenged and changed by our intellect. Primarily, as that intellect is informed and instructed through the Word of

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God and God's Spirit guiding the way. When that happens, we can change and be more and more what God wants us to be.

So, the inward being, the heart, is made up of intellect and that intellect is the guiding force, humanly speaking, in our lives as we move forward and make our plans. So, it's important that we guard it, discipline it, and transform it through the Word of God and God's truth.

We are going to look at the emotions tomorrow that should follow straight from the intellect.

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February 8, 2023

I trust you have your Bible with you this morning as we enjoy just a few minutes to gather in God's Word examining various features that we have been going through, especially in the book of Proverbs lately. We are looking at the issues and all the different things that God has given us to understand, apply to our lives, enjoy, be warned against, all the things God's Word has for us. Proverbs is such a wonderful book and we have enjoyed a number of days in the study of it.

We are looking at the matters of the heart this week. We saw yesterday that the heart is a word used in the Bible for the inward being, who we are on our inside and what really makes up our person. So, it's not our body, it's our inward being. It's made up of three different components: intellect, emotion, and will. Intellect is our mind. Our thinking apparatus. How we process. How we think, and that will be the key to so much of what we do. Also, the heart is used for determining our emotions. It's the seat of our emotions. Everybody wants to have emotions. We think of some people, like Mr. Spock on Star Trek movies or shows, a man without emotion. Of course, he was very intellectual and could accomplish much, like a computer could accomplish, but he had no emotions. While that's interesting on a television show, it's not very enjoyable when you think about it in real life. Who wants to be a person that goes through life with no emotions? Of course, emotions can vary. Some can be very difficult and sad and grievous, and others can be joyful and happy, but all of that is part of the heart. Proverbs addresses the emotional aspect of the heart.

Proverbs 12 is where we will start today. We will look at some of the emotions springing from the heart. Proverbs 12:25 says, "Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad." So, here, as often happens in the Proverbs, he contrasts. A man's heart is weighed down by anxiety. We all know what this means. We feel something that hurts us, ties us in knots, weighing heavy on us, and that kind of thing weighs us down. It's anxiety. It's worry. It's concern. Those things weigh us down. Emotionally, it brings us low. On the other hand, it says, "a good word makes it glad." Just someone coming to us and saying something that is positive and encouraging; it turns our spirits around, doesn't it? It makes us glad. Which is one of the reasons why the Lord would have us

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come to one another in encouragement and to speak words of encouragement and to bring gladness to the hearts of our friends, family, and church members. Also, we find here in this passage that this word makes us glad and we're happy about that.

Now we go to Proverbs 13:12 and see another thing about the emotions, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but desire fulfilled is a tree of life." Once again, we see an emotion on the basis of something that happens. "Hope deferred." In other words, we had great hopes to get something, but it didn't happen. It was put off, perhaps indefinitely, and what does it do to our heart? It makes us sick. It makes us sad. So, we have a job situation that we thought was turning out well and it didn't and things aren't going to go as well as we thought and we get kind of sick of heart. We have a situation in our home in which some family member is turning the wrong direction and not going the direction we had hoped they would go, especially spiritually, and it burdens our hearts and makes us sick, so to speak. It says, though, "desire fulfilled is a tree of life," so when good things happen and we see a desire that we have been looking forward to, some expectation that is now fulfilled, we see that as a tree of life. It gives us this emotional life. This emotional spring that we desperately need at times.

In Proverbs 15:15, he says this, "All the days of the afflicted are bad, but a cheerful heart has a continual feast." Again, in contrasting form, "the days of the afflicted are bad," those that are under some kind of oppression, affliction, pain or trial, we emotionally feel bad. But, "the cheerful heart," the one who is enjoying life and the things that have come our way, "has a continual feast." We see that the perspective is all important here. We also see how emotions are coupled with our intellect. It's our perspective. The way we process and think through things that will ultimately determine how we often feel emotionally about certain things.

One more verse, Proverbs 17:22 says, "A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones." Once again, we see this emotional layer of life in the heart based upon the circumstances that we're going through. "A broken spirit dries up the bones." When we're crushed because of some sin in our life, sin in someone else's life, or some painful experience and we are crushed, it's like drying up the bones, but a joyful

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heart is good medicine. If you want to feel better and have a good spirit, that joyful heart brings that good medicine. It can lift us up in our deepest sorrows and hardships and give us a pleasant and wonderful day.

I hope that as we think about that today that these thoughts give you a wonderful day in the Lord. We're going to look at the will tomorrow.

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February 9, 2023

We've been focusing on the heart this week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. That inward being that is really our true personhood where we make our decisions, where we think, where we have emotions. This determines how we live our lives as we relate inwardly with our Lord and with His Spirit and with His truth. So, knowing the matters of the heart and what's going on in our heart is very important and book of Proverbs is extremely helpful in this regard and understanding the heart.

As I just said, the heart is made up of those inward components, those elements that we would see as intellect, emotion and will. We intellectually plan, think and process. We emotionally feel, either downward times and painful experiences, or times of happiness and joy and everything in between. But there is a third aspect we haven't talked about yet and that is the will. In the heart, the heart is the seat of our choices, our volition. We choose how we are to live, and we make those choices in the heart, and Proverbs discusses that as we will see in our passage today.

In Proverbs 23:19, it says this, "Listen, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way." So, he tells his son to be wise. That's an intellectual choice, I suppose, but he is telling him to direct his heart in the way. So, the heart is not neutral. We're born sinful. We're born foolish, but we also, as we have already seen, we can change the heart. There can be transformation of our hearts through the Word of God and through the power of His Spirit. We make choices. So, he says here, don't follow your heart, "direct your heart." That's important because we hear quite often about following your heart. You might remember a rather famous song, I think by Elvis, that we should follow our heart wherever it may lead us. If we do that, we're probably going to get into trouble, and a lot of people are making decisions and choices, life choices, big choices, on the basis of how they think they feel and following their heart. A lot of times we call it our "gut" today. Just follow our "gut," or follow our heart. Folks, that is not the direction that Scripture takes us. We certainly can examine how we feel, what our dreams are, how our gut is feeling and whatever we want to call it. We can look at those things and examine those things, but Proverbs tells us to direct our hearts. Give it direction. Control it. That includes our will. So, we're going to make choices in life. As a matter of fact, we make

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many, many choices every day. Most of them are relatively minor. What we will eat for lunch. What direction we're going to take to work. Myriads of little choices. But, on other occasions, big choices pop up: where we're going to live, who we're going to spend our life with, how we are going to walk before the Lord and all these things. We should not be at the whim of how we feel or even what we might think at times. We have to challenge how we think and how we feel with the truth of God's Word. All of that takes place in the heart. We are to direct our hearts in that way.

Later in Proverbs 28:14, he talks about hardening our hearts. He says, "How blessed is the man who fears always, but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity." He is talking here about the one who fears the Lord. So, when we properly fear the Lord, seeing Him as a majestic, sovereign of the universe that we obey and follow, then that person is going to be blessed. But, the one who hardens his heart, in this case, I think against God, and refuses to follow Him or go the direction He wants one to go, that person who hardens their heart will "fall into calamity." Sin is always destructive. Disobedience to the Lord is always destructive. It's a calamity. We have a choice here. He's speaking of the choices within our hearts. The choice to do right. The choice to do wrong. The choice to obey, the choice to disobey. If you harden your heart against the Lord, then you're facing the calamities of those decisions. Some of those kinds of decisions are found in the book of Proverbs. We see, for example, in Proverbs 21:4, we can choose to be proud, "Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, is sin." We can choose to get our backs up and be obstinate and determine that our way is better than anyone else's, better than God's and we won't listen to wisdom and get proud in our hearts. So, we make bad choices.

Proverbs 12:20 talks about deceitfulness. "Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but counselors of peace have joy." There is such a thing as a deceitful heart in which we are being deceived by our own intellect, emotion and will, and we are following that deception rather than directing our hearts as we are told in the other passage. We allow the heart to direct us in a deceitful way.

Then Proverbs 22:11 speaks of purity, "He who loves purity of heart and whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend." How honored, he is

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saying, is the person who loves purity of heart. That's a choice. You don't accidentally live purely. If you're going to live holy, be pure, be morally clear from sin, that's a choice you make. It's not something you accidentally do. So, he who loves purity and chooses to embrace it, he says, will be in the presence of kings. He is talking here in proverbial form of course, but he is talking about the fact that we will be honored. Our lives will be so much better because we are honoring the Lord with the way we live our lives.

So, intellect, emotion and will are all part of the heart. We are going to look at one more issue related to the heart tomorrow. I trust you can join us.

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February 10, 2023

We've been examining the heart this week in the book of Proverbs. It's that inward portion of our being that is really our personhood. We are looking at what takes place there, and Proverbs has a lot to say about that. Our intellect, emotion, and our will, but we are going to look today as we close out the week by looking at God's relationship to the heart. God controls the heart and deals with the heart.

Proverbs 15:11 says, "Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the Lord, how much more the hearts of men!" Sheol is the Old Testament teaching concerning the grave and death. Abaddon would have the issue related to that and the afterlife, but it lies open before the Lord, and so our heart does too. Our hearts are not hidden from the Lord. It's kind of a joke, almost, to think that I can hide my thoughts, emotions, and choices from the Lord. I just kind of play hide and seek from God. You know, I'm going to do something. I'm going to think or feel and choose something, but I'm going to try to keep God from finding out. Now, when we play that little game, we are really off base somehow. How can it possibly be that you and I can hide from the Lord who sees everything? Even that which pertains to the afterlife, or death. So everything lies open before Him. So, there's no sense in pretending or hiding. He knows. So, we come before Him realizing that He is the Lord of the heart. He knows what's in the heart. As a matter of fact, quite frankly, He knows what's in our hearts better than we know what's in our hearts. We can hide from ourselves. Sometimes we don't want to admit just how corrupt we might be or how impure our thoughts might be or how our choices are not what they ought to be. Sometimes we don't even know that, and sometimes we don't even know when we are being proud. We might think we are being humble when we are being proud. But, we don't have omniscience. We can be wrong, even about ourselves, but the Lord is never wrong about such things. He sees our hearts. He knows what's there and He looks within.

Going along with that same subject, we look at Proverbs 21:1, He also controls the heart, "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes." We're really, quite frankly, happy to read this verse in Scripture because we sometimes look around us at the things that our governmental leaders are doing around the world,

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and we think it's hopeless and there's no way that this world can survive with the things that are going on. It's great to know that even the greatest of leaders, the most powerful human forces in the world can go no further than God lets them go. It might be further than we think He ought to let them go, or we're happy with, but nevertheless, their heart is in His hand. When He chooses to change them and turn them, He can do so. We think of Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel as a perfect example of one whose heart God changed. Both in a direction in which he went insane because of his rebellion, and also coming out of that insanity because God had changed His heart within him. So, God can do that.

In Proverbs 21:2, it says, "Every man's way is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts." Once again, as I just mentioned a moment ago, it's possible to deceive ourselves and believe our way is right. Most people do that. Most everyone wants to think that what they do is right, but it's easy to deceive ourselves. He says, "the Lord weighs the hearts." The Lord knows what is in the heart. He weighs it. He measures it. He knows what's there, and we're glad He does. In His own timing through the Word, other people, and circumstances, the Lord has a way of revealing to us who we really are and how desperately we need to have that.

In Proverbs 17:3 he says this, "The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests hearts." Finally, we see that the Lord tests our hearts. So, there are times when the Lord takes us through various circumstances and trials and difficulties, which we would not choose. We don't want to go down that lane, yet the Lord puts us there. Not because He dislikes us or wants to see us squirm, but because He is testing our hearts. Keep in mind that the Lord is omniscient. He knows our hearts. It's not so much for Him to know our heart as for us to know our own heart. Sometimes, folks, we don't really know who we are. We don't know our own hearts until we are put in a circumstance in which the Lord opens it up to us and we see what we really are, good or bad, and we find out what's going on inside of us. The Lord has a way of doing that in our lives for our good and for His glory.

So, this week we have looked at the heart. Proverbs talks a lot about it. Scripture speaks of it all the time and how we need to look at our own

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heart and examine those hearts and turn our heart to the Lord and let Him take absolute control over all things in our hearts.

I hope this has been helpful to you this week, I hope that as you contemplate these things that you will have a wonderful day in the Lord.