

WEEK 35.

Proverbs 12 – 24 (Solomon Shares Wisdom, Part 2 of 2)

Sunday ([Proverbs 12-13](#))

12:1 The one who loves discipline loves knowledge, but the one who hates reproof is stupid.

12:2 A good person obtains favor from the Lord, but the Lord condemns a person with wicked schemes.

12:3 No one can be established through wickedness, but a righteous root cannot be moved.

12:4 A noble wife is the crown of her husband, but the wife who acts shamefully is like rotteness in his bones.

12:5 The plans of the righteous are just; the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.

12:6 The words of the wicked lie in wait to shed innocent blood, but the words of the upright will deliver them.

12:7 The wicked are overthrown and perish, but the righteous household will stand.

12:8 A person is praised in accordance with his wisdom, but the one who has a twisted mind is despised.

12:9 Better is a person of humble standing who nevertheless has a servant, than one who pretends to be somebody important yet has no food.

12:10 A righteous person cares for the life of his animal, but even the most compassionate acts of the wicked are cruel.

12:11 The one who works his field will have plenty of food, but whoever chases daydreams lacks wisdom.

12:12 The wicked person desires a stronghold, but the righteous root endures.

12:13 The evil person is ensnared by the transgression of his speech, but the righteous person escapes out of trouble.

12:14 A person will be satisfied with good from the fruit of his words, and the work of his hands will be rendered to him.

12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own opinion, but the one who listens to advice is wise.

12:16 A fool's annoyance is known at once, but the prudent overlooks an insult.

12:17 The faithful witness tells what is right, but a false witness speaks deceit.

12:18 Speaking recklessly is like the thrusts of a sword, but the words of the wise bring healing.

12:19 The one who tells the truth will endure forever, but the one who lies will last only for a moment.

12:20 Deceit is in the heart of those who plot evil, but those who promote peace have joy.

12:21 The righteous do not encounter any harm, but the wicked are filled with calamity.

12:22 The Lord abhors a person who lies, but those who deal truthfully are his delight.

12:23 The shrewd person conceals knowledge, but foolish people publicize folly.

12:24 The diligent person will rule, but the slothful will become a slave.

12:25 Anxiety in a person's heart weighs him down, but an encouraging word brings him joy.

12:26 The righteous person is cautious in his friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

12:27 The lazy person does not roast his prey, but personal possessions are precious to the diligent.

12:28 In the path of righteousness there is life, but another path leads to death.

13:1 A wise son accepts his father's discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

13:2 From the fruit of his speech a person eats good things, but the faithless desire the fruit of violence.

13:3 The one who guards his words guards his life, but whoever is talkative will come to ruin.

13:4 The appetite of the sluggard craves but gets no thing, but the desire of the diligent will be abundantly satisfied.

13:5 The righteous person hates anything false, but the wicked person acts in shameful disgrace.

13:6 Righteousness guards the one who lives with integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.

13:7 There is one who pretends to be rich and yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor and yet possesses great wealth.

13:8 The ransom of a person's life is his wealth, but the poor person hears no threat.

13:9 The light of the righteous shines brightly, but the lamp of the wicked goes out.

13:10 With pride comes only contention, but wisdom is with the well-advised.

13:11 Wealth gained quickly will dwindle away, but the one who gathers it little by little will become rich.

13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is like a tree of life.

13:13 The one who despises instruction will pay the penalty, but whoever esteems instruction will be rewarded.

13:14 Instruction from the wise is like a life-giving fountain, to turn a person from deadly snares.

13:15 Keen insight wins favor, but the conduct of the unfaithful is harsh.

13:16 Every shrewd person acts with knowledge, but a fool displays his folly.

13:17 An unreliable messenger falls into trouble, but a faithful envoy brings healing.

13:18 The one who neglects discipline ends up in poverty and shame, but the one who accepts reproof is honored.

13:19 A desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul, but fools abhor turning away from evil.

13:20 The one who associates with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.

13:21 Calamity pursues sinners, but prosperity rewards the righteous.

13:22 A benevolent person leaves an inheritance for his grandchildren, but the wealth of a sinner is stored up for the righteous.

13:23 There is abundant food in the field of the poor, but it is swept away by injustice.

13:24 The one who spares his rod hates his child, but the one who loves his child is diligent in disciplining him.

13:25 The righteous has enough food to satisfy his appetite, but the belly of the wicked lacks food.

PRAYER

Lord, You instruct in the best way to live and of the consequences of rebellion, and You do so frankly. May I never be offended by Your truth.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon began with no pretense of worry for the feelings of those who read his Proverbs, merely wanting the truth to be known to all who were teachable “The one who loves discipline loves knowledge, but the one who hates reproof is stupid.”

He continued his frank declarations “A noble wife is the crown of her husband, but the wife who acts shamefully is like rottenness in his bones.”

Solomon warned of the folly of ‘good intentions’ coming from one who lacks wisdom “A righteous person cares for the life of his animal, but even the most compassionate acts of the wicked are cruel.”

He again reminded that choices have consequences “The one who works his field will have plenty of food, but whoever chases daydreams lacks wisdom.”

Solomon continued the theme of teachability “The way of a fool is right in his own opinion, but the one who listens to advice is wise.” and he returned again to theme that a wise person is patient and thoughtful while the corollary is equally true “A fool’s annoyance is known at once, but the prudent overlooks an insult.” and as the two respond to challenges the results differ dramatically “Speaking recklessly is like the thrusts of a sword, but the words of the wise bring healing.”

He reminded that it is not always best to broadcast everything of which one may be aware, and even more-so, to refrain from speaking without careful thought “The shrewd person conceals knowledge, but foolish people publicize folly.”

Concluding Chapter Twelve Solomon returned to the eternal principle “In the path of righteousness there is life, but another path leads to death.”

In Chapter Thirteen Solomon paralleled the worldly son-father relationship and the spiritual one “A wise son accepts his father’s discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.”

He addressed gossips and false teachers versus encouragers and faithful teachers “An unreliable messenger falls into trouble, but a faithful envoy brings healing.”

Solomon challenged those who would be wise to dig deeply for understanding-in-application “A desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul, but fools abhor turning away from evil.”

He warned that the company one keeps has an impact “The one who associates with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.”

He observed that in this fallen world there are problems, and that the weakest are the most easily victimized by the selfish who abuse power “There is abundant food in the field of the poor, but it is swept away by injustice.”

Solomon advised parents that children in this fallen world are sometimes too immature to respond only to reason and that they will also benefit from unpleasant consequences “The one who spares his rod hates his child, but the one who loves his child is diligent in disciplining him.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

A Biblically-accurate preacher/teacher is a “faithful envoy”.

DISCUSS

Why do so many people worry so much about offending other people with the truth of the Lord God when He does not?

REFLECT

There is a lot contained in the Proverbs that shines light upon the troubles we see today.

SHARE

When have you observed an “unreliable messenger” of God’s Word falling into trouble?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you which of the 'company that you keep' is drawing you away from a close relationship with the Lord God.

ACT

Today I will acknowledge the negative influence of those whom the Holy Spirit has made me aware, whether they are neighbors, relatives, workplace associates, or people with whom I associate on the Internet. I will place boundaries around those relationships, limiting them where that seems effective, and terminating them as is appropriate.

Be Specific _____

Monday ([Proverbs 14-15](#))

- 14:1 Every wise woman builds her household, but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands.
- 14:2 The one who walks in his uprightness fears the Lord, but the one who is perverted in his ways despises him.
- 14:3 In the speech of a fool is a rod for his back, but the words of the wise protect them.
- 14:4 Where there are no oxen, the feeding trough is clean, but an abundant harvest is produced by strong oxen.
- 14:5 A truthful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies.
- 14:6 The scorner seeks wisdom but finds none, but understanding is easy for a discerning person.
- 14:7 Leave the presence of a foolish person, or you will not understand wise counsel.
- 14:8 The wisdom of the shrewd person is to discern his way, but the folly of fools is deception.
- 14:9 Fools mock at reparation, but among the upright there is favor.
- 14:10 The heart knows its own bitterness, and with its joy no one else can share.
- 14:11 The household of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish.
- 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way that leads to death.
- 14:13 Even in laughter the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.
- 14:14 The backslider will be paid back from his own ways, but a good person will be rewarded for his.
- 14:15 A naive person believes everything, but the shrewd person discerns his steps.
- 14:16 A wise person is cautious and turns from evil, but a fool throws off restraint and is overconfident.
- 14:17 A person who has a quick temper does foolish things, and a person with crafty schemes is hated.
- 14:18 The naive inherit folly, but the shrewd are crowned with knowledge.
- 14:19 Those who are evil will bow before those who are good, and the wicked will bow at the gates of the righteous.

14:20 A poor person is disliked even by his neighbors, but those who love the rich are many.

14:21 The one who despises his neighbor sins, but whoever is kind to the needy is blessed.

14:22 Do not those who devise evil go astray?

But those who plan good exhibit faithful covenant love.

14:23 In all hard work there is profit, but merely talking about it only brings poverty.

14:24 The crown of the wise is their riches, but the folly of fools is folly.

14:25 A truthful witness rescues lives, but the one who breathes lies brings deception.

14:26 In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and it will be a refuge for his children.

14:27 The fear of the Lord is like a life-giving fountain, to turn people from deadly snares.

14:28 A king's glory is the abundance of people, but the lack of subjects is the ruin of a ruler.

14:29 The one who is slow to anger has great understanding, but the one who has a quick temper exalts folly.

14:30 A tranquil spirit revives the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones.

14:31 The one who oppresses the poor insults his Creator, but whoever shows favor to the needy honors him.

14:32 The wicked will be thrown down in his trouble, but the righteous have refuge even in the threat of death.

14:33 Wisdom rests in the heart of the discerning; it is known even in the heart of fools.

14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

14:35 The king shows favor to a wise servant, but his wrath falls on one who acts shamefully.

15:1 A gentle response turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath.

15:2 The tongue of the wise treats knowledge correctly, but the mouth of the fool spouts out folly.

15:3 The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on those who are evil and those who are good.

15:4 Speech that heals is like a life-giving tree, but a perverse tongue breaks the spirit.

15:5 A fool rejects his father's discipline, but whoever heeds reproof shows good sense.

15:6 In the house of the righteous is abundant wealth, but the income of the wicked brings trouble.

15:7 The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but not so the heart of fools.

15:8 The Lord abhors the sacrifices of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.

15:9 The Lord abhors the way of the wicked, but he loves those who pursue righteousness.

15:10 Severe discipline is for the one who abandons the way; the one who hates reproof will die.

15:11 Death and Destruction are before the Lord – how much more the hearts of humans!

15:12 The scorner does not love one who corrects him; he will not go to the wise.

15:13 A joyful heart makes the face cheerful, but by a painful heart the spirit is broken.

15:14 The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

15:15 All the days of the afflicted are bad, but one with a cheerful heart has a continual feast.

15:16 Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth and turmoil with it.

15:17 Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened ox where there is hatred.

15:18 A quick-tempered person stirs up dissension, but one who is slow to anger calms a quarrel.

15:19 The way of the sluggard is like a hedge of thorns, but the path of the upright is like a highway.

15:20 A wise child brings joy to his father, but a foolish person despises his mother.

15:21 Folly is a joy to one who lacks sense, but one who has understanding follows an upright course.

15:22 Plans fail when there is no counsel, but with abundant advisers they are established.

15:23 A person has joy in giving an appropriate answer, and a word at the right time – how good it is!

15:24 The path of life is upward for the wise person, to keep him from going downward to Sheol.

15:25 The Lord tears down the house of the proud, but he maintains the boundaries of the widow.

15:26 The Lord abhors the plans of the wicked, but pleasant words are pure.

15:27 The one who is greedy for gain troubles his household, but whoever hates bribes will live.

15:28 The heart of the righteous considers how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

15:29 The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

15:30 A bright look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the body.

15:31 The person who hears the reproof that leads to life is at home among the wise.

15:32 The one who refuses correction despises himself, but whoever hears reproof acquires understanding.

15:33 The fear of the Lord provides wise instruction, and before honor comes humility.

PRAYER

Lord, Your gift of wisdom brings blessing to every part of our lives. May I pursue and honor Your wisdom wherever I find it.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon contrasted the wise and foolish woman “Every wise woman builds her household, but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands.”

He warned that keeping the wrong company may interfere with understanding “Leave the presence of a foolish person, or you will not understand wise counsel.” and he warned that when a mere man imagines that he is more-wise than God there is trouble “There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way that leads to death.”

Solomon repeated his contrast between the thoughtfulness of a wise person versus a fool “A wise person is cautious and turns from evil, but a fool throws off restraint and is overconfident.”

He noted the consequences of different heart-conditions “A tranquil spirit revives the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones.”

Solomon observed “Wisdom rests in the heart of the discerning; it is known even in the heart of fools.”, which is why the fool is guilty before the Lord – he chooses to reject wisdom.

He continued the theme of consequences for choices “A gentle response turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath ... Speech that heals is like a life-giving tree, but a perverse tongue breaks the spirit ... A fool rejects his father’s discipline, but whoever heeds reproof shows good sense ... A joyful heart makes the face cheerful, but by a painful heart the spirit is broken ... The fear of the Lord provides wise instruction, and before honor comes humility.” and that merely because someone speaks with confidence does not mean that they are correct “The tongue of the wise treats knowledge correctly, but the mouth of the fool spouts out folly.”

Solomon warned that there is no where to hide from the Lord God and that He knows who are good and evil “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on those who are evil and those who are good.”

He observed that poor choices aren’t obvious to the one who rejects wisdom “Folly is a joy to one who lacks sense, but one who has understanding follows an upright course.”

Solomon explained that ones heart-condition when praying impacts how one is received in the throne-room of the Lord God “The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

It has long been known that foolish people, even when confronted with their foolishness, will deny it as they are blind to truth and wisdom.

DISCUSS

Why can spending time in the company of “a foolish person” get in the way of ones recognition of “wise counsel”?

REFLECT

Solomon’s warning is important – as an earnest speaker is not necessarily an honest speaker – in business, politics, or religion.

SHARE

When have you observed a person so convinced that there is no greater wisdom than their pursuit of momentary pleasure that they were unable to recognize obvious truth?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your life where envy sometimes interferes with the blessing of a tranquil heart that the Lord God desires for you.

ACT

Today I will confess and repent, seek and receive the Lord's forgiveness, and cease from any envy so that I might rest in the tranquility of knowing that in all things that matter - He is sufficient.

Be Specific _____

Tuesday ([Proverbs 16](#))

16:1 The intentions of the heart belong to a man, but the answer of the tongue comes from the Lord.

16:2 All a person's ways seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord evaluates the motives.

16:3 Commit your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established.

16:4 The Lord works everything for its own ends – even the wicked for the day of disaster.

16:5 The Lord abhors every arrogant person; rest assured that they will not go unpunished.

16:6 Through loyal love and truth iniquity is appeased; through fearing the Lord one avoids evil.

16:7 When a person's ways are pleasing to the Lord, he even reconciles his enemies to himself.

16:8 Better to have a little with righteousness than to have abundant income without justice.

16:9 A person plans his course, but the Lord directs his steps.

16:10 The divine verdict is in the words of the king, his pronouncements must not act treacherously against justice.

16:11 Honest scales and balances are from the Lord; all the weights in the bag are his handiwork.

16:12 Doing wickedness is an abomination to kings, because a throne is established in righteousness.

16:13 The delight of kings is righteous counsel, and they love the one who speaks uprightly.

16:14 A king's wrath is like a messenger of death, but a wise person appeases it.

16:15 In the light of the king's face there is life, and his favor is like the clouds of the spring rain.

16:16 How much better it is to acquire wisdom than gold; to acquire understanding is more desirable than silver.

16:17 The highway of the upright is to turn away from evil; the one who guards his way safeguards his life.

16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

16:19 It is better to be lowly in spirit with the afflicted than to share the spoils with the proud.

16:20 The one who deals wisely in a matter will find success, and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.

16:21 The one who is wise in heart is called discerning, and kind speech increases persuasiveness.

16:22 Insight is like a life-giving fountain to the one who possesses it, but folly leads to the discipline of fools.

16:23 A wise person's heart makes his speech wise and it adds persuasiveness to his words.

16:24 Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

16:25 There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way that leads to death.

16:26 A laborer's appetite works on his behalf, for his hunger urges him to work.

16:27 A wicked scoundrel digs up evil, and his slander is like a scorching fire.

16:28 A perverse person spreads dissension, and a gossip separates the closest friends.

16:29 A violent person entices his neighbor, and leads him down a path that is terrible.

16:30 The one who winks his eyes devises perverse things, and one who compresses his lips brings about evil.

16:31 Gray hair is like a crown of glory; it is attained in the path of righteousness.

16:32 Better to be slow to anger than to be a mighty warrior, and one who controls his temper is better than one who captures a city.

16:33 The dice are thrown into the lap, but their every decision is from the Lord.

PRAYER

Lord, You are in control, You are the standard for good and evil, right and wrong, wise and unwise, righteous and unrighteous. When I need answers may You always be the first place I go.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon returned to his theme that when a person is apart from the Lord and His wisdom “All a person’s ways seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord evaluates the motives.” and that one must choose to “Commit your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”

He observed that for the one who belongs to the Lord God “A person plans his course, but the Lord directs his steps.”

Solomon declared the standard of earthly ethics and justice, and the certain justice of eternity, to be of the Lord “Honest scales and balances are from the Lord; all the weights in the bag are his handiwork.”

He warned again that choices have consequences “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”, a haughty spirit being arrogant and unteachable.

Solomon noted the linkage between the essential physical needs, not optional lusts, of the body and positive motivation “A laborer’s appetite works on his behalf, for his hunger urges him to work.”

He returned to his warning as to the influence of those with whom associates “A wicked scoundrel digs up evil, and his slander is like a scorching fire.”

Solomon warned again of the trouble caused by gossip “A perverse person spreads dissension, and a gossip separates the closest friends. A violent person entices his neighbor, and leads him down a path that is terrible.”

He observed that, among those who obey the Lord God, wisdom is gathered over time “Gray hair is like a crown of glory; it is attained in the path of righteousness.”

Solomon returned to the outward expression of an inward peace “Better to be slow to anger than to be a mighty warrior, and one who controls his temper is better than one who captures a city.”

And he concluded Chapter Sixteen with a return to the observation that the events of life for one who belongs to the Lord are not random “The dice are thrown into the lap, but their every decision is from the Lord.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The life of one who truly belongs to the Lord is not random, unlike most of what happens in the life of the one who lives without the Lord.

DISCUSS

Why would an emphasis on the Lord God's justice and His involvement in the life of a believer be so important to emphasize? Could it be part of his strategy to keep people from arrogance?

REFLECT

Solomon repeatedly warned about the bad consequences of bad company and living without the wise counsel of the Lord God.

SHARE

When have you experienced or observed the destructive impact of gossip?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your walk where He has “guided your steps”, of which you had not previously been aware.

ACT

Today I will give thanks for the Lord God's loving care and His blessed intervention in my life when I needed it.

Be Specific _____

Wednesday ([Proverbs 17](#))

17:1 Better is a dry crust of bread where there is quietness than a house full of feasting with strife.

17:2 A servant who acts wisely will rule over an heir who behaves shamefully, and will share the inheritance along with the relatives.

17:3 The crucible is for refining silver and the furnace is for gold, likewise the Lord tests hearts.

17:4 One who acts wickedly pays attention to evil counsel; a liar listens to a malicious tongue.

17:5 The one who mocks the poor insults his Creator; whoever rejoices over disaster will not go unpunished.

17:6 Grandchildren are like a crown to the elderly, and the glory of children is their parents.

17:7 Excessive speech is not becoming for a fool; how much less are lies for a ruler!

17:8 A bribe works like a charm for the one who offers it; in whatever he does he succeeds.

17:9 The one who forgives an offense seeks love, but whoever repeats a matter separates close friends.

17:10 A rebuke makes a greater impression on a discerning person than a hundred blows on a fool.

17:11 An evil person seeks only rebellion, and so a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

17:12 It is better for a person to meet a mother bear being robbed of her cubs, than to encounter a fool in his folly.

17:13 As for the one who repays evil for good, evil will not leave his house.

17:14 Starting a quarrel is like letting out water; stop it before strife breaks out!

17:15 The one who acquits the guilty and the one who condemns the innocent – both of them are an abomination to the Lord.

17:16 Of what use is money in the hand of a fool, since he has no intention of acquiring wisdom?

17:17 A friend loves at all times, and a relative is born to help in adversity.

17:18 The one who lacks wisdom strikes hands in pledge, and puts up financial security for his neighbor.

17:19 The one who loves a quarrel loves transgression; whoever builds his gate high seeks destruction.

17:20 The one who has a perverse heart does not find good, and the one who is deceitful in speech falls into trouble.

17:21 Whoever brings a fool into the world does so to his grief, and the father of a fool has no joy.

17:22 A cheerful heart brings good healing, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

17:23 A wicked person receives a bribe secretly to pervert the ways of justice.

17:24 Wisdom is directly in front of the discerning person, but the eyes of a fool run to the ends of the earth.

17:25 A foolish child is a grief to his father, and bitterness to the mother who bore him.

17:26 It is terrible to punish a righteous person, and to flog honorable men is wrong.

17:27 The truly wise person restrains his words, and the one who stays calm is discerning.

17:28 Even a fool who remains silent is considered wise, and the one who holds his tongue is deemed discerning.

PRAYER

Lord, You are with those who are truly Yours at all times, and some of those times are difficult because we have made it necessary for You to teach us the hard way. May I never doubt Your love or Your presence and may I always seek-out what it is I may learn from You in every circumstance.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon reinforced the message that the Lord God uses challenges in our lives to mature us “The crucible is for refining silver and the furnace is for gold, likewise the Lord tests hearts.”

He also reinforced the message that a wise person is teachable and an unwise one is not “A rebuke makes a greater impression on a discerning person than a hundred blows on a fool.”

He reinforced the message of consequences for choices “As for the one who repays evil for good, evil will not leave his house. Starting a quarrel is like letting out water; stop it before strife breaks out! The one who acquits the guilty and the one who condemns the innocent – both of them are an abomination to the Lord A cheerful heart brings good healing, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.”

Solomon taught that true friendship is a significantly more valuable relationship than a casual acquaintance and that a fellow family member (among people of common-faith) is dependable “A friend loves at all times, and a relative is born to help in adversity.”

He returned to the theme of justice “It is terrible to punish a righteous person, and to flog honorable men is wrong.”

Solomon concluded with a reminder that there are outward symbols of a wise person which are also true of a not-yet-wise person who is available to receive wisdom “The truly wise person restrains his words, and the one who stays calm is discerning. Even a fool who remains silent is considered wise, and the one who holds his tongue is deemed discerning.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

There is a cause and effect relationship between choosing wisdom and playing the fool.

DISCUSS

How dark must the spiritual condition of a person be to “... punish a righteous person, and to flog honorable men ...”?

REFLECT

Investing in one true friendship is far more valuable than selling-out for momentary pleasure or recognition and is more valuable than dozens of casual acquaintances.

SHARE

When have you observed one person learning from an appropriate rebuke and another repeating the same error despite bad result over and over again?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a person into whom He wants you to invest for a true friendship. This person will be a fellow believer, will not be a romantic interest, will not be someone whose resources you seek for personal benefit, and will be one who will gratefully return the friendship-investment equally.

ACT

Today I will humbly accept the leading of the Holy Spirit and I will begin a conversation about building a deeper friendship. If it is of the Lord they will have received the same directive from the Holy Spirit and it will have been confirmed by at least one other believer.

Be Specific _____

Thursday ([Proverbs 18-19](#))

18:1 One who has isolated himself seeks his own desires; he rejects all sound judgment.

18:2 A fool takes no pleasure in understanding but only in disclosing what is on his mind.

18:3 When a wicked person arrives, contempt shows up with him, and with shame comes a reproach.

18:4 The words of a person’s mouth are like deep waters, and the fountain of wisdom is like a flowing brook.

18:5 It is terrible to show partiality to the wicked, by depriving a righteous man of justice.

18:6 The lips of a fool enter into strife, and his mouth invites a flogging.

18:7 The mouth of a fool is his ruin, and his lips are a snare for his life.

18:8 The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down into the person's innermost being.

18:9 The one who is slack in his work is a brother to one who destroys.

18:10 The name of the Lord is like a strong tower; the righteous person runs to it and is set safely on high.

18:11 The wealth of a rich person is like a strong city, and it is like a high wall in his imagination.

18:12 Before destruction the heart of a person is proud, but humility comes before honor.

18:13 The one who gives an answer before he listens – that is his folly and his shame.

18:14 A person's spirit sustains him through sickness – but who can bear a crushed spirit?

18:15 The discerning person acquires knowledge, and the wise person seeks knowledge.

18:16 A person's gift makes room for him, and leads him before important people.

18:17 The first to state his case seems right, until his opponent begins to cross-examine him.

18:18 A toss of a coin ends disputes, and settles the issue between strong opponents.

18:19 A relative offended is harder to reach than a strong city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a fortified citadel.

18:20 From the fruit of a person's mouth his stomach is satisfied, with the product of his lips is he satisfied.

18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love its use will eat its fruit.

18:22 The one who finds a wife finds what is enjoyable, and receives a pleasurable gift from the Lord.

18:23 A poor person makes supplications, but a rich man answers harshly.

18:24 A person who has friends may be harmed by them, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

19:1 Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is perverse in his speech and is a fool.

19:2 It is dangerous to have zeal without knowledge, and the one who acts hastily makes poor choices.

19:3 A person's folly subverts his way, and his heart rages against the Lord.

19:4 Wealth adds many friends, but a poor person is separated from his friend.

19:5 A false witness will not go unpunished, and the one who spouts out lies will not escape punishment.

19:6 Many people entreat the favor of a generous person, and everyone is the friend of the person who gives gifts.

19:7 All the relatives of a poor person hate him; how much more do his friends avoid him – he pursues them with words, but they do not respond.

19:8 The one who acquires wisdom loves himself; the one who preserves understanding will prosper.

19:9 A false witness will not go unpunished, and the one who spouts out lies will perish.

19:10 Luxury is not appropriate for a fool; how much less for a servant to rule over princes!

19:11 A person's wisdom makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

19:12 A king's wrath is like the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass.

19:13 A foolish child is the ruin of his father, and a contentious wife is like a constant dripping.

19:14 A house and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

19:15 Laziness brings on a deep sleep, and the idle person will go hungry.

19:16 The one who obeys commandments guards his life; the one who despises his ways will die.

19:17 The one who is gracious to the poor lends to the Lord, and the Lord will repay him for his good deed.

19:18 Discipline your child, for there is hope, but do not set your heart on causing his death.

19:19 A person with great anger bears the penalty, but if you deliver him from it once, you will have to do it again.

19:20 Listen to advice and receive discipline, that you may become wise by the end of your life.

19:21 There are many plans in a person's mind, but it is the counsel of the Lord which will stand.

19:22 What is desirable for a person is to show loyal love, and a poor person is better than a liar.

19:23 Fearing the Lord leads to life, and one who does so will live satisfied; he will not be afflicted by calamity.

19:24 The sluggard plunges his hand in the dish, and he will not even bring it back to his mouth!

19:25 Flog a scorner, and as a result the simpleton will learn prudence; correct a discerning person, and as a result he will understand knowledge.

19:26 The one who robs his father and chases away his mother is a son who brings shame and disgrace.

19:27 If you stop listening to instruction, my child, you will stray from the words of knowledge.

19:28 A crooked witness scorns justice, and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

19:29 Judgments are prepared for scorners, and floggings for the backs of fools.

PRAYER

Lord, You make Your wisdom available, but we must choose to acquire it and to apply it. May I always respond to Your leading to seek out and apply Your gifts of wisdom to me.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon returned to his theme of choices and consequences "One who has isolated himself seeks his own desires; he rejects all sound judgment ... The name of the Lord is like a strong tower; the righteous person runs to it and is set safely on high ... The one who gives an answer before he listens – that is his folly and his shame ... A foolish child is the ruin of his father, and a contentious wife is like a constant dripping ... The one who is gracious to the poor lends to the Lord, and the Lord will repay him for his good deed ... Listen to advice and receive discipline, that you may become wise by the end of your life ... If you stop listening to instruction, my child, you will stray from the words of knowledge ... A relative offended is harder to reach than a strong city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a fortified citadel."

He again warned that many will speak without knowledge "A fool takes no pleasure in understanding but only in disclosing what is on his mind."

Justice is important to the Lord God "It is terrible to show partiality to the wicked, by depriving a righteous man of justice."

The Lord God expects everyone one to honor their contracts and to give their best-effort “The one who is slack in his work is a brother to one who destroys.”

Money can be isolating from the realities of daily life and may falsely persuade the wealthy that they are safer than others “The wealth of a rich person is like a strong city, and it is like a high wall in his imagination.”

We need encouragement in fellowship so that we may remain strong “A person’s spirit sustains him through sickness – but who can bear a crushed spirit?”

The value of a choice to listen and learn is amplified when one listens intentionally for additional wisdom “The discerning person acquires knowledge, and the wise person seeks knowledge.”

Solomon revisited the importance of the wife that is from the Lord and centered upon the Lord “The one who finds a wife finds what is enjoyable, and receives a pleasurable gift from the Lord ... A house and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.”

The vulnerability that is required in the overall investment to build and maintain true friendships means that they can hurt one more-deeply than a casual acquaintance or a stranger, but even so, a true friend remains true in spite of some hurts “A person who has friends may be harmed by them, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”

A wise person makes different choices for different reasons than an unwise person “A person’s wisdom makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.”

While a firm hand is necessary in parenting, excessive violence is not “Discipline your child, for there is hope, but do not set your heart on causing his death.”

We need to allow people to receive some of the consequences of their destructive behavior else they will fail to learn “A person with great anger bears the penalty, but if you deliver him from it once, you will have to do it again.”

Humankind has always had notions, from the Garden until the present, but in the end the sovereign big-picture plan of the Lord God is irresistible “There are many plans in a person’s mind, but it is the counsel of the Lord which will stand.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

An intentionally-wise person benefits not only him or herself but also others.

DISCUSS

Why is history so replete with people in power “showing partiality to the wicked” when that same history demonstrates irrefutably that the end of such choices is disaster?

REFLECT

Wisdom brings discernment of where balance lies, be it in the discipline of a child, allowing violent people to learn from consequences, choosing to overlook an offense, choosing to seek more wisdom, and/or choosing to sacrifice for one more-needy.

SHARE

When have you observed a person excused from consequences for destructive choices – only to repeat the error?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where you might acquire greater wisdom if you make the effort to seek it out, beyond merely listening to teaching.

ACT

Today I will intentionally follow where the Holy Spirit leads, beginning each day in search of greater wisdom behind knowledge – where understanding and application will take me. I will share the blessing of that obedient experience with a fellow believer.

Be Specific _____

Friday ([Proverbs 20–22:16](#))

20:1 Wine is a mocker and strong drink is a brawler; whoever goes astray by them is not wise.

20:2 The king’s terrifying anger is like the roar of a lion; whoever provokes him sins against himself.

20:3 It is an honor for a person to cease from strife, but every fool quarrels.

20:4 The sluggard will not plow during the planting season, so at harvest time he looks for the crop but has nothing.

20:5 Counsel in a person’s heart is like deep water, but an understanding person draws it out.

20:6 Many people profess their loyalty, but a faithful person – who can find?

20:7 The righteous person behaves in integrity; blessed are his children after him.

20:8 A king sitting on the throne to judge separates out all evil with his eyes.

20:9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart clean; I am pure from my sin"?

20:10 Diverse weights and diverse measures – the Lord abhors both of them.

20:11 Even a young man is known by his actions, whether his activity is pure and whether it is right.

20:12 The ear that hears and the eye that sees – the Lord has made them both.

20:13 Do not love sleep, lest you become impoverished; open your eyes so that you might be satisfied with food.

20:14 "It's worthless! It's worthless!" says the buyer, but when he goes on his way, he boasts.

20:15 There is gold, and an abundance of rubies, but words of knowledge are like a precious jewel.

20:16 Take a man's garment when he has given security for a stranger, and when he gives surety for strangers, hold him in pledge.

20:17 Bread gained by deceit tastes sweet to a person, but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.

20:18 Plans are established by counsel, so make war with guidance.

20:19 The one who goes about gossiping reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with someone who is always opening his mouth.

20:20 The one who curses his father and his mother, his lamp will be extinguished in the blackest darkness.

20:21 An inheritance gained easily in the beginning will not be blessed in the end.

20:22 Do not say, "I will pay back evil!" Wait for the Lord, so that he may vindicate you.

20:23 The Lord abhors differing weights, and dishonest scales are wicked.

20:24 The steps of a person are ordained by the Lord – so how can anyone understand his own way?

20:25 It is a snare for a person to rashly cry, "Holy!" and only afterward to consider what he has vowed.

20:26 A wise king separates out the wicked; he turns the threshing wheel over them.

20:27 The human spirit is like the lamp of the Lord, searching all his innermost parts.

20:28 Loyal love and truth preserve a king, and his throne is upheld by loyal love.

20:29 The glory of young men is their strength, and the splendor of old men is gray hair.

20:30 Beatings and wounds cleanse away evil, and floggings cleanse the innermost being.

21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord like channels of water; he turns it wherever he wants.

21:2 All of a person's ways seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord evaluates the motives.

21:3 To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart – the agricultural product of the wicked is sin.

21:5 The plans of the diligent lead only to plenty, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.

21:6 Making a fortune by a lying tongue is like a vapor driven back and forth; they seek death.

21:7 The violence done by the wicked will drag them away because they refuse to do what is right.

21:8 The way of the guilty person is devious, but as for the pure, his way is upright.

21:9 It is better to live on a corner of the housetop than in a house in company with a quarrelsome wife.

21:10 The appetite of the wicked desires evil; his neighbor is shown no favor in his eyes.

21:11 When a scorner is punished, the naive becomes wise; when a wise person is instructed, he gains knowledge.

21:12 The Righteous One considers the house of the wicked; he overthrows the wicked to their ruin.

21:13 The one who shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and will not be answered.

21:14 A gift given in secret subdues anger, and a bribe given secretly subdues strong wrath.

21:15 Doing justice brings joy to the righteous and terror to those who do evil.

21:16 The one who wanders from the way of wisdom will end up in the company of the departed.

21:17 The one who loves pleasure will be a poor person; whoever loves wine and anointing oil will not be rich.

21:18 The wicked become a ransom for the righteous, and the faithless are taken in the place of the upright.

21:19 It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and easily-provoked woman.

21:20 There is desirable treasure and olive oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish person devours all he has.

21:21 The one who pursues righteousness and love finds life, bounty, and honor.

21:22 The wise person can scale the city of the mighty and bring down the stronghold in which they trust.

21:23 The one who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps his life from troubles.

21:24 A proud and arrogant person, whose name is "Scoffer," acts with overbearing pride.

21:25 What the sluggard desires will kill him, for his hands refuse to work.

21:26 All day long he craves greedily, but the righteous gives and does not hold back.

21:27 The wicked person's sacrifice is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent!

21:28 A lying witness will perish, but the one who reports accurately speaks forever.

21:29 A wicked person shows boldness with his face, but as for the upright, he discerns his ways.

21:30 There is no wisdom and there is no understanding, and there is no counsel against the Lord.

21:31 A horse is prepared for the day of battle, but the victory is from the Lord.

22:1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great wealth, good favor more than silver or gold.

22:2 The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the creator of them both.

22:3 A shrewd person sees danger and hides himself, but the naive keep right on going and suffer for it.

22:4 The reward for humility and fearing the Lord is riches and honor and life.

22:5 Thorns and snares are in the path of the perverse, but the one who guards himself keeps far from them.

22:6 Train a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

22:7 The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

22:8 The one who sows iniquity will reap trouble, and the rod of his fury will end.

22:9 A generous person will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor.

22:10 Drive out the scorner and contention will leave; strife and insults will cease.

22:11 The one who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious – the king will be his friend.

22:12 The eyes of the Lord guard knowledge, but he overthrows the words of the faithless person.

22:13 The sluggard says, “There is a lion outside! I will be killed in the middle of the streets!”

22:14 The mouth of an adulteress is like a deep pit; the one against whom the Lord is angry will fall into it.

22:15 Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

22:16 The one who oppresses the poor to increase his own gain and the one who gives to the rich – both end up only in poverty.

PRAYER

Lord, You remind us over and over that we have choices and are rewarded according to our choices. May I choose the path of Your wisdom.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon cautioned against drunkenness, not against all alcohol consumption “Wine is a mocker and strong drink is a brawler; whoever goes astray by them is not wise.”

He observed that it is very difficult to discern the motives in a person’s heart “Counsel in a person’s heart is like deep water, but an understanding person draws it out ... but that such discernment is necessary when seeking trusted advisors and confidants “Many people profess their loyalty, but a faithful person – who can find?”

He warned again against gossip “The one who goes about gossiping reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with someone who is always opening his mouth.”

He returned to his prior warning to children “The one who curses his father and his mother, his lamp will be extinguished in the blackest darkness.”

Solomon warned that receiving ‘easy money’ at a young age may have a troublesome impact on the perspectives and priorities of a person “An inheritance gained easily in the beginning will not be blessed in the end.”

He rephrased “Vengeance is Mine says the Lord” as “Do not say, “I will pay back evil!” Wait for the Lord, so that he may vindicate you.”

Solomon observed that for those who belong to the Lord – He is actively involved in their lives and it is not always apparent what is His long-term goal or path – we must be faithful in the moment and not imagine we know it all “The steps of a person are ordained by the Lord – so how can anyone understand his own way? All of a person’s ways seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord evaluates the motives.”

He warned against an emotional rush to “swear commitment” to a course of action “It is a snare for a person to rashly cry, “Holy!” and only afterward to consider what he has vowed.”

Speaking to wise people and not fools, Solomon encourages them to view difficulties – even physical trauma – as opportunities to learn and to grow “Beatings and wounds cleanse away evil, and floggings cleanse the innermost being.”

Solomon returned again to the choices (both of action and of attitude) and consequences teaching “To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice ... Doing justice brings joy to the righteous and terror to those who do evil ... Haughty eyes and a proud heart – the agricultural product of the wicked is sin ... There is desirable treasure and olive oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish person devours all he has ... The one who pursues righteousness and love finds life, bounty, and honor ... The one who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps his life from troubles ... A shrewd person sees danger and hides himself, but the naive keep right on going and suffer for it.”

He warned again that one should be very careful in choosing a spouse “It is better to live on a corner of the housetop than in a house in company with a quarrelsome wife ... It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and easily-provoked woman.”

Solomon reminded that selfishness in the face of obvious need – that one can meet with a little sacrifice – is seen by the Lord “The one who shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and will not be answered ... The one who oppresses the poor to increase his own gain and the one who

gives to the rich – both end up only in poverty ... A generous person will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor.”

Solomon counseled that one's integrity-earned reputation is a major priority “A good name is to be chosen rather than great wealth, good favor more than silver or gold.”

He noted that it is not wealth that determines true value, but rather one's relationship with the Lord “The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the creator of them both.”

Solomon returned to his wisdom about raising children “Train a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it ... Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.”

He warned that those who belong to the Lord God must set boundaries in their fellowships, and that will include sometimes ‘dis-inviting’ those who oppose Him “Drive out the scorner and contention will leave; strife and insults will cease.”

Solomon warned that one who has made the Lord God angry, likely due to chronic and unrepentant sin, rebellion, and a “haughty”/unteachable spirit will be given the world-without-God that they have demanded and earned “The mouth of an adulteress is like a deep pit; the one against whom the Lord is angry will fall into it.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

There are no places of significance in our lives into which the Word of God does not speak.

DISCUSS

Why would Solomon emphasize the importance of extra care in choosing a spouse?

REFLECT

Blessings come to those who are faithful, be it to the Lord God's call to care for the truly poor, His call that we be people of integrity, in the raising of children, and/or in the pursuit of righteousness.

SHARE

When have you observed someone, perhaps a celebrity or politician, whose birth into great wealth and/or celebrity appears to have caused them to lack wisdom?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you an opportunity to assist someone who is genuinely poor, perhaps only briefly-poor, or perhaps chronically poor.

ACT

Today I will sacrificially assist the one whom the Lord has revealed, and it will be both in the form of physical assistance and of prayer.

Be Specific _____

Saturday ([Proverbs 22:17-24](#))

The Sayings of the Wise

22:17 Incline your ear and listen to the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my instruction.

22:18 For it is pleasing if you keep these sayings within you, and they are ready on your lips.

22:19 So that your confidence may be in the Lord, I am making them known to you today – even you.

22:20 Have I not written thirty sayings for you, sayings of counsel and knowledge,

22:21 to show you true and reliable words, so that you may give accurate answers to those who sent you?

22:22 Do not exploit a poor person because he is poor and do not crush the needy in court,

22:23 for the Lord will plead their case and will rob those who are robbing them.

22:24 Do not make friends with an angry person, and do not associate with a wrathful person,

22:25 lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare.

22:26 Do not be one who strikes hands in pledge or who puts up security for debts.

22:27 If you do not have enough to pay, your bed will be taken right out from under you!

22:28 Do not move an ancient boundary stone which was put in place by your ancestors.

22:29 Do you see a person skilled in his work? He will take his position before kings; he will not take his position before obscure people.

23:1 When you sit down to eat with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you,

23:2 and put a knife to your throat if you possess a large appetite.

23:3 Do not crave that ruler's delicacies, for that food is deceptive.

23:4 Do not wear yourself out to become rich; be wise enough to restrain yourself.

23:5 When you gaze upon riches, they are gone, for they surely make wings for themselves, and fly off into the sky like an eagle!

23:6 Do not eat the food of a stingy person, do not crave his delicacies;

23:7 for he is like someone calculating the cost in his mind. "Eat and drink," he says to you, but his heart is not with you;

23:8 you will vomit up the little bit you have eaten, and will have wasted your pleasant words.

23:9 Do not speak in the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

23:10 Do not move an ancient boundary stone, or take over the fields of the fatherless,

23:11 for their Protector is strong; he will plead their case against you.

23:12 Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to the words of knowledge.

23:13 Do not withhold discipline from a child; even if you strike him with the rod, he will not die.

23:14 If you strike him with the rod, you will deliver him from death.

23:15 My child, if your heart is wise, then my heart also will be glad;

23:16 my soul will rejoice when your lips speak what is right.

23:17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, but rather be zealous in fearing the Lord all the time.

23:18 For surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

23:19 Listen, my child, and be wise, and guide your heart on the right way.

23:20 Do not spend time among drunkards, among those who eat too much meat,

23:21 because drunkards and gluttons become impoverished, and drowsiness clothes them with rags.

23:22 Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

23:23 Acquire truth and do not sell it – wisdom, and discipline, and understanding.

23:24 The father of a righteous person will rejoice greatly; whoever fathers a wise child will have joy in him.

23:25 May your father and your mother have joy; may she who bore you rejoice.

23:26 Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes observe my ways;

23:27 for a prostitute is like a deep pit; a harlot is like a narrow well.

23:28 Indeed, she lies in wait like a robber, and increases the unfaithful among men.

23:29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow?

Who has contentions? Who has complaints?

Who has wounds without cause? Who has dullness of the eyes?

23:30 Those who linger over wine, those who go looking for mixed wine.

23:31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly.

23:32 Afterward it bites like a snake, and stings like a viper.

23:33 Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind will speak perverse things.

23:34 And you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, and like one who lies down on the top of the rigging.

23:35 You will say, “They have struck me, but I am not harmed!

They beat me, but I did not know it!

When will I awake? I will look for another drink.”

24:1 Do not envy evil people, do not desire to be with them;

24:2 for their hearts contemplate violence, and their lips speak harm.

24:3 By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established;

24:4 by knowledge its rooms are filled with all kinds of precious and pleasing treasures.

24:5 A wise warrior is strong, and a man of knowledge makes his strength stronger;

24:6 for with guidance you wage your war, and with numerous advisers there is victory.

24:7 Wisdom is unattainable for a fool; in court he does not open his mouth.

24:8 The one who plans to do evil will be called a scheming person.

24:9 A foolish scheme is sin, and the scorner is an abomination to people.

24:10 If you faint in the day of trouble, your strength is small!

24:11 Deliver those being taken away to death, and hold back those slipping to the slaughter.

24:12 If you say, "But we did not know about this," does not the one who evaluates hearts consider?

Does not the one who guards your life know?

Will he not repay each person according to his deeds?

24:13 Eat honey, my child, for it is good, and honey from the honeycomb is sweet to your taste.

24:14 Likewise, know that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, you will have a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

24:15 Do not lie in wait like the wicked against the place where the righteous live; do not assault his home.

24:16 Although a righteous person may fall seven times, he gets up again, but the wicked will be brought down by calamity.

24:17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and when he stumbles do not let your heart rejoice,

24:18 lest the Lord see it, and be displeased, and turn his wrath away from him.

24:19 Do not fret because of evil people or be envious of wicked people,

24:20 for the evil person has no future, and the lamp of the wicked will be extinguished.

24:21 Fear the Lord, my child, as well as the king, and do not associate with rebels,

24:22 for suddenly their destruction will overtake them, and who knows the ruinous judgment both the Lord and the king can bring?

Further Sayings of the Wise

24:23 These sayings also are from the wise: To show partiality in judgment is terrible:

24:24 The one who says to the guilty, "You are innocent," peoples will curse him, and nations will denounce him.

24:25 But there will be delight for those who convict the guilty, and a pleasing blessing will come on them.

24:26 Like a kiss on the lips is the one who gives an honest answer.

24:27 Establish your work outside and get your fields ready; afterward build your house.

24:28 Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, and do not deceive with your words.

24:29 Do not say, "I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will pay him back according to what he has done."

24:30 I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of one who lacks wisdom.

24:31 I saw that thorns had grown up all over it, the ground was covered with weeds, and its stone wall was broken down.

24:32 When I saw this, I gave careful consideration to it; I received instruction from what I saw:

24:33 "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to relax,

24:34 and your poverty will come like a bandit, and your need like an armed robber."

PRAYER

Lord, Your wisdom applies to every part of our lives, and You have made it plainly know in Your Book. May I read and trust and obey.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon again pleaded with his readers to intentionally receive wisdom "Incline your ear and listen to the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my instruction. For it is pleasing if you keep these sayings within you, and they are ready on your lips ... Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to the words of knowledge ... By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; by knowledge its rooms are filled with all kinds of precious and pleasing treasures."

He cautioned that against the love of money “Do not wear yourself out to become rich; be wise enough to restrain yourself.”

Solomon addressed the raising of children “Do not withhold discipline from a child; even if you strike him with the rod, he will not die. If you strike him with the rod, you will deliver him from death.” and the responsibilities of children My child, if your heart is wise, then my heart also will be glad; my soul will rejoice when your lips speak what is right ... Listen, my child, and be wise, and guide your heart on the right way ... Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.”

He observed that the true power of genuine and maturing-faith shows under stress “If you faint in the day of trouble, your strength is small! Although a righteous person may fall seven times, he gets up again, but the wicked will be brought down by calamity.”

Solomon warned that we must keep our hearts right, desiring faith and blessing for others, even our enemies “Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and when he stumbles do not let your heart rejoice, lest the Lord see it, and be displeased, and turn his wrath away from him.” and that we must leave vengeance to the Lord “Do not say, “I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will pay him back according to what he has done.”“

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

We must be constantly-seeking wisdom, even though it may be inconvenient to acquire and equally inconvenient to apply.

DISCUSS

What is the down-side to celebrating the troubles of your enemy?

REFLECT

A deep faith-walk with the Lord God brings confidence and power – and it will show under stress.

SHARE

When have you observed someone “wear [themselves] out to become rich” because of a lack of self-restraint?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you an opportunity in your life to “Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to the words of knowledge.”

ACT

Today I will prayerfully follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit and will share the experience with a fellow believer as an encouragement to them.

Be Specific _____

All Bible text is from the NET unless otherwise indicated - <http://bible.org>

Note 1: These Studies often rely upon the guidance of the NET Translators from their associated notes. Careful attention has been given to cite that source where it has been quoted directly or closely paraphrased. Feedback is encouraged where credit has not been sufficiently assigned.

Note 2: When NET text is quoted in commentary and discussion all pronouns referring to God are capitalized, though they are lower-case in the original NET text.

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