

Proverbs For Living

Section 2 11 weeks

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Proverbs For Living

This study of Proverbs groups the Proverbs by subject or topic. I have used it several times in a small group setting in the churches where I was Pastor. We always had good discussion from those in the group. There are a few things I feel I should share with you before using this material:

First: I had no intent of sharing or publishing this material until encouraged to do so by some friends. While I did consult several commentaries as I was preparing the original sermon series, I did not make notes of the references used in the messages. There was not in the beginning, nor is there now, any intent to plagiarize. Should you see anything you feel is the original thought of another, I ask for your grace and mercy.

Second: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I tend to spell certain words phonetically for the purpose of emphasis. When transforming these notes from sermon notes to teaching notes, I felt inclined to leave a number of these phonetic spellings. They help me to make emphasis in the lesson at particular points.

Third: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I make little effort to conform to rules of grammar. One example is that I often use a hyphen (-) to indicate a point where I may want to pause slightly and to keep certain thoughts connected as I speak. Another example is that I will use local colloquialisms to make points in the message.

Please accept that these notes are not an academic work. But I do hope they will help the preacher or teacher to be able to more quickly prepare their own sermon or teaching.

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

Strife:

Read Proverbs 17:1 and make notes:

Perhaps only those who have had to deal with strife for any length of time would agree; but it would no doubt be unanimous among those who have had to deal with strife that poverty with peace is better than prosperity with strife. The house with only a dry crust of bread in the midst of peace and quiet is by far a better place to reside than the one with unlimited feasting but has no peace and no quiet of the soul.

This does not only apply to the personal residence. The church with very little to offer in programs, activities, and facilities; but has peace is better for health and life than the church with abundant programs for every person, even more activities than one could participate in, and wonderfully convenient and comfortable facilities, but has strife. It is possible to have both; but we should never sacrifice our peace, unity, and harmony for the chance to have more of anything else.

Strife Is Bad !

Sources of Strife:

#1:

Read Proverbs 18:6 and make notes:

Foolish people don't just get themselves into trouble; they "bring" strife. People can only bring what they have. The person of folly has strife as a part of who and what they are. They even carry the seeds of strife everywhere they go. These seeds of strife often fall to the ground and take root in groups and places even without conscious effort on the part of the fool.

#1 - The First Source Of Strife Is The Fool!

#2:

Read Proverbs 22:10 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

The mocker causes strife. Before a serious discussion can be carried out in a meeting with any success, the mocker must be removed. Before serious ministry can go forth with any success, the mocker will probably have to be removed. Jesus removed the "mockers" from the house (or at least the room) where the dead girl was before He ministered life to her.

#2 - The Second Source Of Strife Is The Mocker!

#3:

Read Proverbs 28:25 and make notes:

The greedy person is one who is not only selfish but one who does not believe that God will provide for them. The person who trusts in the Lord may work diligently, they do not push others and take ruthless advantage of them to get ahead. The greedy person will stir up a great deal of dissension by the way they continually push others in their zeal to get things for themselves.

#3 - The Third Source Of Strife Is The Greedy Person!

Read Proverbs 6:12-13 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 6:15 and make notes:

The phrase translated "scoundrel" literally speaks of "a person who violates the law" or acts in a contemptuous manner against social institutions. Not only their words, but their sinister sign language as well causes strife in the community. The scoundrel, or the one who causes strife, will ultimately be destroyed and it will be sudden (in an instant).

Read Proverbs 26:21 and make notes:

When you place a piece of charcoal onto embers, the result is the charcoal becomes ablaze and begins to burn. Quarrelsome people cause fights. Quarrelsome people take a situation which may only be hot and will cause it to become a full scale fire. The quarrelsome person is not the cause of strife; but they become the kindling to cause the strife to increase and perhaps become as unmanageable as the consuming fire.

Quarrelsome People Increase Strife !

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

Read Proverbs 30:33 and make notes:

When milk is churned, it does not create butter, it only separates that part of the whole milk which is butter from the remaining parts. When a person's nose is twisted hard, it doesn't create blood; but it does rearrange certain physical aspects of the inner nose to make it possible for the blood to escape from its proper place. Having blood inside the body is a very good thing. Having blood leaking outside the body is a very bad thing.

Stirring up anger does not create the strife. It only separates strife from a place where it can be controlled and properly managed to a place where it is out of control. Having blood escaping from the body causes things to become soiled or even damaged. If enough blood escapes from the body it can destroy the life of the body. Having strife stirred up can cause damage; but if enough strife is stirred up, it can destroy the body.

Stirring Up Anger Increases Strife !

Read Proverbs 20:2 and make notes:

It is very unwise to provoke those in authority. The roaring lion is announcing his warning; he is ready to do battle or defend his territory. It is very unwise to provoke the lion that is already roaring. In the culture from which this Proverb came a person would forfeit their life if they provoked the king. In our culture, we may not lose our physical life by provoking those in authority but we may certainly forfeit our lifestyle. Provoking those in authority of our employment can forfeit our ability to earn income. Provoking those in authority over legal matters can forfeit our ability to move about freely.

Read Proverbs 20:3 and make notes:

This is a great place to review all of the previous lessons in the series, especially the characteristics of people with knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. People can find ways to avoid strife. This is an honorable thing to do. In the Church and in the community, the person who continually seeks ways to avoid strife and to reduce strife will be recognized as a person of honor and will have honor bestowed upon them by others.

It Is Honorable To Avoid Strife !

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

Quarrel:

Read Proverbs 19:13 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 27:15-16 and make notes:

It is not so narrow a principle as to only apply to a family member such as a wife, husband, son, or daughter. A person who is quarrelsome is so annoying as to drain the house of any and all peace. Life and health does not flourish where there is no peace.

The most straightforward interpretation of this Proverb says the quarrelsome spouse is uncontrollable. Who could possibly control the elusive wind? Who could hold tightly or firmly (grasp) oil in their hand? The quarrelsome spouse is as unpredictable as which way a gust of wind might blow and with how much force.

Quarreling Robs Us Of Peace !

Read Proverbs 26:17 and make notes:

A person who interferes in a quarrel is likely to experience being bitten by both parties in the issue. The word translated "meddles" is literally speaking of one who "becomes excited" about a quarrel that has nothing to do with them. Be very careful about getting angry for the cause of another person and engaging in a battle that is not yours. The indications are that dogs in the ancient world when this proverb was written were not domesticated but very wild. The person who walks up and grabs a wild dog by the ears should not whine and complain about getting hurt by the dog. Neither should the person who gets hurt because they choose to get involved in another person's argument.

It Is Dangerous To Meddle !

Read Proverbs 17:14 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

Not only is it dangerous to get involved in another person's dispute, it is extremely dangerous to start an argument. The "breaching of a dam" gives the image of causing a small leak. The problem is not a small amount of water has started leaking from the reservoir. The problem is that this leak will eat away at the dam and allow itself to increase. As the leak increases so does it's ability to eat away at the dam. It is completely impossible to predict the extent to which this simple act of breaching the dam will eventually lead. This seemingly insignificant breaching of the dam could possibly lead to such a massive spillage that everything in front of the dam would be completely destroyed. The argument you begin may seem so small and harmless. You simply cannot be sure where it will lead. God's plan is to drop the matter before it becomes an argument or quarrel.

Don't Start An Argument !

Read Proverbs 17:19 and make notes:

Some people appear to simply enjoy the argument. They don't seem to care what the issue is or what side they take as long as they can get someone to argue with them. This verse should serve as a yellow caution light on our road of life. The yellow caution light is not the danger, it only alerts us that a dangerous situation or place is ahead. When we find someone who loves to argue, be assured you have met someone who "loves sin." The end of sin is destruction and death.

The second part of this verse is troubling or confusing to some. In our American English we sometimes refer to the mouth as a "trap" such as in "shut your trap." In the day when this proverb was written, the mouth was sometimes referred to as a "gate." To say a person is using their mouth as a high gate is to say they are speaking high and lofty things, or just bragging way too much. Such talk does "invite" destruction.

Those Who Love To Argue, Love Sin !

Read Proverbs 20:3 again and make notes:

It isn't just that every fool will quarrel; but every fool is "quick" to quarrel. The person who loves to quarrel is a fool. It is highly unlikely that anyone can live their life without confrontation or strife to some degree. It is our dishonor when we jump quickly to the argument stage when things don't go as we wish them to.

Fools Are Quick To Argue !

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

Read Proverbs 15:17 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 21:9 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 21:19 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 25:24 and make notes:

Living the simple life with peace is to be preferred over the prosperous life with strife. Sharing the most simple meal in an atmosphere of love is so much preferred to the finest feast in an atmosphere of hatred. Living with a family to share life is good; but what is better is to live in peace, even if it means living alone. Living on the corner of the house gives the impression of inconvenient or cramped quarters. It could be lonely as well as uncomfortable.

Living alone in an arid place such as a desert is far better than living in strife in a home with family. Living in the desert gives us the impression of living where there are few, if any, neighbors. This would mean there might not be anyone else with which to fellowship. This is still better than living with many companions and strife.

Peace Is The Preferred Way Of Life !

How to handle Quarrels:

Read Proverbs 26:20 and make notes:

One of the best and most effective ways to stop a fire from burning is to remove its fuel. Gossip is a very combustible fuel for arguments. When we restrict the gas going to a gas heater, we can control the fire within the heater. When we stop the flow of gas to the gas heater, we can cause the fire inside the heater to stop burning altogether. When we restrict the gossip around us, we are able to control the arguments and minimize damage. When we stop gossip altogether, we can stop the quarrels.

Stop The Gossip To Stop The Quarrels !

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

Read Proverbs 15:18 and make notes:

Perhaps the second best way to stop a fire from burning is to remove the oxidant (the air) from the fire. Without oxygen, the fuel cannot burn. If gossip is the fuel for arguments, surely the oxidant for arguments is the hot-temper. The hot-tempered person seems to "fan-into-flames" every issue and situation. If we can learn to be patient, we can choke out the fire of quarreling. The greater the volatility of the issue, the more important it is that we practice patience. Great issues require great patience. The patient person will do whatever they can do to minimize the burning passion of the argument.

Patience Calms Quarrels !

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Strife” from this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 12 - Strife

(this page for additional notes)

Proverbs For Living – 13 – Temper / Patience / Peace

Results of Temper:

#1:

Read Proverbs 14:29 and make notes:

The phrase translated "quick-tempered" in this verse literally means "one who is hasty of (or in) spirit exalts folly." The commonly used phrase of "losing our temper" does not fit the application of this proverb. The more accurate phrase would be "finding our temper." The person who easily and quickly allows rage and anger to take control what they say and what they do will most assuredly not only display folly but will exalt (build up and promote) folly.

#1 - Displaying Or Exalting Folly!

#2:

Read Proverbs 14:17 and make notes:

It is a natural progression (or digression) from displaying (or exalting) folly to committing foolish actions. The person who is quick to get angry, or to fly into rage, will do things which make no sense to the rational mind.

#2 - Doing Foolish Things!

#3:

Read Proverbs 15:18 and make notes:

The "hot-tempered" person refers to the one who is so near the combustion point that the least little spark will cause them to burst into flames. Because people by nature have passionate feelings for one another, the hot-tempered person causes dissension among others. There are those who get offended at the words and actions of the hot-tempered person while others get offended at those who "set them off." The hot-tempered person is one who will take even a small offense or difference of opinion and turn it into a major legal battle. Every legal battle creates sides for people to take; and take sides we must, it seems.

#3 - Stirring Up Dissension!

Proverbs For Living – 13 – Temper / Patience / Peace

#4:

Read Proverbs 29:22 and make notes:

When we look at the fact that a person with a temper does foolish things and stirs up dissension, it should not be a surprise to find they also commit "many sins." This person does not only commit sins by their own actions. They do so indirectly through others for they often incite others to commit sins as a result of their temper and the words and actions which result from their temper. (consider what Jesus said about the people who cause one of the little ones to stumble)

#4 - Committing Many Sins!

What we are to do:

Read Proverbs 19:19 and make notes:

The hot-tempered person is going to be continually in trouble. Just look at the results of having and using a temper. This is perhaps one of the most important text to know and to remember in our desire to truly help those who are suffering as a result of their temper; not to mention others who are suffering as a result of someone's temper. The hot-tempered person **MUST PAY THE PENALTY**; or else you will have to rescue them over and over and over. Bailing people out of trouble is expensive. Helping them learn to stay out of trouble can be expensive; but never as expensive as bailing them out.

When we allow a hot-tempered person to pay the penalty for their temper and its associated words and deeds, we are demonstrating the level of our love for them is enough to do what is best for them for the long haul. Allowing them to pay the penalty **IS NOT** failing to show mercy and compassion! It is in fact showing the greatest level of compassion; so that they will overcome and no longer continue the suffering of themselves or others.

Hot Tempered People Must Pay The Penalty !

Read Proverbs 22:24 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 13 – Temper / Patience / Peace

This instruction is so often ignored and as a result, the hot-tempered person is actually encouraged in their behavior and lifestyle. We should not be rude to the hot-tempered person; but to be obedient to God's Word; we should not make them our friend. We should not associate with them. Our time with such a person needs to be greatly limited. The most frequent reason for God's people to ignore this instruction is the attitude that we want to help them change. So we spend time with them, hoping to get to impart some wisdom and instruction. The reality is they are spewing forth their venom repeatedly and continuously upon us. Over time, some of this poison begins to make it into us. Verse 25 gives the warning, "or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared." Nothing more really needs to be said. We only need to obey.

Don't Make A Hot Tempered Person Your Friend !

Read Proverbs 17:27 and make notes:

We need to seek to gain understanding so that we can be even-tempered as opposed to being hot-tempered. Perhaps the hot-tempered person who is paying for the results of their temper might begin to desire to become even-tempered. This verse gives us the answer for them when they finally ask for help with their temper. We need to become people of understanding so we can be even-tempered.

Seek Understanding To Correct Temper !

Patient:

Read Proverbs 16:32 and make notes:

We have just seen that the patient person can calm an argument. This would be like the person who prevented the war. If war breaks out, surely you would desire to have the mightiest warriors fighting for your cause. Even if you win the war, there are casualties, and on both sides. A mighty warrior is to be praised and rewarded. But the sad truth is the warrior has to destroy or damage in order to be victorious. What is better than being victorious in the battle? Being able to win without having to do battle. The person who can prevent a war is by far better than the person who can win a war. A little patience is by far better than great physical power. It is better to control your temper than to be able to subdue and conquer another my might.

Patience Is Better Than A Warrior !

Proverbs For Living – 13 – Temper / Patience / Peace

Read Proverbs 25:15 and make notes:

The patient controlled speech and actions of a person can overcome great opposition. A person in control of their passions and actions persuade those in authority who in turn affect the actions of all those over whom they exercise authority. The bone represents the structural strength of the body. The very structure of our being can be subdued by the power of the Word.

Patient Words Influence People In Leadership !

Source of Patience:

Read Proverbs 14:29 and make notes:

Patient people are able to be patient because of their understanding or because of their wisdom. So, if you would like to be one of those patient people who can calm the storms of quarreling, then go for understanding, and Patience will come to you.

Patience Comes From Understanding !

Read Proverbs 19:11 and make notes:

We have seen that Patience is a helpful characteristic and it is an honorable thing to have and exhibit in our daily life. A person of wisdom has the ability to be patient with those who are causing disturbance.

Patience Comes From Wisdom !

Prior to this study series, were you one of those who thought "Patience ONLY comes through tribulation?" Tribulation certainly does bring about patience in our lives; but isn't it great to know you can also get patience through Wisdom and Understanding?

Proverbs For Living – 13 – Temper / Patience / Peace

Peace:

Read Proverbs 12:20 and make notes:

We have seen in this lesson that Peace is greatly to be desired over many other things. The contrast is between what is in the heart of those who plot evil as opposed to those who promote peace. Happiness is a good thing and everyone in their right mind no doubt wants to be happy. However, Joy is by far greater than happiness. To have joy in the heart is a most wonderful thing. Those who are counselors of peace will have more than an inner contentment, they will have Joy in their heart.

Peace Brings Joy !

Read Proverbs 14:30 and make notes:

While envy rots the bones, Peace gives life to the body. Peace brings life to the body (the whole body, more than just a part of it). A peaceful spirit soothes and heals.

Peace Brings Life !

Read Proverbs 29:9 and make notes:

There is no way to have peace with a fool. The ways of the Fool actually destroy peace; for themselves as well as for those around them.

Fools Destroy Peace !

Read Proverbs 29:17 and make notes:

A disciplined child brings peace to the family home. Any organization or group of people where there is no discipline will have no peace. One sure avenue to Peace is the way of discipline.

Discipline Brings Peace !

Proverbs For Living – 13 – Temper / Patience / Peace

Read Proverbs 10:12 and make notes:

This speaks of the attitudes which drive our actions. An attitude of hatred stirs up dissension while an attitude of love covers over wrongs. The covering over of wrongs by love speaks of forgiveness.

Read Proverbs 18:18-19 and make notes:

In the culture from which this Proverb emerged, it was believed that divine providence controlled the outcome of the casting of lots. If both sides in a dispute would recognize divine control of events and situations, it would make it easy to resolve any dispute regardless of how far apart the opponents might be at the beginning of the dispute. It doesn't say there wouldn't be hurt, but simply that the opponents wouldn't take actions of retribution since the divine overseer allowed things to come about the way they did.

A fortified city is one which others cannot come inside easily. Some part of the fortification has to be voluntarily opened by those on the inside before another can enter. Abuse of one who is close to us (a brother) can turn them into an enemy that is more unyielding to the allowing someone inside than a fortified city. Basically it implies they won't be willing to listen to us when we try to speak to them about working things out. The disputes that arise from an offended brother become like the barred gates of a citadel which cannot be broken down. We won't be able to force our way into the offended brother's life.

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Temper / Patience / & Peace” from this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 14 – Words 1

Six Things Words Can Do:

#1:

Read Proverbs 14:3 and make notes:

Perhaps one of the greatest factors in how people receive a person is the words with which they speak. This verse is saying more than the simple fact that the words of a foolish person cause others to desire to put a "rod to his back." What it is saying is the foolish words actually bring harm to the person speaking them. Their foolish words become the rod which inflicts the pain upon them. In other words, it is the words which are the direct cause of the pain. The contrast between the words of the fool and those of the wise is significant. The words of the wise actually protect them.

#1 - Words Can Inflict Pain Or They Can Protect!

#2:

Read Proverbs 12:13 and make notes:

The words of the evil person frequently becomes the very thing which snares them. There is an old saying which speaks of giving an evil person enough rope to hang themselves. The idea expressed in this old saying is if you allow an evil person to speak long enough, they will trap themselves and everyone will see what their real nature is. The evil person will eventually catch himself (or herself) in their very own words. The righteous person escapes trouble by the very same thing which traps the wicked. The words of the righteous person are the things which deliver them from danger, traps, and snares. The words spoken by the righteous are an instrument of protection and deliverance rather than a trap.

Read Proverbs 6:2 and make notes:

Verse 1 reveals this instruction is being given regarding a young persons who have found themselves in trouble because they made a pledge of security for another person. How often a young inexperienced person will make a pledge (or debt) which takes them a lifetime to pay off or to become free from it!

This is not so different from the trap of the wicked person. The foolish words of the immature person which are spoken without being given serious consideration have a very similar result as the words spoken by the wicked person.

#2 - Words Can Be A Trap Or A Means Of Escape !

Proverbs For Living – 14 – Words 1

#3:

Read Proverbs 12:18 and make notes:

Reckless words are those which are spoken without any thought or planning. They are those words spoken without any consideration as to where they will land or what affect they will have on those who receive them. Reckless words are those which are spoken hastily and without seeking counsel. "Piercing" is a random stabbing into the unseen; not knowing what, if anything, is being severed or wounded. A surgeon never just jabs the scalpel into the person they are operating upon. The surgeon will cut slowly and carefully through each layer taking great care that nothing is cut or damaged unnecessarily. Not so with the reckless words. The piercing ability of the sword can be experienced not only by those who are in the immediate vicinity of the one speaking recklessly but it can also be experienced by the speaker. It is an interesting contrast to see the words of the wise bring healing instead of reckless piercing. Reckless cutting words bring harm and pain. Carefully spoken words of the wise bring healing, encouragement, and are uplifting.

Read Proverbs 16:24 and make notes:

Pleasant words are not only sweet, like the eating of a fresh honeycomb, but they bring healing to the bones. In 1 Samuel chapter 14 is the account of Jonathan who is weak and suffering from hunger. Verse 27 says "his eyes brightened" or he was strengthened when he ate some honeycomb. This is the affect which pleasant words have upon our physical bodies as well as our emotions and spirits.

Read Proverbs 18:4 and make notes:

There seems to be an inexhaustible supply of words from the mouth of a person ("deep waters"). To the experienced and accomplished swimmer or fisherman, deep waters do not bring fear or anxiety. In fact, the swimmer seems to find it easier in some respects to swim in water with some depth to it as opposed to very shallow water. The fisherman usually finds more success in the deep waters and considers the deep waters a desirable place to fish. However, for the poor swimmer and those who are not fishermen, deep waters can be the source of great concern and worry. The contrast is shown in the words which come forth from the wise person. Their words are seen more as a bubbling brook than a pool of deep water. A bubbling brook has the sight and sound of refreshment. Almost everyone finds it to be a pleasant experience.

Read Proverbs 15:4 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 14 – Words 1

Our spoken words can be either healing words or words of harm. The healing words produce the fruit of life while the harmful words crush life itself. Healing words vitalize our spirit while deceitful words crush our spirit.

Read Proverbs 15:13 and make notes:

Happiness has an affect on our physical body and it most frequently shows in the face. Heartache does damage to the physical body but it isn't as readily noticed by those we meet. The words translated "crushes the spirit" are the ones used to describe major depression and the pain of despair. Sometimes we can see the face of an individual and realize they are not happy, but sometimes a person's face may not show any sign of deep depression to the untrained observer.

Read Proverbs 26:28 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 12:25 and make notes:

Words that hurt and words that bring forth destruction. A lying tongue is only slightly different from a flattering tongue. Both are speaking things that are not true. The lying tongue is actually associated with the idea of those who really don't care anything at all about the welfare of those to whom they are being spoken. The flattering tongue is usually associated with the idea of caring about the other person and trying to make them feel better by telling them they are better, smarter, prettier, etc. than reality. The lying tongue hurts indiscriminately while the flattering tongue hurts a specific person or people.

The lying tongue hates (or has no love) for the recipients of the lies while the flattering tongue loves or cares for the welfare and feelings of those receiving the flattery. Words which are not true (lies or flattery), hurt people and even bring ruin to ourselves and to others.

Encouraging words can actually lift the weights that press heavily upon the heart. The word translated "anxious" literally means "anxiety and fear." Anxiety, fear, and stress weigh so heavily upon the heart that it not only bows a person down but will eventually take their physical life from them. Speaking the right words can turn a heart from depression to rejoicing.

Read Proverbs 15:30 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 14 – Words 1

The right words spoken, as in "good news", can bring health to the very framework of our being. The right medicines should not be ignored when one is sick and hurting, but no medicine can do for the inner man what hearing "good news" can do.

#3 - Words Can Bring Healing Or Harm !

#4:

Read Proverbs 12:6 and make notes:

Words spoken by the righteous become a skillful defensive force against the charges and accusations being waged against them. The words of the wicked lying in wait for blood reinforces the picture of the words of the wicked being a trap. Sometimes the wicked become snared by their own trap and the blood which is spilled is their own. The words of the righteous helps them to be able to avoid the traps and snares of the wicked.

Read Proverbs 18:21 and make notes:

What we say can lead to life or it can lead to death. Those who love it (the tongue), those who love to talk, will certainly eat the fruit of their words. The only question is what will be the fruit which we eat?

#4 - Words Can Bring Life Or Death!

#5:

Read Proverbs 15:2 and make notes:

The words spoken by the wise person brings forth knowledge. The words spoken by the foolish person "gushes" forth folly.

#5 - Words Can Be Wisdom Or They Can Be Folly!

#6:

Read Proverbs 15:1 and make notes:

The way we use our words determines to a great degree what kind of effect we will have on others. The word translated "gentle" is quite different from simply speaking softly or with kind words. It speaks of words which bring reconciliation or restores the situation to a state of reasonableness. The word translated "harsh" speaks directly of those words which cause another person to experience pain or will make them angry.

Proverbs For Living – 14 – Words 1

Read Proverbs 25:20 and make notes:

Taking away a person's garment on a cold day would leave them uncomfortable and no doubt with some harsh feelings toward the person who took it. The pouring of vinegar on soda neutralizes the soda and renders ineffective, so this is a counter-productive act. To try and sing songs to (or get them to sing with you) a person with a heavy heart is as inappropriate and counterproductive as these two examples. You may very well make the person uncomfortable to add to their heavy heart and also likely to cause them to have hard feelings toward you.

#6 - Our Words Can Calm Anger Or Stir It Up!

Six Ways Words Have Power:

Read Proverbs 2:16 and make notes:

#1 - Words Have The Power To Seduce Us!

Read Proverbs 7:21 and make notes:

#2 - Words Have The Power To Lead Us Astray!

Read Proverbs 25:15 and make notes:

Even a gentle tongue has the power to break a bone. This speaks of the gentle calm speech which breaks down the strongest opposition.

#3 - Words Have The Power To Break Stiff Opposition!

Read Proverbs 18:8 and make notes:

Words have the ability to penetrate to the deepest and inmost parts of who we are.

#4 - Words Have The Power To Penetrate Our Every Layer !

Proverbs For Living – 14 – Words 1

Read Proverbs 16:27 and make notes:

Words at the disposal of the wicked scoundrel are like a scorching fire. The words of a scoundrel devour others as well as their possessions.

#5 - Words Have The Power To Destroy!

Read Proverbs 25:13-14 and make notes:

A messenger who is faithful and trustworthy lifts the spirits of those who send them as well as those who receive the message. The phrase "refreshes the spirit" clarifies that this is a deeper refreshing experience than simply refreshing the physical body.

Clouds and wind together usually hold the promise of rain. When no rain comes, it is like a promise unfulfilled. The boasting of a gift, like the clouds and wind, get the attention of those near by. When the promise or boast goes unfulfilled it is disappointing and discouraging. We need to be careful not to make false promises.

Read Proverbs 25:25 and make notes:

#6 - Words Have The Power To Refresh!

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Words” from this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

Four Things About Bad Words:

#1:

Read Proverbs 17:4 and make notes:

The wicked are actually attracted to destructive speech. Those who are interested in listening to evil and destructive speech are those who are evil and destructive themselves. Those who are interested in listening to lies are themselves a liar. The wicked listens to (is looking for or searching for) evil words. The liar is the one who will pay careful attention to words that are malicious and tearing down someone. The wicked person and the liar seem to feed on destructive words.

#1 - Bad Words Are Food For The Wicked!

#2:

Read Proverbs 25:23 and make notes:

This proverbial saying must be adapted to each location on the globe since north wind does not bring rain in every country. Replacing "north" with the appropriate direction from which our rains come does no harm to the text. As surely as the wind (from your direction) brings forth rain, so do the sly words bring forth angry looks.

#2 - Bad Words Bring Angry Looks!

#3:

Read Proverbs 17:20 and make notes:

Those speaking deceitful words always fall into trouble. A perverse person will never be able to prosper over the long run because of the continuous trouble which is brought about by their words. The word translated "trouble" clearly speaks of the calamities and adversities of life. These are the things which consume our resources (our prosperity).

#3 - Bad Words Bring Troubles!

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

#4:

Read Proverbs 20:20 and make notes:

The "curses" of father or mother includes treating contemptuously and denying or disparaging one's origin or background, but it specifically is directed to speaking curses upon them. The judgment for these kinds of words is to forfeit their life (lamp snuffed out).

#4 - Bad Word Against Parents Bring Death!

Words Can Be Fruitful:

Read Proverbs 16:21 and make notes:

#1 - Words Can Produce Instruction!

Read Proverbs 10:31 and make notes:

#2 - Words Can Produce Wisdom!

Read Proverbs 21:23 and make notes:

#3 - Words Can Produce Protection!

Read Proverbs 22:11 and make notes:

#4 - Words Can Produce Good Friends!

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

Read Proverbs 10:20 and make notes:

#5 - Words Can Produce Personal Value!

Read Proverbs 12:14 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 18:20 and make notes:

In much the same way as a person who works diligently will be blessed with good things, so will the person who speaks good words be blessed with good things. By speaking positive, uplifting, encouraging words, a person can receive the sustenance required for everyday life.

#6 - Words Can Produce Provision!

Two Ways Words Are In-Sufficient:

While we have seen words are powerful, they are not sufficient for some things.

Read Proverbs 29:19 and make notes:

A servant (or any person) cannot be properly trained (or corrected) by words alone. If there isn't some kind of action to accompany the words in the early part of the training or correction, the results will be lacking (or maybe even non-existent). It doesn't matter whether the training is that which involves the discipline of a child or helping someone to learn how to perform some task. They will not "learn" how to obey or to perform by words alone.

#1 - Words Are Insufficient For Training!

Read Proverbs 14:23 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

Profit (or increase in our resources) is the result of hard work. Words alone are not sufficient to increase our wealth. Some might like to point to the person who makes a living by giving talks about various issues or to the instructor who appears to make a living by speaking. If all that a person does is to give out words, then they will have a short span of making a living. In order for the person who makes a living by speaking to continue to be in demand, they must continue to study, research, plan, and outline. They must put forth a noticeable effort to keep current in the field in which they wish to speak.

#2 - Words Are Insufficient To Provide A Living!

Some Words Are Worthless:

Read Proverbs 28:23 and make notes:

The average person is aware of words which are being spoken in sincerity or in flattery. This proverb is making the observation that the average person would rather have a sincere rebuke than the insincere words of flattery.

#1 - Words Are Worthless When They Are Flattering Words!

Read Proverbs 12:19 and make notes:

The truth holds up under trial and testing. Truth withstands the ravages of storms, wars, and ignorance. A lie is revealed and cast out as quickly as the blinking of an eye. It does appear from time to time that lies seems to prevail over truth. We should not despair when we think a lie is holding up and is being accepted over the truth. It is only a matter of time until the lie is revealed for what it is and will be rejected. Lies simply don't last but the truth last forever! This simple, but profound, proverb is the reason Christians can refrain from despair and discouragement when lies are being spread.

Read Proverbs 21:6 and make notes:

One simply cannot hold onto wealth which has been acquired by means of lying and deceiving. This proverb declares a fortune made this way will disappear as easily as a vapor and will be as destructive as a "deadly" snare.

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

Read Proverbs 16:30 and make notes:

Facial expressions (winks eye & purses lips) often reveal a person is not speaking the truth. It is important to see the person who is speaking to us. There is some importance to be placed upon the tonal inflections of a person's words, but the body language can sometimes reveal a completely different message from the literal translating of the words.

#2 - Words Are Worthless When They Are Not True!

God's View Of Words:

Read Proverbs 6:16-17 and make notes:

There are many sins and God hates them all. There are seven specific things which are hated by God so much as to be named. Words which are not true are hated by God. This applies to the Prophet who declares things as being from God when they are not. This applies to the business person who declares their product or service will perform in a way which it will not. This applies to the person who says "I will be there for you" when they know they will not. This applies to the person who says "I will pray for you" when they know they will not, and etc.

Read Proverbs 19:22 and make notes:

God Hates Words That Are Not True!

Read Proverbs 10:18 and make notes:

The person who conceals their hatred by telling lies is a hypocrite. Slander is declared as worse than hypocrisy. One reason this may be so is at least the hypocrite keeps the words of hatred to himself while the slanderer spreads words of hatred out for anyone who should be available to hear them.

God Sees Slander As Worse Than Hypocrisy!

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

Read Proverbs 8:13 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 12:2 and make notes:

Perverse speech certainly applies to evil and wicked words. Perverse speech also applies to those words which have deviated from what is right. Maybe they have not completely become false as of yet, but if the conversation continues in this direction then the words will become non-true words. Words which have deviated from the path that is right and are headed for corruption are the "perverse" words. The person with sly plans will be condemned by the Lord while the person who speaks good things will receive God's favor.

God Hates Perverse Words !

Read Proverbs 22:12 and make notes:

While God watches over knowledge, He is also the one who "frustrates" the words of the unfaithful. This has the implication that the unfaithful person will find themselves becoming frustrated by their own words. "Why did I say that?", or "Oh, how I wish I hadn't said that!", etc.

God Frustrates The Words Of Those Who Are Not Faithful !

God's Instructions Regarding Words:

Read Proverbs 4:24 and make notes:

"Put away" perverse words from your mouth. Don't allow words which have deviated from what is right to come forth from your mouth. This is more specific than "don't tell lies." This is saying don't even allow yourself to speak words which are technically still true but have deviated from what is right. Don't beat around the bush! Keep your words straight and true!

Read Proverbs 30:10 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

"Slander" means to defame and make another person look bad in the sight of others. This word of wisdom is not limited to strictly the literal slave and slave master. This bit of wisdom applies equally well to any situation where one person reports to another. Don't slander a child to their parents. Don't slander an employee to their employer. Don't slander anyone to the person to whom the report or answer. When it is discovered that what you say is not true, then you will be cursed, and be penalized (pay for it). The advice is to be very careful that what we say is not only true but is verifiable. If it can be verified or proven, then it may be considered slander by others.

Don't Say Anything That Isn't Right !

Read Proverbs 10:19 and make notes:

It is unclear whether this proverb is saying the person who talks a lot is one who has sin in their life or if the person who talks a lot will cause themselves to sin because of their much speaking. Rather than allowing ourselves to go around in circles trying to figure this one out, why not accept the warning and make it a point to control how much we talk. Many words spoken indicates sin in your life. Few words spoken indicates wisdom.

Read Proverbs 17:28 and make notes:

A fool is not wise, but when they keep silent, others may think they are wise. There is an old saying that goes something like this: "Why not keep silent and allow some people to think you are a fool instead of speaking and letting everyone know you are!"

Don't Talk Too Much !

Proverbs For Living – 15 – Words 2

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Proverbs “ so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

Discretion:

Read Proverbs 5:1-2 and make notes:

This is an interesting "wisdom statement." The instruction is first of all for the child to listen well and pay attention to what the parent is saying (from verse 1). The reason they are asking the child to pay attention and listen to what they are saying is "so that" the child will be able to "maintain" discretion.

The Old Testament word which is translated "maintain" means to "keep up, save, or preserve." In the O.T. when the word translated "discretion" was used in a bad sense it referred to wicked plans or to mischievousness. When the word was used in a good sense it spoke of a person's "witty invention." In both cases, being used in a bad sense or good, the word spoke overall of the person with discretion as being one who had a plan.

In the dictionary of today's English language the definition of "discretion" is "the quality of being prudent or being careful about what one does." This old word of wisdom was encouraging the child to "keep safe", "protect", and "keep in good working order" their ability to be witty in inventing if necessary, but to certainly make sure they were able to be prudent in the way they handled themselves in certain situations.

Don't just respond to situations and circumstances! Make a concerted effort to guard your ability to use Discretion!

Guard Your Discretion!

Read Proverbs 8:12 and make notes:

This text declares "discretion" to be a "possession" of those with wisdom. The word possession infers ownership to some degree, so it is only natural to expect the Wise to have Discretion. But it is also true that one can have something in their possession (such as discretion) and yet not have ownership of the thing which they possess. This should be encouraging to those who do not yet feel they have obtained a place among the wise. Even though we may not yet consider ourselves as being among the wise, this does not mean that we can not have and use Discretion. It only means we may have to put forth more effort than the wise may have to in order to make use of Discretion.

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

The second thought worth dwelling on from this text is this: If you would like to have Discretion in your possession on a consistent and regular basis, then work toward making a place for yourself among the wise.

Discretion Is The Possession Of The Wise!

Read Proverbs 2:11 and make notes:

Discretion is for more than just making you look good or for keeping the family from being embarrassed by your actions. Discretion will serve as a fence around you to keep harm from coming too near. Discretion will at times keep any harm from touching you or the things which are yours; body, family, home, personal items, equipment, etc. Discretion at other times may not prevent harm from touching you; but will minimize the amount of harm you will experience. In all cases, Discretion will serve as a protector of you and your life.

Read Proverbs 13:3 and make notes:

Having close control over what we say can prevent a lot of trouble in our life. The most important means of guarding our life and our lifestyle is to guard carefully what we say. Remember the assurance of this Proverb; those who speak without giving care to what they say (speaks rashly) will come to destruction.

Discretion Protects Us!

Read Proverbs 11:22 and make notes:

Using the picture of a "beautiful person with no Discretion" could refer to the absence of Discretion in regard to what they eat (physical or spiritual), lack of intellectual discretion, a lack of discretion in ethical matters, or in moral decisions. Most scholars would no doubt agree the context of this particular verse is speaking of the lack of moral discretion.

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

The picture is given of a pig wearing a beautiful and valuable gold ring in its nose. To the Hebrew people, the pig had no value as an animal. They didn't make use of its meat, its hide, nor its service in any way. What possible sense could it make to fasten a beautiful piece of jewelry to an animal which has no value and even less to fasten this jewelry to a detestable thing like a pig. Placing the most beautiful jewelry on the pig would not change the value of the pig. Neither would it make the pig more attractive. The jewelry would instead become something no self-respecting Hebrew would want after it had been worn by the likes of a pig. So, that which would otherwise be beautiful to behold and valuable to have, would become itself worthless and undesirable to others.

Our beauty as a person; whether it comes from physical beauty, intellectual beauty, or otherwise; becomes "de-valued" and undesirable if we fail to make use of discretion in the way we live our life and deal with the everyday issues which we face.

Read Proverbs 25:10-11 and make notes:

A good word spoken at the right time and in the right way has beauty and value. It can make a person look great to others and make them feel good about themselves.

Discretion Gives Us Value And Makes Us Desirable!

Gossip:

Read Proverbs 18:8 (and 26:22) and make notes:

The words of a gossip are much like an addictive chemical. When these tasty bits of gossip are taken into our being, they cause us to desire even more. It seems to be a part of our human nature to want to listen to gossip when the opportunity is given. It takes discipline and restraint for an individual to refuse to listen to gossip and slander. It is sad to have to acknowledge it as a part of our nature but the reality appears to be that if someone chooses to gossip about others or slander someone, there is an almost guaranteed audience. The warning in this text is clear: gossip (this addictive substance) goes directly to the inner most parts of who we are and what we are. It does not simply remain somewhere on the surface of our consciousness. Once it makes its way to our inner most parts, it is in a strategic place to become a part of who and what we are. Does this idea not concern you?

Gossip Has The Ability To Penetrate To Our Inmost Parts!

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

Read Proverbs 26:20 and make notes:

By controlling the amount of fuel being delivered, you can control a fire. If you stop the flow of fuel, you can completely extinguish a fire. It is no less the case when it comes to gossip and quarrelling. By controlling the amount of gossip you can control the level of a quarrel. If you completely stop the flow of gossip, it is amazing how quickly the quarreling dies down.

Gossip Is Fuel For Quarreling!

Read Proverbs 11:13 and make notes:

In much the same way that our nature desires more gossip when it taste any, so it is that our nature simply **MUST** share gossip if we have any. The person who is given to gossip **WILL NOT** be able to keep anything told to them in any degree of confidence. It is the nature of a gossip not only to tell all they know, but it will seek out the most damaging situation in which to share what is known.

Gossip Betrays Confidence!

Read Proverbs 16:28 and make notes:

This "word to the wise" is saying more than the simple fact that others will separate from the gossip because of what they say. Those who have had a confidence betrayed by the gossip will want to separate themselves from the gossip. But the gossip has another sad affect upon the people around them and upon those who hear the product of their mouth. The gossip will cause those who are close friends to separate from one another and often will completely destroy the friendship. The fruit of the gossip reaches out and touches far too many in any community.

Read Proverbs 17:9 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

The contrast is made clear in this Proverb between those who love and those who do not. The person who loves another will not tell others about the offense caused by the one they love. The person who does not love the other person will tell over and over about the offense the other person caused. The person who insist on telling others about the error or offense of another person not only stands in danger of destroying any friendship they might have together, but they also endanger the friendship the offender may have with others.

Gossip Separates Friends!

Read Proverbs 20:19 and make notes:

The very real danger which comes from having anything to do with a gossip cannot be overstated. The gossip cannot keep a secret and must tell everything they know; and they tell it in the most damaging way. Because of this, a sure result of gossip is the destruction of friendships. When you find someone who talks too much, they are to be avoided as much as possible. The less contact we have with a gossip the better off we will be.

Gossips Are To Be Avoided!

Friends:

Read Proverbs 27:6 and make notes:

The wounds from a friend are nothing to be feared. Any wounds inflicted by a true friend would be intended to bring something good into our life. Maybe protection or even correction. The kisses of an enemy are completely undesirable. Even one is too many.

Friends Don't Hurt Friends!

Read Proverbs 27:9 and make notes:

Advice from a friend is not only pleasant, it is beneficial. The advice from a friend is "earnest", that is, it is truly intended to be helpful to us and for us.

Friends Give Good Advice!

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

Read Proverbs 17:17 and make notes:

The love of a friend is not conditional. The friend loves in the good times as well as the bad times. Their love is just as reliable and consistent when we fall as when we are winning. A blood brother may in fact come to your assistance in a time of adversity, but all too often we have witnessed the opposite. A true friend is still with you, even in the times of great adversity.

Friends Love At All Times!

Read Proverbs 22:11 and make notes:

The person who consistently speaks forth with honesty and graciousness will find themselves being welcomed into the places of prominent people.

Friends Are Made By Gracious Speech!

Read Proverbs 14:10 and make notes:

Caution is given in the Proverb. Even our closest friend cannot fully know the full bitterness of our heart. Neither can someone else know the fullness of the joy that is in our heart. The caution comes in that we should be careful to say to another person, “I know how you feel.” We may indeed know something of how they feel, especially if we have been in a similar situation or experience. But we cannot know exactly what they feel since only they can know the depth of bitterness or the height of joy that is in their heart.

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

Deceit:

Read Proverbs 14:5 and make notes:

The problem of false witnesses slowing down the quest for the truth in a matter is not a new one. This Proverb has a double edge to it. One side describes what you can expect from a faithful witness and a false witness. The other side describes those who make faithful witnesses to call in settling a matter and those who will not. The truthful witness does not deceive, and those who have a reputation for telling the truth make a faithful witness. A false witness tells abundant lies, and those who have a reputation for telling lies makes an unfaithful witness.

Read Proverbs 14:25 and make notes:

It is equally true that a deceitful person makes a false witness. Whatever the deceitful person says is completely unreliable. Their word cannot be trusted. The truthful person will save the life of another by telling the truth; even if the truth is detrimental to their own welfare. The deceitful person will change the facts, distort the truth, or leave out significant little details; regardless of who's life may be at stake, other than their own.

Deceitful People Are Not Reliable Witnesses!

Read Proverbs 26:24 and make notes:

The deceitful person is constantly changing the facts to hide the real person they are. Their words are a continuous attempt to be in disguise. They attempt to hide the deceit of their heart by the words they use. They also try to hide their malicious intentions by carefully chosen words. God's children should take no part in any deceitful activity or scheme. It is dangerous to be a part of anything which hides the truth. The person who would encourage you along these lines is a deceitful person. The real person is hidden behind the disguise. At the heart of their being, they are a malicious person. Too many of God's children have been deeply wounded when attempting to help someone and taken part in what they thought was a harmless amount of deception.

Deceitful People Are Malicious!

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

Read Proverbs 12:20 and make notes:

There is a clear and concise contrast between the deceitful person and the non-deceitful person. The deceitful person plots (and promotes) evil while the non-deceitful person promotes (and plans) peace. Nothing good can come from evil plots and plans; only sorrow and pain. The deceitful person has plans which are intended to take away peace from an individual, family, church, or nation.

Deceitful People Plan To Destroy Peace!

Read Proverbs 6:14 and make notes:

In this passage (verses 12-14) the deceitful person is called a "scoundrel" and a "villain." This is a clear description of what a deceitful person is at the core of their being. This should help even the youngest Christian to understand why we should have no part in anything deceitful. We do not want to be associated with a "scoundrel" or a "villain" who is always plotting another way to stir up dissension among God's people.

Deceitful People Stir Up Dissension!

Read Proverbs 15:4 and make notes:

The words we say have a tremendous potential to bring healing or harm, blessing or cursing, relief or pain. The plan and intent of the deceitful person is to crush the very spirit of the other person or people. The words of the deceitful person are diametrically opposed to everything the Christian is commissioned to minister in our walk with Christ Jesus.

Deceitful People Crush The Spirit Of Other People!

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

Read Proverbs 12:5 and make notes:

It really does make a difference as to the person from whom we take advice. The righteous person will give good and healthy advice. The very thoughts and intentions (plans) of the righteous are for good (just). The advice given by the deceitful person is completely worthless for any good. Only harm and destruction can come from the advice given by the deceitful person.

Read Proverbs 26:25-26 and make notes:

It is our human nature to want to draw near those who say charming words to us. This is a caution against believing the words of one who speaks charming words. The "seven abominations" which fill his heart may speak of the completeness of abominable plans and intent found in the heart of the charmer. The intended malice may be so concealed that we may not easily see it, but it will eventually be revealed. We are much safer with the person who at least on occasion speaks a word of correction or rebuke to us.

Deceitful People Give Harmful Advice!

Read Proverbs 17:20 and make notes:

The evil words and plans of the deceitful person lead only to trouble; not only for themselves but for those who are associated with them. A perverse person is one who's heart is twisted and crooked. A deceitful person is one who's words are twisted and crooked. The Hebrew word translated "trouble" in this text conveys the idea of calamity and adversity in this present life.

Deceitful People Lead Only To Trouble!

Proverbs For Living – 16 – Words 3

Read Proverbs 10:10 and make notes:

Those who continually engage in foolish talk (chattering fool) comes to destruction.

Deceitful People Come To Ruin !

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Words” in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

Neighbor:

The way we treat our neighbor says a great deal about who we are. Not just position or place in society or in the community, but who we are in Christ or the lack of. These verses have some significant words of wisdom in regard to how and what we say to and say about our neighbors. It is unfortunate, but it is greatly needed in today's church community. We as a people seem to have lost our perspective upon the proper way for God's children to interact with our neighbors.

Read Proverbs 11:12 and make notes:

The Hebrew word translated "deride" in this text means to strongly despise or to hold in great contempt. Our English word "deride" means to laugh at in contempt or to ridicule and make fun of. We are given the opportunity to have the mind of Christ. It simply is not the mind of Christ to make fun of our neighbor, or to ridicule them. This word of the wise states plainly that one who does so faces judgement. Consider the question posed to Jesus in Luke chapter 10 regarding "who is my neighbor."

Don't Ridicule Your Neighbor!

Read Proverbs 14:21 and make notes:

One of the sad characteristics of our current day society is the constant arguing about what constitutes a sin and what is acceptable in our contemporary lifestyles. This word from the ancient wise couldn't be more clear. If you despise your neighbor, you are guilty of sin. Again, this text doesn't address whether the neighbor is a good neighbor or a bad one. It doesn't say a thing about how deserving they may or may not be. How close can our personal relationship with the Heavenly Father be on a daily basis, if we are guilty of sin?

To Despise Your Neighbor Is Sin!

Read Proverbs 16:29 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 3:29 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

To entice (or encourage) your neighbor to go somewhere or to do something which brings harm to them places you in the category of the "violent" person. This passage says nothing of the good or bad neighbor as far as their part goes. It speaks only to the way we lead them. Can we be a violent person and fulfill our obedience to the life in Christ? Never, ever, make plans to do harm, especially to an unsuspecting neighbor.

Don't Lead Your Neighbor To Any Harm!

Read Proverbs 11:9 and make notes:

The godless person will destroy their neighbor. But God's children do not need to fear such a neighbor should they have one. The contrast is made between the righteous who escape destruction by way of their knowledge and the godless who destroy their neighbor. While it is true the godless will bring destruction to their neighbor; the child of God does not need to strike the first blow to ward off such a destruction. Our knowledge will be the perfect defense against the destruction of the godless neighbor. There is no place for God's children in any activity which is set to destroy a neighbor.

Don't Destroy Your Neighbor!

Read Proverbs 21:10 and make notes:

While the wicked are busy pursuing evil, they have no place for mercy toward anyone. Because the wicked man is "craving" evil, mercy doesn't even fit into his vocabulary or thought processes. This is directly opposite the attitude Christ has instructed His children to have toward others (especially our enemies).

If you find you have a wicked neighbor, don't be surprised when they fail or even refuse to show mercy toward you even in the smallest matter. It is impossible to live as one who has the love of Christ in our heart if we also fail to show mercy toward our neighbor. After all, the lack of showing mercy is one of the characteristics of the wicked person.

Read Proverbs 3:27-28 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

If it is in your ability to help your neighbor, do not put them off or delay your help to them. This certainly does include your ability to speak up for or to speak out for your neighbor.

Don't Withhold Mercy From Your Neighbor!

Read Proverbs 24:28 and make notes:

This is an important text for today's society. It does not say you should never testify against a neighbor. It says you should not do so without a clear and solid reason. We, as God's children, should take great care and consideration before ever going to give testimony against another person. This applies to the secular judicial system but it also applies to meetings of the church and its organizations. The second statement simply re-enforces the injunction against saying anything which will deceive.

Read Proverbs 25:8 and make notes:

Don't be quick to testify against someone. It happens so frequently that we take a position on a matter only to find out more information and discover we have taken the wrong side of the issue. When we rush to take someone to court, we stand in danger of facts being made public that we know nothing of and wind up being put to shame because of it.

Don't Testify Against A Neighbor Without A Solid Reason!

Read Proverbs 3:30 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 25:18 and make notes:

The club, sword, and arrow all are capable of causing pain and even death to a neighbor. That is what we become when we give false testimony against another person. The person who gives false testimony; but doesn't know it is false, may try to lessen their guilt by pointing to their ignorance of the truth. That doesn't diminish the results of the club, sword, or arrow.

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

It's not so different from saying, "I didn't know the gun was loaded." The harm is still done to the neighbor. When we consider the Great Commission given to the followers of Jesus, we cannot fulfill our commission and be like these weapons. This is a great reason we should be slow to testify against another person. What if we are wrong?

Don't Give False Testimony Against Your Neighbor!

Read Proverbs 25:9 and make notes:

Regardless of how intense the argument may become; do not betray another person's confidence. Do not let a secret slip out which you have been trusted to keep. If you must argue with a neighbor, then make every effort to keep the argument private. Arguments conducted in public always have the possibility that something is revealed that should not be made known to others. What a solid reason to follow Jesus' instructions as to how we should handle an offense from another person.

Don't Betray A Neighbor's Confidence!

Read Proverbs 26:18-19 and make notes:

Deception for the purposes of a practical joke are potentially very dangerous. Far too many of God's children today think it is acceptable to engage in deception as long as it is "low key" deception or that which is intended to bring a laugh or something good (they think). The madman shooting deadly arrows just may not hit anyone and no one may get hurt. But someone might get hit by one of these arrows being shot at random without concern or care. The comparison is made to "deadly" arrows. The idea is if one of these arrows should hit you, then you will probably suffer death or at least serious injury. Even the slightest deception has the potential to inflict great harm upon the body of Christ and/or it's disciples.

Read Proverbs 16:10 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

This points out how careful those in authority should be in the words they use. Many people place a great deal of importance and validity in the words spoken by those in authority. It was not uncommon in ancient times to equate the words spoken by the king as divinely inspired words. When we are in a place of leadership, we should be extremely careful that our words do not betray what is right and fair and just.

Don't Deceive Your Neighbor, Even In Jest!

Read Proverbs 29:5 and make notes:

Flattery has grown to be quite acceptable in our contemporary society. Some of God's children even think it is a good thing which builds others up and encourages them. This is not what God's Word says about flattery. Remember, we are reading the words of ancient wisdom. Long ago, it was observed to be a very destructive thing.

To read this text as saying the one who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his neighbor's feet is enough to cause most of us to cease flattering our neighbor. After all, we don't want to bring harm to our neighbor. This text is even more powerful when you consider the second phrase in what is probably the original intent. The one who flatters his neighbor is spreading a net for his own feet. We will ultimately become entangled and trapped by the flattery we use on others. It isn't just dangerous for our neighbor. It is dangerous for the one who is doing the flattering.

Read Proverbs 27:14 and make notes:

Loud, overly demonstrative, and untimely greetings simply aren't appreciated by anyone. This indicates that how we say it, when we say it, and where we say it is as important as what we say to another person. Spoken at the wrong time, in the wrong way, or at the wrong place can cause us to be seen as a curse by the recipient.

Don't Flatter Your Neighbor!

Read Proverbs 17:13 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

Read Proverbs 20:22 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 24:29 and make notes:

This speaks of the person who shows a lack of gratitude toward others. The person who acts in an evil manner toward those who have acted in a good fashion toward them are promised to have evil as a permanent member of their house. We need to be careful to show and express appreciation for those acts of kindness and goodness shown to us by others.

This is a very important part of the Wisdom sayings. We should be careful to leave retribution to the Lord and allow Him to bring about judgment or deliverance. The righteous should not try to avenge evil but trust the Lord to repay evil and just reward.

The Lord is not only an avenger for those who have been wronged, but He is a deliverer for those falsely accused. This includes our not asking God to punish another person for the wrong we have witnessed or experienced at their hand. As righteous children of God, we should leave them in God's hand for punishment, discipline, or deliverance. Do not allow the spirit of vengeance to take control of your life.

Don't Attempt To Pay Back An Offense Against You!

Read Proverbs 6:1-5 and make notes:

It has become so commonplace in our society for one person to put up security for another that few give it any consideration. Most adults have either underwritten the debt of another person or have had someone underwrite a debt for them. This text is not saying we should never put up security for another (although that is a prudent position to consider taking). This text is addressing the situation where one has put up security for another person and then discovered they have been trapped by what they agreed to do or to guarantee. Verses 4-5 describe in clear detail how we should not allow anything to delay us in working to free ourselves from such a trap, not even sleep.

Read Proverbs 17:18 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

While the previous text leaves open the possibility to put up security for another as long as you are careful, this verse narrows that margin considerably. Do we lack judgment?

Read Proverbs 11:15 and make notes:

Those who do make promises to cover for another person is assured by this proverb to suffer. The point being made is not a guarantee that every single pledge for another person will result in suffering or loss. The concept is referring to a person who is willing to put up security for others is surely going to suffer. The odds are truly strongly against this person. The sure side of this is that the person who simply refuses to put up security for anyone will be kept safe. If you don't gamble, you can't lose.

Read Proverbs 20:16 and make notes:

There are two situations mentioned here when a person should be held to their obligations. One is when they have put up security for someone they don't know very well (a stranger) and the other is when they have made a commitment with a prostitute. Both of these actions are considered by the Wise to be extremely foolish. When a person commits willful foolishness, they should be made pay for it.

Don't Put Up Security For A Neighbor Without Careful Consideration!

Read Proverbs 27:10 and make notes:

A neighbor who is close by and available is far better than a blood relative who is at some distance or not available. Do not forsake your friends, not even the friends of your parents. Don't try to go to some relative's house which is far away when you are in need. Check with the friends and neighbors you have. This is better. Take good care of your neighbors.

Take Good Care Of Your Neighbors!

Read Proverbs 16:1 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 17 – Words 4

It is God who enables people to put their thoughts into words of truth. When we must speak before others, it is The Lord in whom we should put our faith and trust to be able to say what needs to be said and in the proper manner. Does this remind you of something Jesus told His disciples ?

The Righteous Don't Have To Worry About What To Say!

Read Proverbs 26:2 and make notes:

This word of wisdom stands to refute the idea that once a curse is spoken against someone it will take affect. This clearly states that a curse doesn't land on a person who does not deserve it. The curse may come near them and even attempt to come to rest on them or in their life, but it cannot.

The Righteous Don't Have To Worry About Being Cursed!

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Words” in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 18 - Sin

Read Proverbs 20:9 and make notes:

Mankind has known for many generations that we all "mess up" from time to time. Romans 3:23 states "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." There simply isn't anyone who can truthfully say they have always been pure in their thoughts and in their deeds. For someone to state they have kept their heart pure would be to say every decision and the motive for that decision was without any fault. This would be claiming to have attained moral perfection.

Who among us can state emphatically that our every motive was pure? Who can state categorically that every decision we made was done so with no impure or selfish motive? If you should be convinced this is true, are you sure you are not one who has become self-deceived? This simple proverb of wisdom from the ancients should help us take on a personal humility and be more willing to make an effort to understand others when they fall.

Make a list of times when you were sure you had made a decision based solely upon right motives and discovered later that you had an underlying, or subconscious, motive which was not all that pure. Make a note by each as to the result of that decision.

Make a list of decisions you made when you knew your motives were less than pure and what the results of the decision were. Draw a line through those which you know you have confessed to God and asked forgiveness.

Read Proverbs 14:34 and make notes:

The Hebrew word translated "exalts" means the people live in an elevated state or condition as compared to those around them. This is to say the neighbors look upon them with respect and admiration. The opposite is true concerning the concept of "disgrace." This says they have lost favor with their neighbors and are looked upon as something unlovely, unwanted, and despised.

How does today's advertisements for indulgence in sin compare with what God's Word says?

Read Proverbs 1:16-18 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 18 - Sin

It is always sad to hear of someone who "slipped" into a sinful situation or circumstance. It is tragic indeed when we hear of those who have "rushed" into sin. This proverb contains instruction from the parent to the child (verses 10- 19). It is a strong caution to be on guard for those who are "rushing" into sin. Those who would do so (and encourage you to do so) certainly do not have wisdom or understanding.

We need to be careful about following someone, or their advice and counsel, who makes quick decisions about everything. Have they, and do you, take the time to evaluate whether this situation might be something which will harm you or those you love? If this decision should turn out to be a wrong decision, would others see you as having "rushed into" sin or having "slipped up"?

It is useless to spread a net to catch birds when the birds are watching. These people are so blinded by their greed that they just don't recognize the futility of the lifestyle they have chosen. Their actions will be the thing that leads to their downfall and destruction and they don't see it nor do they see any reason to change their course.

List some situations where you responded to the encouragement of someone else and found yourself surprised to be so quickly in a sinful situation. (you had rushed into sin). The sinful situation might be the attitude of bitterness, resentment, unforgiveness, etc. as a result of what happened to you by following their enticement.

Read Proverbs 1:10-14 and make notes:

The student is warned not to agree to go along with sinners. There is definitely vicious intent in their plans. The verb translated "lie in wait" is used for hostile purposes such as murder and they even share their intent is to shed an innocent person's blood. These sinners offer the young person a part of gain from the crime. The word translated "plunder" is the word used for spoils from war. This suggests these are career criminals trying to entice the young person.

Read Proverbs 29:6 and make notes:

While the righteous enjoy the benefits of security, the sinner is frequently caught in their own snare. A person's own sin becomes their personal snare. In the original Hebrew language the first part of this verse literally means, "in the transgression of a bad man is a snare." The second part of this Proverb's points out the righteous person has no fear of snares and can sing along their journey of life.

Proverbs For Living – 18 - Sin

With this thought of a person's sin becoming a personal snare for them, consider the previous proverb concerning "rushing into" sin. How does it appear when someone drives head first into a building at a high rate of speed as compared to someone who side-swiped a building at a moderate rate of speed? Both are certainly unfortunate and cause damage and loss of property. The head first, high rate of speed, collision might indicate someone who was foolish to be going so fast, and not paying attention as to where they were going. The side-swiped incident could indicate someone who was caught off guard by the actions of someone else; perhaps by someone running in front of them.

There are many possible variations concerning both of these, but what is the first impression you have in each of these situations? If you end up snared because of sin, and sin is a snare, how is it going to appear to those around you? What does this do to your testimony?

Read Proverbs 15:15 and make notes:

Life can be great or it can be painful depending upon the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Those who are oppressed find life to be a wretched experience. No one is more oppressed than those oppressed by sin.

Read Proverbs 5:22 and make notes:

This proverb intensifies the danger of sin and strengthens the reasons why we should desire to attain wisdom and knowledge in order to avoid sin. Sin is not only a snare, but the cords that bind one in the snare of sin are strong cords which are not easily broken.

Read Proverbs 29:24 and make notes:

Those who become an accomplice to sin will not find an easy way out. When they are called to be a witness they are put under oath. If they tell the truth, they have betrayed the friend whom they agreed to protect. If they do not tell the truth they have violated the oath they just made.

This is not simply a theological issue! Think of some of the sins that are snaring people in our generation and the long lasting results which come from them. How easy is it to break free from the hold sin has on a person? Consider some of the common snares of our generation and the difficulty people are experiencing in trying to break free. It requires a lot of help and re-enforcement from others in most cases.

Proverbs For Living – 18 - Sin

If something is going to be so hard to get out of, then why would anyone knowingly allow themselves to get caught in it?

List some sinful snare (or snares) from which you had a difficult time getting free. Are there any at this time with which you need help to be free?

Read Proverbs 14:9 and make notes:

"Making amends" is the paying of compensation for loss or damage you have caused. This proverbial wisdom points to the mocking attitude fools have toward taking responsibility for their actions. They see no reason for making amends, after all they don't accept your loss or hurt as being their fault. They don't just reject the idea of responsibility, they actually make fun of the idea that they should repay someone for the damage they have caused.

This proverb begins another important concept. Sins CAN BE paid for (or made amends for). If sin could not be made right, then it wouldn't be only the fools who make fun of the idea of making amends for sins, but the wise would declare it to be so as well.

Read Proverbs 16:6 and make notes:

This proverb continues this very important concept that sins can be atoned for. This doesn't give two different means by which sin can be atoned for. It isn't love or faithfulness which atones for sin. It is through love AND faithfulness that sin is atoned for.

The greatest application of this proverb in action is seen in Jesus Christ. His love for us without the accompanying faithfulness would not have resulted in our sins being atoned for. It was His love for us and His faithfulness to do everything the Heavenly Father asked of Him which provided us with the necessary atonement for our sins before God.

The everyday application is no more or less complicated. When we sin against another person, our love for them coupled with our faithfulness to them will make atonement for the sin against them. In short, it isn't enough to say "I love you and I am sorry for hurting you", it requires subsequent faithfulness toward them as well. This applies equally well to marriages, business relationships, and church member relationships.

Proverbs For Living – 18 - Sin

Read Proverbs 29:16 and make notes:

To say something "thrives" means it is growing and increasing. Sin is something that can and does grow and increase. The warning in this proverb can be seen in the identifying of the environment or place where sin thrives. Sin thrives where the wicked thrive.

If we wish to be where sin is at a minimum, then we need to stay clear of the places and people where the wicked "grow and increase." To fellowship with the wicked is to place yourself in danger of their sins and it's consequences not to mention the danger of sin becoming a part of your life.

List some situations where you caused another person harm and made amends for it. What were the results of you making amends? Did you volunteer to make amends before being asked to do so or did you make amends only after being asked to?

There are some identifying signs, or flags, which help us identify when and where sin might be found, in ourselves or others.

Read Proverbs 10:19 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 17:19 and make notes:

Not everyone who "talks too much" does so because there is sin in their life. The evaluation of "talks too much" might be very different for different people. However, if you should find yourself wanting to talk to the point that you don't allow anyone else to say anything, or not very much, this could be a warning sign that you have sin in your life. The other warning sign is the love for quarreling.

How are you doing in these two areas ?

Proverbs For Living – 18 - Sin

Read Proverbs 21:4 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 24:9 and make notes:

Most of us probably understand things like murder and stealing to be sin. When Jesus was ministering with His disciples, He pointed out that sin was committed when our thoughts or hearts were set on sin, even before the physical act was committed. Jesus wasn't narrowing the definition of sin. As these Proverbs indicate, this has always been the case from God's perspective.

The word "haughty" speaks of having a high opinion of yourself coupled with contempt for others. This doesn't speak of the person who is simply proud of their accomplishments. This is speaking of a person who thinks more highly of themselves than they should and at the same time thinks more lowly of others than they should.

Isn't it interesting that this wisdom statement of the ancient world speaks of the "haughty eyes"? Do you think you can see it in someone's eyes who think too highly of themselves and have contempt for others?

This is just as much sin as the proud heart and the schemes of folly; which is just as much sin as murder and stealing. The "scheme of folly" speaks of the plans and thoughts to carry out folly.

How much does our attitude have to do with the purity of our heart and the absence or presence of sin in our heart?

How are you doing in this area?

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Proverbs on Sin” in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

It is not unusual to find someone who is hesitant to call another person wicked. We aren't always sure exactly what constitutes a 'wicked person.' The following Proverbs will help us with a Biblical definition of what a wicked person is and give the criteria by which we can recognize a wicked person.

Characteristics of the Wicked:

#1:

Read Proverbs 10:32 and make notes:

The wicked person doesn't just fail to use prudence or good judgment before they speak, and it is more than the fact they don't consider how it might affect others. The wicked person speaks what is perverse. The word perverse is defined as:

- 1 - that which deviates from what is considered right or acceptable
- 2 - the persisting in error in a stubbornly contrary way
- 3 - being obstinately disobedient or difficult about the issue

The wicked person is not just someone who is careless or inconsiderate in what they say. The wicked person is being driven by a force which is determined to cause harm and hurt.

Read Proverbs 12:5 and make notes:

When we consider the previous proverb, it should not be necessary to explain why the advice of a wicked person is deceitful. If you are still unclear about this, take the time to re-read the definition of 'perverse' given above and remember this is what the advice given by the wicked person will be.

Read Proverbs 12:6 and make notes:

The image of 'lie in wait for blood' is of one who sets a trap which is intended to cause great harm or death to it's victim, and then hides nearby so they can see for themselves as the one caught in the trap suffers the harm caused by their trap (shedding of blood).

This gives a very ugly picture of the wicked person. The wicked person is one who has willful intent to cause pain and suffering by what they say.

Read Proverbs 15:28 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

A small quantity of painful words would be sad enough. The tragedy is revealed by this statement of wisdom which declares the mouth of the wicked "gushes" forth evil. To say that someone's words 'gush' is to say their words flow suddenly and plentiful. Compare this characteristic with the few carefully thought out words of the righteous person.

#1 - The Wicked Person Has A Plentiful Supply of Hurtful Words.

#2:

Read Proverbs 17:4 and make notes:

A wicked person finds evil speech appealing and attractive. Just like a liar pays attention to malicious speech, a wicked person pays attention when someone is speaking evil. In Leviticus 19:17, God warned His chosen people to rebuke those who speak evil words against another and He explained this instruction was given so that you will not bear their evil with them (share in their guilt) .

This begins to indicate a marked contrast between the righteous person and the wicked person. The person with a heart for righteousness WILL NOT listen to evil being spoken against another while the person with a heart after wickedness finds this kind of talk attractive.

Read Proverbs 19:28 and make notes:

The picture of one who 'gulps' down something is of a person who is swallowing large amounts quickly; not even taking time to taste the substance. Someone who puts a small amount of something in their mouth but does not swallow it until they have had an opportunity to detect even a small amount of something harmful, could possibly spew it out before it causes harm to their body. The one who 'gulps' down anything would not taste (or detect) small amounts of very harmful or deadly substances. They carelessly and thoughtlessly place themselves in danger.

Read Proverbs 21:10 and make notes:

The person who 'craves' is one who has become addicted. They will find no peace within themselves until they satisfy the craving. Their body will refuse to cooperate until it receives that which it craves. The wicked person, being addicted to evil, is in a type of personal prison and is clearly being driven by a force stronger than themselves.

#2 - The Wicked Person Is Attracted to Evil.

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

#3:

Read Proverbs 12:10 and make notes:

Many people believe the amount of compassion a person shows towards animals is a good indicator of their character. Even if that is true, it is probably missing the point of this proverb. The point isn't that a good person is kind to animals while a wicked person is not.

A righteous person takes care of all of God's creation because that is what God created man to do and is clearly spelled out for man in the Genesis account of creation. The righteous person will be noted for the humane things they do, even for lowly animals. The wicked, however, even if they try to do something kind, it will turn out to be cruel or will be done in a cruel way. This ancient insight helps point the way to the New Testament declaration that even our greatest works are filthy rags in the presence of God. It is never a matter of the quality or intent of the works we do; rather it is a matter of our relationship with the Heavenly Father.

Read Proverbs 12:12 and make notes:

The contrast is increased between the righteous and the wicked. The wicked actually desire to take the net some other evil person has already laid out. The wicked person thinks and plans ways in which they can possibly take the plunder away from another evil person. Their thoughts, hopes, and plans are continually upon the 'taking away' from someone else. The righteous don't even think of taking what someone else has. The righteous understand God's plan to produce for them what they need from the 'root'. This ancient wisdom is seen currently in the concept of Jesus being the vine and we are the branches. Jesus is the root from which our Heavenly Father will supply all our needs, if we are His and we are where He wants us to be. Not so with the wicked as will be seen more clearly later in this lesson.

#3 - The Wicked Person Is Mean.

#4:

Read Proverbs 17:23 and make notes:

Even the ancients had observed the wicked being willing to take a bribe. It is noteworthy it states the wicked accept the bribe in secret. Not everything done in secret is for evil intent, but it is when it has the express purpose to 'pervert' the course of justice. This can be seen in the wicked person who is willing to accept something of personal value and in turn give false testimony, or make a corrupt decision as the person presiding over a situation.

#4 - The Wicked Person's Testimony Changes With the Money.

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

#5:

Read Proverbs 28:1 and make notes:

Perhaps it is the guilty conscience, or the fear of judgment, but the wicked are in a constant state of fear. They are suspicious of everyone and find it difficult to trust anyone. If it were not so sad, it might be humorous to think of the wicked fleeing (running away) even though no one is chasing them.

#5 - The Wicked Person Lives In Constant Fear.

#6:

Read Proverbs 21:29 and make notes:

The emphasis of this word of wisdom is not on the word 'bold' but is on the word 'front.' Sure the first impression of this person is one who is bold and strong, maybe even hard. But the first impression is all there is. There is nothing to their boldness but the 'front.' This is a major reason a wicked person doesn't want to allow anyone to enter into their life. They don't want you to discover there is nothing to their life but this 'bold front.' The picture of this can be visualized by a stage prop which is the front of a building. Should someone open the door to this stage prop and walk through it, they would find nothing but the back side of the 'front.'

#6 - The Wicked Person Presents a False Impression of Who They Are.

#7:

Read Proverbs 28:4 and make notes:

The only people who would openly praise a person known to be wicked is someone who has forsaken or abandoned the law. Those who are faithful to the law as a moral standard by which life is to be measured will not only refrain from praising the wicked but will openly resist the wicked. Those who abandon the law soon lose the means by which they can determine if anything is bad, so it becomes easy to call anything praiseworthy. The 'law' should be understood as God's law or God's instruction.

#7 - The Wicked Person Receives Praise from Lawless People.

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

The Wicked Have A Hard Life:

Read Proverbs 22:5 and make notes:

It isn't just a matter that a wicked person will suffer after they leave this physical life. Their life here on earth is going to be a hard and dangerous life, one filled with thorns and snares.

Read Proverbs 13:22 and make notes:

The Divine Authority overrides the sinner's plan to leave an inheritance for their posterity. All that the wicked store up will one day be handed over to the righteous.

Read Proverbs 13:25 and make notes:

Whatever the wicked receive or manage to acquire will never satisfy them. One of the ways in which they will live a hard life on this earth is to continually experience being hungry and not being able to satisfy their hunger. Many of us can testify from personal experience of how hard life seems when we endure an unfilled hunger. This proverb spoke of the stomach indicating physical food, but the application spreads to all areas of our life and can apply to any kind of hunger.

Read Proverbs 10:6 and make notes:

One would expect a 'curse' to be the opposite of a 'blessing.' It would even seem balanced to say 'violence' would be the opposite of 'blessing.' The statement here is significantly more than this. It says the mouth of the wicked will be 'overwhelmed'. The wicked will experience the pain of being 'overwhelmed' or drowned by the very thing they crave. It is like the addicted person who craves more and finds the pain and destruction of an overdose rather than increased pleasure. This doesn't sound at all like an easy life.

Read Proverbs 10:11 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

It is 'violence' which will overwhelm the mouth of the wicked. If this were speaking of the violent words spoken by other people, then it would most likely say the heart or the soul would be overwhelmed. Since it says the mouth of the wicked person is the one which will be overwhelmed, it is most likely referring to the words they have spoken being the source of their overwhelming or drowning.

Read Proverbs 10:16 and make notes:

It isn't the poverty itself, or the small quantity of finances which causes a painful life on this earth. Regardless of the quantity or level of income, the wicked will experience punishment as their income.

Read Proverbs 11:18 and make notes:

Perhaps one of the painful and hard parts of life for the wicked will be the 'deceptive' nature of their wages. It will never accomplish quite what they expected it to.

Read Proverbs 15:6 and make notes:

The original text states the income of the wicked is 'a thing troubled' or a thing in calamity. This troubling of their finances goes a long way toward making life hard.

Read Proverbs 20:26 and make notes:

This Proverb serves to encourage the righteous not to despair over the apparent success of the wicked while at the same time giving reason for fear in the life of the wicked. The 'winnowing out' process clearly speaks of the wise king or person in authority throwing the wicked person to the wind and allowing the chaff to be blown away. The 'threshing wheel' speaks of the king's ability to separate the wicked from the righteous. The possibility of this threshing process is more than enough to place fear in the heart of the wicked.

Read Proverbs 22:8 and make notes:

Surely, we do reap according to the seeds we sow. What else should the wicked person expect to harvest in this life except trouble as a result of sowing wickedness.

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

Read Proverbs 11:21 and make notes:

Don't be concerned too much about the wicked who appear to be so clever that they seem to be skirting around punishment for their wicked lifestyle. Punishment will come to them.

Read Proverbs 5:22 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 11:5 and make notes:

It would be understandable that someone else snaring you would make you angry. How frustrating life is to the wicked because they continually experience themselves being snared by their own devices.

Read Proverbs 26:27 and make notes:

This is an ancient version of "whatever a person sows, that is what they will reap" or "what goes around comes around." The digging of a pit referred to in this text is that of digging a hole and trying to make a trap to capture someone else. The rolling of a stone is in the same vane, it is trying to cause a large stone to roll onto someone else to harm them. Wicked people are promised to fall to harm by their own schemes and plans.

Read Proverbs 11:11 and make notes:

The words of the wicked person are not only dangerous to a community, but can be disastrous. Their words can endanger the safety of a whole community. The words of the wicked are continually weakening, demoralizing, and discouraging those who would try to actually make things better or safer.

Read Proverbs 12:26 and make notes:

In much the same way the wicked 'gulp' down evil words, they give no consideration and take no caution regarding the path they take. This is a primary explanation as to the reason the wicked are so often lead astray into harmful situations.

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

Read Proverbs 21:7 and make notes:

It is the violence of the wicked that drags them away and not the violence of others. This Proverb opens our understanding concerning the wicked. They are not just passive victims who fall into unfortunate circumstances. They are people who actively 'refuse' to do what is right. It is their own action of refusing to do what is right that bears the primary responsibility for the calamity they experience.

Read Proverbs 13:6 and make notes:

This proverb enforces the principle that it is the wicked who cause themselves the pain. It is wickedness which 'overthrows' the sinner, not some other person, whom they usually blame for their suffering.

Read Proverbs 10:24 and make notes:

The very thing the wicked fear most is the thing which will 'overtake' them. Their greatest fear won't simply catch up to them, it will 'overtake' them.

Read Proverbs 11:8 and make notes:

The same trouble from which the righteous are rescued, is the very same trouble which will come upon the wicked.

Read Proverbs 12:21 and make notes:

While the wicked will not have their 'hungers' satisfied, they will certainly have their fill of troubles.

Read Proverbs 13:17 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

There are a couple of ways to see the 'wicked messenger.' One is in the fact that the words of a wicked person are 'perverted' and as such cannot be trusted to be true. The other is in the fact that wicked people are going to 'have their fill of trouble' and as such may not be able to accomplish the mission which has been entrusted to them. If the news being brought by the messenger was the cure for an infirmity which had befallen a city, consider the harm that could result from choosing a wicked person, who might not deliver it because of their own deceit or the trouble they will likely experience.

Read Proverbs 17:11 and make notes:

Those who break the rules will meet with retribution. The wicked who are determined to be of a rebellious attitude will not only meet with retribution but they will receive it from a "merciless official." This could be a person working with the authority of the civil government, but it could also be storms, pestilence, or the like.

Read Proverbs 24:15 and make notes:

It is so self-defeating to mistreat or attack God's people. The righteous are promised to survive and the wicked are promised failure and destruction. To attack the righteous is to attack God or at least to attack His plan.

No Hope For The Wicked:

Read Proverbs 10:3 and make notes:

While God will make sure the righteous have their appetite satisfied, He will also hinder, obstruct, and frustrate the cravings of the wicked.

Read Proverbs 3:25 and make notes:

It is a given; ruin will overtake the wicked.

Read Proverbs 2:22 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

Read Proverbs 10:30 and make notes:

The wicked have this to look forward to; they will be cut off from the land. This was set forth in Deuteronomy in the verses concerning the blessing and curse.

Read Proverbs 10:25 and make notes:

The wicked are offered no hope of surviving the storms of life while the righteous are given the promise that they will stand.

Read Proverbs 12:7 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 14:11 and make notes:

The wicked will not only be 'overthrown' but they will be utterly destroyed and will no longer exist.

Read Proverbs 14:32 and make notes:

While the righteous have hope even in the face of death, the wicked will be brought down by any and every calamity that comes.

Read Proverbs 24:16 and make notes:

The righteous have the promise that regardless of how many times they fall or stumble, the Lord will be there to pick them up and help to re-establish them. The wicked are assured that calamity will bring them down and they are given no hope of being picked up. The wicked will not be able to stand when the storms of life come.

Read Proverbs 10:27 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

Read Proverbs 13:9 and make notes:

While the righteous are promised to have God add years to their life, the wicked are told they will have years removed from their life. The Lord will ensure the light (or life) of the righteous shines and shines brightly, but He will 'snuff out' the lamp (or life) of the wicked.

The wicked will experience a short life on earth.

Read Proverbs 10:28 and make notes:

The hopes of the wicked will be as the fruit or vegetables which have been dashed upon the stones. They will not be able to ripen, reproduce, or be enjoyed. The hopes of the wicked will lie as so much damaged and destroyed fruit exposed to the elements to the point of complete the destruction.

Read Proverbs 11:7 and make notes:

Sometimes when a person falls short of their goal in life, they find solace in the fact that another person will continue their work and one day reach the goal. The wicked don't even have this to fall back upon. Their hopes all perish as their life ends.

Read Proverbs 11:23 and make notes:

The only thing to come from the hope of the wicked is the wrath of God.

Read Proverbs 24:19-20 and make notes:

Do not envy the wicked. They are completely and wholly doomed. What total and complete folly it would be to envy after the wicked. It is not only hopeless in the present for the wicked, it isn't going to be any better in the future. The wicked have no future hope either. They will be completely snuffed out.

Read Proverbs 12:3 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 19 – Wicked 1

Man's history is simply filled with accounts of people, tribes, and nations who tried to establish themselves by way of wickedness. Not one of them was able to endure. No one can be established through wickedness. If every Believer could get a firm grasp of this proverb, surely more would abandon wickedness in an effort to acquire and accomplish. Life will be hard for the Wicked because there is NO HOPE for them.

Read Proverbs 28:5 and make notes:

Evil men may cry out and demand justice, but the wicked simply don't have the capability to understand what justice is. With their distorted view, what they perceive to be justice is usually very unfair to others. What the righteous community sees as justice usually makes the wicked angry because it doesn't look like justice to them.

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Proverbs for the Wicked” in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

Warnings Concerning The Wicked:

Read Proverbs 4:14 and make notes:

The instruction is clear. Don't follow the path (methods or ways) of the wicked. Consider the end of the wicked. Don't walk the way of the wicked.

Read Proverbs 18:5 and make notes:

The translation of the phrase 'it is not good' is somewhat of an understatement. The original text uses a word which declares it to be reprehensible, vile, and wrong to show partiality or favoritism to the wicked.

Read Proverbs 24:1-2 and make notes:

Wicked people have a heart that is permanently set on violence. This cannot change as long as they remain a wicked person. It requires a "heart change" in order for them to no longer be a wicked person. This is not the kind of person one would want to spend time with and certainly not the kind you would want to envy.

Read Proverbs 4:19 and make notes:

Becoming involved in any way with the wicked is dangerous. The pathway (or lifestyle) of the wicked is like one which is in deep darkness. If you have ever been in a cave when the lights went out you have a good visual picture of the lifestyle of the wicked. Their way is filled with such deep darkness that it is impossible to determine what they are about to step into.

Read Proverbs 10:20 and make notes:

There is an old saying which is used frequently by people trying to encourage another about decisions they are making which says, "Follow your heart." This proverb makes it quite clear that the heart of the wicked is of 'little value.' This obviously is not good advice to the wicked.

The tongue (or words) of the righteous are choice silver. It should be obvious, the words of the Most Righteous (our Heavenly Father) would be the Choicest of Silver. Rather than 'follow the heart', it would be infinitely better to follow God's Word.

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

Read Proverbs 26:23 and make notes:

The word translated "glaze" is the process of covering a vessel with a dazzling and shimmering coating that hides completely the earthen or ceramic nature of the vessel. Once the glaze was applied, the vessel looked exquisite but beneath that luxurious finish could easily be hidden flaws and defects which could cause the vessel to fail you when you try to use it. That is what "fervent" speech can do in regards to the evil or wicked heart; hide the imminent failure from obvious view.

Read Proverbs 29:27 and make notes:

Because the wicked frequently try to act like they are the friend of the righteous, this proverb should be carried around with us to help us take caution. There is an enmity between the righteous and the wicked. Regardless of the words spoken by the wicked (remember, they are deceitful), always remember the wicked detest the righteous.

Read Proverbs 25:5 and make notes:

Even if the king (or leader) has perfect (or right) ideals; even if they live a lifestyle of impeccable moral standards, if the wicked are allowed to remain in their counsel, they will have difficulty establishing their throne (city, business, church). Remember, no one can be established by wickedness.

Read Proverbs 25:26 and make notes:

The 'muddying of a spring' was a serious offense in the ancient world. The 'polluting of a well' was considered an unforgivable offense worthy of serious repercussions. How useless is a righteous man who has allowed himself to be guided by a wicked person. A righteous person in leadership is a valuable asset to any city, nation, business, or church. When a righteous person loses their integrity, they are not only not useful but have become dangerous.

Consider the discouragement and heartbreak experienced by the person who comes to the spring desperately thirsty and finds it muddied to the point of being undrinkable. This is an excellent picture of the hurting person who comes to a righteous leader for relief and assistance and finds they have lost their integrity and steadfastness due to showing favor to the wicked or have listened to their counsel.

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

Read Proverbs 29:12 and make notes:

This proverb is not so troubling when you consider in the ancient world (probably still happens today) those in the court or presence of the king would adjust themselves according to what the king finds acceptable. Once it is seen that the king listens to and accepts lies, those in the court will consider flattery and un-truths to be the game to play to be successful. What good could it be to seek counsel from a group of counselors who all tell you what they think you want to hear instead of the truth?

Read Proverbs 28:12 and make notes:

Consider what the wicked have to look forward to in this life. Consider the characteristics of the wicked. It is easy to understand why people desire to hide when the wicked come to a place of power.

Read Proverbs 28:15 and make notes:

While animals are all lower in estate, value, and intelligence than man in regards to God, the brute strength of the lion and bear can easily destroy man. The tyrannical attitude and tactics of the wicked are much like the charging of a bear against an unarmed man. This helps to explain why beastly images were used in the prophecies in Daniel regarding wicked and ruthless world leaders.

Read Proverbs 28:28 and make notes:

Just as much as people go into hiding when the wicked rise to power, people rejoice and celebrate the perishing of the wicked.

Read Proverbs 29:2 and make notes:

People have historically always suffered when the wicked ruled. It is not a coincidence.

Read Proverbs 29:4 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

A nation or community where justice prevails will be a secure community or nation. One where the officials take bribes will be an unsafe place to reside or conduct business.

Read Proverbs 29:7 and make notes:

It is sad, but it seems the wicked historically have made promises to help the poor if only they would be allowed to be in charge. The wicked have no concern for the poor and hurting. Remember, their words are deceitful.

Read Proverbs 14:19 and make notes:

The wicked detest the righteous. The wicked work hard to deceive and to overpower the righteous. Ultimately, the wicked will bow down before the righteous. The picture is of a conquered people who are forced to bow down in humility and service to their conquerors. Jesus has promised to make us more than conquerors.

Read Proverbs 21:18 and make notes:

This proverb probably didn't cause any alarm in the ancient world when it was shared. Care must be taken when interpreting this proverb in today's culture. We usually think of 'ransom' as something being paid to free someone who is being held captive. This is not referring in any way to the ransom which Jesus became for our salvation. This proverb must be kept in context with the concepts of the ancient Hebrew world and compared to the other Proverbs concerning the wicked.

The wisdom statement being made here is a simple declaration that the wicked will pay the price which they intended to extract from the righteous whom they hoped to catch in the snares and traps they set. The ancient Hebrew thought was that once evil was set into place, someone had to pay for it. So, once the trap was laid, someone had to pay the price, and the wicked will be the ones who pay, not the innocent righteous children of the Lord.

God And The Wicked:

Read Proverbs 15:3 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

This is an important thing to keep in mind. God does not only watch the righteous, He watches everyone and is fully aware of all that is going on. God is equally aware of the deeds of the righteous and the deeds of the wicked. This should serve as incentive for godly conduct for us all. The righteous should find comfort in God's continuous watchfulness and the wicked should reconsider their ways.

Read Proverbs 16:4 and make notes:

God, being sovereign, ensures everything receives appropriate retribution. God works everything to accomplish His purpose. With God, there simply aren't any loose ends. When you think a wicked person is getting away with their wickedness, remember this proverb. You may not be able to see it right now, but this too will be worked out by God so that these wicked people receive the punishment for their lifestyle. God knows exactly when and how a person will best be punished. As it is with many things in life, with punishment to be most effective, the timing of the punishment is important.

Read Proverbs 21:12 and make notes:

God doesn't only know 'where the wicked live', He knows what goes on inside the house and 'takes note.'

Read Proverbs 29:16 and make notes:

Regardless of how much wickedness appears to spread and take control of the land, the righteous will one day see it destroyed. In the end, the righteous will prevail. The wicked may in fact thrive for a season, but they cannot last.

Read Proverbs 26:26 and make notes:

The wicked may do an excellent job of disguising and concealing their wicked deeds and plans. God will ultimately make them all known, and in fact will expose them in the assembly of the righteous. This basically says their hidden wicked deeds will be made public and everyone will know what they were really like.

Read Proverbs 24:8 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

The community soon comes to recognize and disapprove of the person who is continually plotting evil. The word translated "schemer" refers to a cold, calculating, and active person capable of intense mental activity. They usually flout morality and it usually doesn't take long for the public community to have their fill of this person.

Read Proverbs 6:16-19 and make notes:

Schemes are plans. 'Schemes' is talking about things that have not become action, they are only as yet just plans. God hates 'wicked schemes'. While you may know that you would never carry it out, don't even allow your heart to plan evil or wickedness. Remember what Jesus said about the person who has done something in their heart?

Read Proverbs 3:33 and make notes:

It shouldn't take any explanation as to the future success of the plans or prosperity of the wicked, since the Lord has a 'curse' on the place where they live.

Read Proverbs 15:8-9 and make notes:

Even if the wicked make a sacrifice, it is not acceptable because of their heart. The very way the wicked go about things is detestable to God.

Read Proverbs 15:26 and make notes:

The thoughts of the wicked are detestable.

Read Proverbs 15:29 and make notes:

The wicked don't experience the joy and safety of having God near.

Read Proverbs 21:27 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

It has never been the actual sacrifice itself with which God has been interested. It has always been the heart of the one making the sacrifice. Since the act of the sacrifice is unacceptable from the one who is wicked, it is even more so when it is being made with an evil intent.

Read Proverbs 10:7 and make notes:

To speak of the name a person has makes for themselves - is to speak of their reputation. Whatever name a wicked person may make for themselves, it will rot.

Read Proverbs 11:10 and make notes:

Another testimony to the celebration of the destruction of the wicked.

Read Proverbs 13:5 and make notes:

The fruit of the wicked lifestyle is 'shame' and 'disgrace'. A literal translation of the original text could be the wicked 'spread the stink of scandal.' This literal translation helps to get the complete warning being conveyed. If one is spreading a 'stink', most likely some of the 'stink' will get on the one doing the spreading as well as those upon which they are attempting to spread the 'stink.' If one is standing near another who is spreading a 'stink', it is likely that some stink would get on the bystander as well. Stay clear of the wicked !

Read Proverbs 18:3 and make notes:

If someone should think they might accept a wicked person in leadership with the idea that they could influence them, they should reconsider. When you get a wicked person, you also get a person with contempt. You just can't get a wicked person without contempt. That means they have no respect for you or anyone else.

Read Proverbs 25:4-5 and make notes:

Removing the dross from silver doesn't make a vessel to be used on the table or a piece of jewelry to be worn. What it does provide is a material that is pure and free from the contaminants that would cause the creation of the silversmith to become defective. It provides the silversmith with something with which he can create the art work or the utensil he desires and it will last. This is the analogy of removing the wicked from the community and especially from areas of leadership.

Proverbs For Living – 20 – Wicked 2

Wicked and Parents:

Read Proverbs 30:11-14 and make notes:

The lack of respect for parents is not new, there has been a segment in society like this for centuries. These are generally people who see themselves as pure, clean, and innocent, but God declares them to be contaminated with filth. The haughty eyes refer to an arrogant attitude toward others and especially toward those in civil authority. God sees these kind of wicked as ravenous beasts.

Read Proverbs 19:26 and make notes:

The wicked who rob and cast aside their own parents are a disgrace in the sight of God and among the community. The original text could easily be interpreted to mean the person takes possession of their parents land or possessions before the rightful time of inheritance and against the parents wishes.

Read Proverbs 28:24 and make notes:

Whoever robs or takes unfairly from their parents is declared by God to be a destroyer. The original text clearly speaks of the person who tries to take by force the possessions and property of their parents before the due inheritance time. This would leave the parents in a very diminished standing within the community. Regardless of what they may say to justify their actions, God will not accept any justification for this.

Read Proverbs 30:17 and make notes:

Some of the most severe punishment is reserved for those who are disrespectful of their parents.

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Proverbs for the Wicked” in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 21 – Things God Hates

The Hebrew word translated 'detests' in the NIV is translated 'an abomination' in the KJV. It literally translates as 'abhorrence, abominable, or an abomination.' Our contemporary English word 'detest' means 'to abhor', so this is a good translation. Many Christians today don't even think in terms of God having an attitude of 'abhorrence' toward something. After all, He is a God of love, mercy, and forgiveness, isn't He? Yes He is, but Believers today need to know there really are some things God hates with an intense hatred. In our carelessness of lifestyle and our frequent oversight of the things God asks of us today, we should at least make some effort to insure we do not commit or become those things which God hates.

#1:

Read Proverbs 15:8-9 and make notes:

Most contemporary Christians probably believe the spiritual condition of the individual determines how acceptable their worship is to the Heavenly Father. What was understood, even by those of ancient days, is even acts and items of sacrifice are completely unacceptable to our Heavenly Father when they come from one who is insincere in their heart, or who's lifestyle is blasphemous before God. Sacrifice is only an outward ritual or activity to demonstrate what has actually taken place in our heart, or to show what the attitude of our heart really is. The outward physical acts and items of sacrifice might fool the people who are around you, because we cannot see a person's heart. What a BOLD LIE it is to attempt to offer a sacrifice to the One who knows a person's heart even better they know it themselves, when your heart is evil, wicked, sinful, disobedient, or in any way contrary to God's will and Word!

Verse 19 declares the simple fact that God detests the 'way' of the wicked. If the ways or lifestyle of the wicked is unacceptable or detestable to God, then it should be understandable to all how the sacrifices of this same person would be at least as unacceptable. The most important note of this verse is more than just a refinement of what is stated in verse 18. It must not be overlooked, God detests (hates intensely, finds repulsive) the 'way of the wicked'; but God loves greatly the person of the wicked!

Read Proverbs 15:11 and make notes:

This text stands as a stern warning to the wicked. In the original text, the words "Sheol" and "Abandon" translated "death and destruction" represented the most remote regions of the underworld where darkness is the greatest. If God was fully aware of everything that takes place in the most remote and darkest region, then how much more is God aware of what we do on earth. If even the remote dark areas of the underworld are in full view to God (lie open before Him) then it should be very clear that we can not do anything that can be hidden from His view.

Proverbs For Living – 21 – Things God Hates

Read Proverbs 15:26 and make notes:

We can probably understand how the ways or lifestyle of the wicked is detestable to God, and why the sacrifices they make are also detestable to Him. But, even the thoughts of the wicked are detestable to our Heavenly Father. The thoughts of the wicked are those of plans and ways in which others can be taken advantage of, harmed, or just made to feel hurt.

#1

The Lord Detest The Wicked (and everything about them) !

#2:

Read Proverbs 3:32 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 11:20 and make notes:

If we rush through these verses too quickly, we may miss an important point God is making here. For many people, they don't consider any significant difference between the 'wicked' person and the 'perverse' person. The Hebrew word translated 'wicked' in the previous verses is a word which means 'a bad person who is condemned.' The Hebrew word translated 'perverse' in these verses means 'to depart from the standard.' Our contemporary definitions agree with this subtle but important difference. 'Wicked' means 'depraved and without any moral consideration.' 'Perverse' means 'to deviate from what is considered right.'

The New Testament tells us those who do not believe in Jesus as their Savior are 'condemned already' (Find this Scripture and write it in the margin). The important point that needs not be overlooked in these texts is God doesn't only detest the person who has sold out to sin but God detest the deviation from what is right.

The person with a perverse heart will soon become a person whose thoughts have deviated from what is right. The whole spiritual person will in time follow the direction of the heart. It is only a matter of time until the person with the perverse heart will become a person who is wicked. God knows all too well what lies ahead for those who start down the path of 'perversion.' A perverse heart leads to a twisted mind which leads to shameful actions which brings us to wickedness.

#2

God Detests The Perverse Heart!

Proverbs For Living – 21 – Things God Hates

#3:

Read Proverbs 12:22 and make notes:

It has always been that telling the truth pleases God and telling lies dis-pleases God! The contrast between 'detests' and 'delights' is so clear as to require no explanation. The one thing, telling lies, God hates intensely. The other thing, telling the truth, God takes great pleasure in. Falsehood, regardless of the noble motive, is 'detestable' to our Heavenly Father.

In our society much is said about body language, i.e. gestures, posture, etc. Could it be if we convey an untruthful message by means of our body language, even the nodding of our head, we will have violated the principle being discussed in this text or is it only referring to spoken word lies?

If we do not say anything at all; we keep completely silent; and our not saying something allows others to believe things to be different than they are, have we violated the principle discussed here?

#3

God Detests The Telling Of Lies!

#4:

Read Proverbs 17:15 and make notes:

God hates anything which deviates from what is right and just. It doesn't matter whether it is allowing the guilty to go unpunished or allowing the innocent to be punished. Don't deviate from what is just.

Read Proverbs 11:1 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 20:10 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 20:23 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 21 – Things God Hates

God hates any dishonesty in business. Refer to Deuteronomy 25:13-16 to see the promise which accompanies being honest in our business affairs. As Christians today, we need to make a concerted effort to make sure we do not become a part of different standards for different people or situations. If something is right, then it is right, regardless of who has done it. If something is wrong, then it is wrong for everyone. What about price, pay, benefits, etc? (Numbers 15:22-29 describes God's requirement for even un-intentional sins to be atoned for.)

Read Proverbs 1:19 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 28:16 and make notes:

Dishonest gain takes life away from the person or shortens one's life. Refusing to take any part at all in obtaining anything through dishonest means helps to ensure the individual of a long life.

Read Proverbs 10:2 and make notes:

#4

God Detests Dis-Honesty !

#5:

Read Proverbs 16:5 and make notes:

The Hebrew is very strong in this verse. You have a guarantee, you have more than just a reliable person's word on this, you have a binding contract which cannot be broken, that those who are 'proud of heart' will be punished. The 'proud of heart' speaks of the person who has taken on an attitude of arrogance and has set themselves up against God. It is the person who has raised themselves up to a high place, in their minds, as they relate to others. The presumptuous attitude and misplaced confidence in their ability will be the very thing God uses to bring them down to the place of punishment.

Proverbs For Living – 21 – Things God Hates

The proud heart seems to make no discrimination of age, sex, or nationality. People have been found to stand proud of heart not only in physical health but in the midst of wrenching disease of the body. The proud of heart can be found not only in the throws of the business world but in the relaxed ebb of retirement. The proud of heart seem to be just as plentiful among those who are sorely lacking in finances as among those with abundant finances. The proud of heart can be found among those who never indulge in any excess or deviate from right as well as those who are proud of their freedom to partake in excess or deviant activity. The proud of heart can be found among those who have been entrusted with great power and responsibility and among those who relish in their complete lack of any responsibility.

How completely opposed to the principle of Christian humility is the attitude of the proud of heart! Perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to the first century Jew's being saved was their pride of being a Jew. Probably one of the greatest obstacles to the lost today in finding salvation is pride. Some of the most severe judgments came upon those in the Bible who were declared to be very proud; i.e. Nebuchadnezzar, Uzziah, Hezekiah, Ahithophel, Herod.

#5

God Detests The Proud Of Heart !

#6:

Read Proverbs 6:16-19 and make notes:

It is interesting to notice the things God hates, or detests, are so clearly identified and spelled out for us. It is also interesting to note that each one of them involves a personal attitude or personal action on the part of the individual. You might be blessed to take time to compare this list with the Beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5.

'Haughty eyes' refers to a proud look indicating an arrogant attitude. In the Hebrew culture of the days in which Proverbs was written, it also spoke of sins which were committed in a defiant disobedience or 'high handed sin.' In Numbers 15:30-31 God declares one who defiantly sins must be cut off from his people. 'Haughty eyes' describes the same arrogance of the pompous Assyrian invader in Isaiah chapter 10 and the extremely proud king in Daniel chapter 11.

'Lying tongue' speaks not simply of words which are not true but of words which are deceptive. More than the words which are blatantly false, these are the words which lead people to think things are different from what they really are. This is the same phrase used in Jeremiah chapter 14 to describe the false prophets who deceive God's people. It is also the same thing the Disciples used in reference to Judas after he betrayed Jesus. Deception in our speech is not only harmful, it is intensely hated by God.

Proverbs For Living – 21 – Things God Hates

'Hands that shed innocent blood' speak not only of the hand which actually takes the life of another, but also of the actions which will lead to another losing their life, or the actions which will cause another person to take a life. The shedding of 'innocent blood' was and is one of the greatest of crimes in God's eyes.

'Heart that devises wicked schemes' refers to the plans to hurt or harm others. The heart is frequently interchanged for the individual's will or intent. This speaks of the person who plans and intends to hurt another person. How does this compare with what Jesus said in regards to our attitude and actions toward others?

'Feet that are quick to rush into evil' speaks of those who are enthusiastic to engage in such activities as those which cause others pain and suffering. This is exactly the opposite to what God has called His people to do. Both in being quick and in the causing of others harm.

'A false witness who pours out lies' speaks of one who is doing something more serious than telling something which is not true. This is the person who is being a witness. That means they are speaking on behalf of another person or they are speaking against another person. When what we say will affect another person as to guilt or innocence, we must be very careful that what we say is truthful and not a lie. The lying witness is detestable to God.

'One who stirs up dissension' is the person who causes others to argue, or quarrel. It doesn't address the matter of intentionally or un-intentionally causing others to quarrel. It is only a matter of my personal belief, but I believe God would love one who repents of having caused others to quarrel when they found out that something they said or did caused this to occur; and His love for this would probably be at least as intense as His abhorrence for having caused the quarrel.

If God hates so intensely these things, might it be God then loves greatly those who are humble, truthful, preserve life, with pure thoughts, eager to do good, honest in their witness, and work to bring peace and harmony among others?

Consider these seven things God really hates: How are you doing in regards to each one?

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Things God Hates” in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

Read Proverbs 16:28 and make notes:

The person who is outright "wicked" is easily identified by most people. However, it is not always easy to pick out a person who is "perverse." The perverse person, or one who has deviated from the standard, can be identified by their continual stirring up or causing dissension in the community. Satan seems to delight in having the perverse person stir up dissension among God's people more than the world at large, but he doesn't leave the world out altogether.

The perverse person may seem very much alright to the general public and as a result the average person would never think of them as a "perverse" individual. Because the perverse person stirs up dissension, in time they manage to destroy friendships. This isn't referring to someone who accidentally caused dissension but to the one who continuously and repeatedly causes dissension between others. Anything or anyone who separates friends has deviated from the standard which God has laid down for His children. Compare this characteristic of the perverse person to what is taught in the New Testament concerning others who offend you or concerning you offending others.

One Who Continues To Stir Up Dissension Is A Perverse Person !

Read Proverbs 17:20 and make notes:

The person who has allowed their heart to deviate from the standard will not prosper. Satan does seem to allow many of them to have a period of apparent prospering, but this verse from God's Word tells us what the inevitable outcome will be for them. Because the perverse heart leads the person to speak deceitful words they are destined for trouble.

Read Proverbs 28:18 and make notes:

The security of the person whose life is one of integrity is contrasted against the certain failure and falling of the person whose life has become perverse. This is the person who has allowed not only their heart to deviate from the standard but has now allowed their moral actions or lifestyle to deviate from the standard. The emphasis in this ancient word of wisdom is upon the word "suddenly." The person whose heart is allowed to remain "perverse" or deviated from the standard will ultimately begin to live the life which has deviated from the standard. The person who continues to live a life deviated from the standard will ultimately become a wicked person.

Read Proverbs 10:31 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

Righteous words are helpful, healing, and encouraging to others and at the same time very pleasing to God. The words of the perverse person are a complete waste and are never helpful, healing, or encouraging. It doesn't take long until no one wants to hear what the perverse person has to say. While it could certainly mean in some cultures a tongue would be literally cut out of the person who continues to use it for perverse purposes, the better interpretation of this verse is in the fact that no one will listen to the perverse person so they have effectively had their tongue cut out.

The Perverse Person Is Destined For Trouble And Loneliness !

Read Proverbs 19:1 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 28:6 and make notes:

Personal integrity, even in poverty, is better than having anything and being a person who speaks perverse words. The original emphasis of this verse was to encourage people to maintain a lifestyle of honesty even if it costs them financially. The honest person in a state of poverty is far better off than the dishonest person with great wealth.

The Bible does not indicate one must be poor to have integrity and honesty nor does it indicate rich people are dishonest. There are those in the Bible as well as most every community who are poor and perverse and those who are rich with great honesty and integrity.

A Perverse Lifestyle Will Cost You Much !

Read Proverbs 4:24 and make notes:

Whatever it takes to do so, make sure you avoid twisting words around and allowing them in any way to deviate from the standard. Since the words we speak are a result of the condition of our heart, the best way to prevent speaking perverse words is to keep our heart from deviating from the standard. If we should find our heart even slightly deviating from the standard, do what is necessary to bring our heart back to the standard. It is next to impossible to keep your words from being perverse if the heart is allowed to remain perverse. It is only a matter of time until your words reveal your heart.

Read Proverbs 8:13 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

When we reverence the Lord we will automatically hate that which is evil. The closer our personal relationship to the Lord, the less we will like or even tolerate perverse speech. This is perhaps the best means of self-examination to determine if we may have allowed our heart to deviate from The Standard.

Take An Active Roll In Keeping Away From Perverse Speech !

Read Proverbs 20:1 and make notes:

Wine is an intoxicating drink made from grapes and beer is an intoxicating drink made from grains. It is common knowledge that the use of such drinks as these can lead to foolish behavior and sometimes to very bad behavior. Wine was seen by the ancients to have the characteristic of actually mocking the person who drinks it. Wine's intoxicating effect comes on slowly and frequently has taken its prey before they realize they are no longer in control. How often a person has slid slowly into a situation and activity they would normally never take part in because of the drinking of wine.

Beer on the other hand was seen in a slightly different character by the wise ones of days gone by. They saw beer as being a cause of fighting or brawling. The intoxicating effects of beer work somewhat more quickly than wine. The beer drinker is more likely to be more impatient than one who drinks wine. The beer drinker wants to feel the effects. Perhaps it is the basic nature of the person who drinks beer, but the one intoxicated on beer often becomes boisterous, aggressive, or even belligerent toward others.

Intoxicating substances confuse the natural senses of our body and that is what makes a person appear to be out of control. An automobile in which the steering mechanism becomes loose becomes difficult to control. In a wide open space it still may be possible to turn the vehicle and appear to have some control over it. In several lanes of traffic going at high speeds, this same vehicle is sure to either become damaged and harm the occupants or cause other vehicles to become damaged and harm their occupants. This is the way the ancients saw those who allowed themselves to be "led astray" or to become intoxicated; as not wise.

It Is Not Wise To Become Intoxicated !

Read Proverbs 21:17 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

The lifestyle given to nothing but the things of pleasure has led many people into poverty throughout the generations of man's history. The ancient wisdom doesn't declare wine or oil to be bad things within themselves. In this proverb wine is used as a symbol of the pleasurable things of life and oil is used to symbolize the anointing or refreshing of the "good life." The operative word in this proverb is "loves." It speaks of the person who gives their life to the pursuit of the wine and the oil. This is referring to the excessive and uncontrolled love for pleasure and the good things. These persons frequently neglect the important things of their life. Anytime we ignore our responsibilities, we are headed down the road for loss, financial and otherwise.

Read Proverbs 23:20-21 and make notes:

The drunkard and the glutton both are persons who lack discipline. Drunkards and gluttons are also persons who are being rebellious and are people who have deeper more serious problems than the physical excessive partaking of drink or food. Those who go to excess in either category are traveling a path which leads to being poor. It is often the drowsiness of their excess which interferes with them performing their assigned tasks or jobs. People who do not perform well at their jobs, even the self-employed, are not clothed with the finest of clothes.

Intoxication Leads To Poverty !

Read Proverbs 23:29-31 and make notes:

As a child of God, it is important to avoid the excess use of any intoxicating substance. Whether it is one of the legal or illegal substances, and whether it is openly available or by prescription of a physician, don't allow yourself to succumb to the temptation to excessive use of any intoxicating substance. It always leads to trouble for the one who is intoxicated and frequently brings trouble to those around them, especially the ones they love such as family and close friends.

Read Proverbs 23:32-35 and make notes:

The person who uses intoxicating substances to excess will become one who raves on and on about things, starts fights, causes quarrels, poisons their own body, makes their own eyes sore, loses control of their life, is frequently confused, has difficulty speaking clearly or expressing themselves, imagines things which simply aren't there, and thinks they are insensitive to pain. The excessive person is truly a moral problem because they become this way by making choices and their actions and choices do endanger other people.

Intoxication Brings Trouble !

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

Read Proverbs 31:4-5 and make notes:

It is highly unlikely the ancient wise were trying to say kings and rulers should not drink wine or beer in light of the culture of that day. But what they are clearly saying is a king or a ruler should never allow themselves to use an intoxicating substance to excess or to the point that it clouds their judgment. It is important that a ruler be able to remember what the law, or rules, actually state and have control of their mind and thought processes to apply them wisely. Should a ruler have a desire for excessive use of an intoxicating substance, this reveals the deeper problems mentioned earlier and it would be best for all concerned if this person were removed from leadership until they have regained control of their life. This applies to civil leaders as well as spiritual leaders!

It Is Un-Acceptable For Leaders To Become Intoxicated !

Read Proverbs 31:6 and make notes:

There is a worthwhile use for intoxicating substances; to relieve bodily pain and suffering. It is unfortunate to see how many people in our society are experiencing mental or emotional pain and suffering and attempt to find relief for these via intoxicating substances. While intoxicating substances appear to have some value for physical pain, every practical evidence seems to point to the compounding of emotional and mental pain and suffering for those who use intoxicating substances to excess.

Intoxicating Substances Are For Physical Pain Only !

Read Proverbs 20:17 and make notes:

Good things which are acquired by dishonest means will never satisfy. The testimonies are too numerous to count of the people who have used fraud to obtain goods and services only to have them turn out to be non-satisfying, unpleasant, and sometimes painful.

The Guilty Don't Enjoy Satisfaction !

Read Proverbs 28:17 and make notes:

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

Scholars struggle with the literal meaning of this proverb. The original text is difficult to translate and all the variations seem to be missing something in our culture.

Perhaps the best understanding is the simplest. Consider the person who is tormented by the guilt of having cost another person their life. It could certainly refer to actually having caused the death of another, but it could also refer to having destroyed another person's reputation or business; their life. It is possible for a person to feel guilty for the loss of a life when in fact nothing they did or said was the cause of the death. It doesn't matter whether they are actually guilty or not, as long as they feel guilty, they will be tormented.

The person who is tormented by guilt will be a fugitive all the days of their life or until they find release from their guilt. In the original text one of the difficulties is found in the last part of this verse. It seems to say literally no one will be able to help him. This doesn't present so much a difficulty when the proverb is interpreted as above. You simply can't do enough, spend enough, care enough, provide enough to help a person who is tormented by guilt. It is completely futile to try to support one who is tormented with guilt.

Guilt Torments !

Read Proverbs 21:8 and make notes:

In much the same way as righteous behavior reveals righteous character, devious behavior reveals a guilty character. It may be the torment being endured by the guilty that causes them to respond to others in a devious manner. Regardless of the reason, the fact that guilty people act in a devious way toward others or respond in such a way makes it very difficult to help them. In order to be of any real help to another person, it is important for them to be honest and above board with you. Since the guilty person is devious in the lifestyle and dealings with others, what real hope is there in being able to help them.

The Ways And Words Of The Guilty Are Devious !

Read Proverbs 24:23-25 and make notes:

In our current society there is much being said against God's children who ask for the guilty to be punished for their crimes. They are accused of being unforgiving, hard-hearted, and narrow-minded as well as some other not so flattering things. People and nations may very well come against you if you allow the guilty to go free without being punished for their crimes. But whether you care what other people think or not, the promise in verse 25 should be enough incentive to "convict" the guilty. I want "rich blessing" to come upon me.

The Guilty Must Be Convicted !

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

Read Proverbs 16:2 and make notes:

Everybody is innocent in their own eyes. The prisons are filled with people who declare their innocence, even in the face of undeniable evidence. It seems to be a part of our human nature to be able to find a way to justify just about everything we do, regardless of how others see it. The easiest person to deceive is yourself. Self-deception or even rationalization simply won't help when we stand before The Judge.

The word translated "innocent" in this proverb is a the word referring to oils which are pure and undiluted. God does evaluate our motives for the things we do. We may declare our motives as being pure and undiluted either through being naive or just deceived. But God uses His Holiness and His Word to evaluate our motives. The person with the greatest confidence of the purity of their motives may find their motives to be far from pure in the presence of our Heavenly Father. This is one of the reasons we need to make ourselves accountable to others for examination, especially others who are full of God's Word.

Everyone Is Innocent In Their Own Eyes !

Read Proverbs 17:26 and make notes:

It is important we do not punish the innocent person. To punish an innocent person is more than a small mistake. This proverb declares it makes as much sense to do this as it does to punish an official for having integrity. If you begin to punish your rulers when they exhibit integrity, you can be sure you will have dishonest, devious, and damaging rulers before long. We need to take great care to ensure that we do not punish an innocent person. If we should discover we have punished an innocent person, we need to openly repent. The text actually says to punish an innocent person is contrary to "what is right" meaning contrary to God.

Innocent Persons Must Not Be Punished !

Read Proverbs 18:5 and make notes:

This proverb isn't speaking about not punishing the innocent. It is talking about withholding justice from the innocent. When a wicked person has caused harm to the innocent person it is "not good" to hold back the justice from them. The word translated "not good" is a serious understatement. The original language says it is reprehensible, vile, and extremely wrong to hold back justice from the innocent. If it is justice to have the wicked punished, then this must be done. If it is justice to have the wicked person make restitution, then this must be done.

Proverbs For Living – 22 – Guilt / Innocence

Read Proverbs 24:11-12 and make notes:

There are those who interpret these verses as applying to everyone, without regard to innocence or guilt. Their view is that we are to work to prevent anyone from receiving the death penalty. This view appears to be very merciful, but it goes against so many other scriptures that clearly state that God's view is that the guilty "must be punished." To be in sync with the rest of Scriptures, we must apply these two verses to the innocent. We are expected – and commanded – to make every effort to help rescue the innocent from being given a death sentence. And we cannot claim ignorance to avoid getting involved – if we are aware. God, who knows every heart, will judge and reward accordingly. For some, this particular text is justification to work diligently toward preventing abortions. Their position is that no one could be more innocent than the unborn child.

Innocent People Must Receive Justice !

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding "Innocence & Guilt" in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Proverbs For Living

Other sections of the “Proverbs For Living”:

Section 1 11 weeks

01. Purpose For Proverbs
02. Knowledge 1
03. Knowledge 2
04. Wisdom 1
05. Wisdom 2
06. Wisdom 3
07. Understanding
08. Discipline
09. Prudent / Discernment
10. Mocker / Folly
11. Pride / Humility

Section 3 9 weeks

23. Honesty / Integrity
24. The Path We Take 1
25. The Path We Take 2
26. Lazy / Diligent
27. Poverty
28. Prosperity
29. Righteous / Hope / Joy
30. Adultery
31. Spouse of Noble Character

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