

Proverbs Notes

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Introduction:

The theme of Proverbs is “wisdom.” Wisdom is the application of knowledge.

- The words “wise” and “wisdom” are used at least 125 times in Proverbs.
- Proverbs follows Psalms. Psalms is the picture of the devotional life (the vertical relationship with God). Proverbs is the picture of the earthly life (our horizontal relationship with others). God always intends for our relationship with Him to impact our relationship with other people.
- Proverbs is “God’s laws from heaven on how we are to live life on the earth.”

Proverbs were written by Solomon (ch. 1-29), Agur (ch. 30), and Lemuel (ch. 31).

- 1 Kings 4:32 spoke of Solomon speaking 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs. (We only have one Song of Solomon.)
- Solomon lived at about 1,000 BC.
- Lemuel’s sayings contain several Aramaic spellings that point to a non-Israelite background.

Proverbs are written in Hebrew poetic form coupling and comparing words together based on concepts, not based on rhyming and rhythm.

- The different forms of the proverbs are: sermons, stories, singles, and couplets. Singles and couplets can be structured as: contrasting (Prov. 17:22), constructive (Ps. 1:1), and completive (Prov. 16:3).
- Proverbs is “heavenly poetry” and not just Hebrew poetry.

Greek wisdom is built on experience and insight into processes. Hebrew wisdom is understood as contained. They understood that we don’t search for wisdom as much as simply listen to it as it is already speaking.

- Some are experiential learners while others are more obedient learners.

Because of the nature of Proverbs, we must be careful not to take what is meant for wisdom to be a prophecy or a promise.

“The best comment on these rules (proverbs) is to be ruled by them” – Matthew Henry.

Chapter 1:

Proverbs 1-9 is an exhortation to get wisdom. “Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.” (Prov. 4:7)

1:1 – “Solomon” – His name occurs again in the headings of Prov. 10:1 and 25:1.

1:2-4 – The 10 words for wisdom:

1. “to know wisdom” – the right application of knowledge,
2. “instruction” – to learn by discipline and everything necessary for education,
3. “perceive the words of understanding” – discernment,
4. “instruction of wisdom” – to learn through bereavement and struggle,
5. “justice” – right behavior,
6. “judgment” – to come to conclusion by thinking it through and trying it out,
7. “equity” – moral integrity,
8. “prudence” – craftiness as regarding the sincere fighting off evil,
9. “knowledge” – truth or information, and
10. “discretion” – thoughtfulness.

1:3-4 – “To receive...To give...” – Proverbs are good for getting and for giving.

1:3 – “receive the instruction of wisdom” – We can learn these things the easy way or the hard way.
Easy is hearing and obeying; hard is disobeying and suffering.

1:4 – “prudence” – Lit. “good judgment or good sense.” Outside Proverbs, the Hebrew word is used in the negative sense of “shrewd, crafty.” The NT term is “discernment.”
- “simple” – This word can also mean “immature, inexperienced, or naïve.”

1:5 – “wise man will hear and increase learning” – The wise person keeps learning.
- Solomon asked God for an “understanding (or hearing) heart to judge Your people.” (1 Kings 3:9)
- The fool cannot receive instructions.

1:6 – “enigma” – Paul spoke of mysteries only revealed to the church.

1:7 – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” – An attitude of submission is necessary to growth and learning. (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 9:10)
- “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.” (Prov. 8:13)
- The knowledge of the reality of God is essential to knowing anything else. God is the source and foundation of the rest of reality. And nothing can be known in the proper perspective without taking God into consideration.
- “beginning of” – The idea is, “the main, or principal, part of wisdom.”
- “fools” – Those who say in their heart there is no God. (Ps. 14:1)
- The important part of this book isn’t the hearing or the learning, but the doing. Solomon, who wrote most of these proverbs, ended up transgressing most of them and suffering for it.

1:8 – “My son” – How good for fathers to communicate wisdom regarding these topics to their sons.
- “hear the instruction of your father” – God intends to teach us through the order He has established for the human existence, starting with the family.
- My authority as a parent is a result of my submission to my authority. Our kids are really His, on loan to us by God for a season.
- Jesus, who was God, was subjected to His parents for a season.
- “hear the instruction” – The fear of the Lord is indicated by our obedience to His word.

1:10, 20 – Sin is enticing, while wisdom calls aloud in the streets.

1:10-19 – There are two enticements to evil: company and covetousness.

- The fear of the Lord will keep us from bad influences. (Ps. 19:9)

1:13 – “precious possessions” – By contrast, the book of Proverbs teaches that wisdom brings the greatest riches man could ever gain. (Prov. 3:14-16; 16:16)

1:16 – Compare to Isa. 59:7 and Rom. 3:15.

1:17 – “in vain the net is spread” – Wisdom helps us to avoid the traps. (Prov. 2:12, 16)

1:20 – “Wisdom calls aloud” – Wisdom is not hidden to the humble.

- God’s wisdom is always available.

1:22 – “simplicity” – The idea is “ignorance.”

1:23 – “Turn at my rebuke” – Wisdom changes how we live, not just what we know. God’s wisdom isn’t for our head as much as it is for our life.

1:24-33 – “you refused” – Wisdom declares its warnings up front.

1:26 – “I will mock when terror comes” – Nobody gets away with anything.

1:31 – “the fruit of their own way” – They will reap what they have sown. (Gal. 6:7)

- How many who once were prosperous only had their prosperity destroy them? (Like Robert Schuller and the Crystal Cathedral.)

1:32 – “the turning away” – or “waywardness.” The simple are turning away from wisdom.

Chapter 2:

2:1 – “receive my words” – Attaining wisdom is an exercise of the inner man as knowledge becomes obedience.

2:3 – “if you cry out” – Wisdom is not hiding, but you must want it to get it. (“ask” – James 1:5)

2:6 – “the Lord gives wisdom” – Solomon understood that wisdom comes from God; his dad was a mere shepherd-boy.

- “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” (James 1:5)

2:10-22 – The two fruits of inclining one’s heart to wisdom: escaping evil men and strange women.

- God’s wisdom can deliver us if we take it seriously.

2:12 – “deliver you from the way of evil” – An example of the advantage of wisdom.

- It is interesting how one’s circle of friends and activities change on their own when your life changes in God’s direction.
- “perverse” – or “proud.”

2:16 – “deliver you from the immoral woman” – Another advantage of wisdom. (v.12)
- “flatters” – Flattery is manipulation and often entices us to sin.
- Flattery plays on men’s pride. Humility steals flattery’s power.
- A wife’s nagging plays right into the hands of the flattering, immoral woman.

2:17 – “companion of her youth” – Her husband.
- “the covenant of her God” – Her wedding vows.

2:18 – “her house leads down to death” – Don’t even put yourself into that situation.

2:21 – “the upright will dwell in the land” – This is a promise the Jews took nationally and the Church can expect when the right King is on the right throne.

Chapter 3:

3:1 – “My son” – Young men need fathers, leaders, and mentors.
- “keep” – This requires our willingness and effort.

3:2 – “length of days” – This idea is “fullness of days.”
- “peace” – (Heb. “shalom”) It is good for peace to accompany length of days. (v. 17)
- God’s laws are not for our imprisonment, but for our protection.

3:3 – “mercy and truth” – The balance exemplified in the life of Jesus. (John 1:14)

3:5-6 – “Trust...lean not...acknowledge Him” – God asks these three things of us if we would know the will of God.

3:5 – “Trust” – means “to lie helpless, facedown.”
- It is much easier to trust someone you know. To trust the Lord more, learn His Word. (Rom. 10:17)
- “not in your own understanding” – Our trust in the Lord is measured by our obedience to His commands.

3:6 – “direct your paths” – Make straight, smooth, and remove the obstacles from our paths.
- Life will tend to be less problematic if you handle things according to God’s wisdom.

3:7 – “and depart from evil” – A result of fearing the Lord.
- “The fear of the Lord is clean.” (Ps. 19:9)

3:10 – “barns will be filled with plenty” – Jesus prefaced this by saying, “now in this time... and in the age to come, eternal life.” (Mark 10:30)
- Our giving is in response to God. We don’t give to get from Him; we give because He has already given to us.
- “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” (Luke 6:38)
- “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this.” (Mal. 3:10)
- “He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” (2 Cor. 9:6)

- 3:11-12 – “do not despise the chastening of the Lord” – Quoted in Heb. 12:5-6. (See also Job 5:17)
- God’s discipline in our lives is an evidence of our son-ship.
- 3:12 – “whom the Lord loves He corrects” – God’s correction keeps us safe.
- 3:15 – “She is more precious than rubies” – Wisdom allows us to enjoy and preserve the material possessions we have and use in life.
- Material wealth without wisdom will leave us unhappy.
- 3:16 – “Length of days” – The idea is “fullness.”
- 3:17 – “ways of pleasantness” – There is a quality of life that wisdom gives us that money cannot; peace and pleasantness to accompany length of days.
- 3:19 – “The Lord by wisdom” – God exercises wisdom.
- 3:20 – “clouds drop down the dew” – 1.5 trillion tons of rain falls on earth every day – all by God’s wisdom.
- 3:21 – “Keep sound wisdom” – Because we are human, we have an aversion to rules and commands. But here God is imploring us to obey for our own benefit.
- 3:27 – “Do not withhold good” – If you wait, you probably won’t do it.
- 3:30 – “not strive with a man without cause” – Don’t go looking for a fight.
- 3:32 – “His secret counsels” – God has wisdom hidden from the sinner and the foolish.
- 3:34 – “grace to the humble” – This is the benefit of humility. God can bless those who know they don’t deserve it.
- Quoted in James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5.

Chapter 4:

- 4:1 – “Hear...And give attention” – Both are needed.
- 4:3 – “my father’s son” – David is having an impact on his grandchildren.
- “Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother” – Solomon was the prized son of David and Bathsheba.
- 4:4 – “and live” – David taught Solomon that God’s commands bring liberty and life.
- This may explain why Solomon asked for a hearing and understanding heart from the Lord.
- 4:7 – “principal” – The same Hebrew word as “beginning” in Prov. 1:7.
- “in all your getting” – Make wisdom a priority.
 - In our culture, it seems as if information is the principal thing most seek after. But knowledge without wisdom can be very dangerous.
 - The head of Enron was a Harvard grad.

4:18-19 – “the shining sun...darkness” – The contrast of wisdom and folly.

4:18 – “ever brighter unto the perfect day” – As we behold Jesus, we are “transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. 3:18)

4:20-27 – “ear...eyes...heart...flesh...mouth...lips...eyes...eyelids...feet” – Wisdom is a whole life thing.

4:23 – “Keep your heart” – The priests of the OT had their ears, hands, and feet anointed with the blood of the sacrifice. That is a picture of the blood of Jesus which is to cover all that we allow into our lives.

- “all diligence” – The idea is “more than anything else.”
- “out of it spring the issues of life” – The heart is the source of the rest of life.

Chapter 5:

5:3 – “lips of an immoral woman drip honey” – She starts with flattery. (Prov. 2:16)

- “Stolen waters are sweet,” (Prov. 9:17) but last only “for a season” (Heb. 11:25).
- “honey” – This was the sweetest thing known in Solomon’s day.
- “oil” – This was the smoothest thing they knew.

5:4 – “in the end” – A phrase repeated throughout Proverbs. No path should be judged by its beginning or its ease, it must be judged by where it takes you.

- “bitter as wormwood” – In contrast to the sweetness of honey. (v. 3)
- “Sharp as a two-edged sword” – In contrast to the smoothness of oil. (v. 3)

5:5 – “Her feet” – But nobody is looking at the feet of the immoral woman.

- “death” – Adultery has been the ruin of many homes.

5:6 – “ways are unstable” – She is deceitfully shifty; you can’t really get a handle on her.

5:9 – “give your honor to others” – Too many people trade honor for pleasure.

- “honor” – means “strength.”

5:11 – “body are consumed” – Through sexually transmitted diseases.

5:12 – “And say: ‘How I have hated instruction’” – They will say, “I was so stupid.” At some point, it was simply a matter of refusing to listen to wise instruction.

- The prodigal son had to eventually “come to himself.” (Luke 15:17)

5:14 – “In the midst of the assembly” – They are sinning while sitting in the congregation of believers.

5:15 – “your own cistern” – Be faithful to your own spouse.

5:16 – “fountains be dispersed abroad” – Speaking of illegitimate children.

5:19 – “satisfy you at all times” – In all seasons of life. (Heb. 13:4)

- Sexual intimacy is to be enjoyed in the context of marriage. (1 Cor. 7:2-4)

5:22 – “cords of his sin” – The end of sin is bondage. (Jer. 2:19)

- People call their sin “freedom.”

Chapter 6:

6:1 – “surety” – Guaranteeing or co-signing a loan.

- If you loan money to someone, consider it a gift. If it comes back to you, great; but if not, then you will not be offended.
- The quickest way to lose a friend is to loan him money.

6:3 – “deliver yourself” – Get out of the loan.

- Sometimes you have to buy yourself out.
- This is like cutting up the credit cards if you cannot handle it.

6:6 – “the ant” – Hard-working, stores up food for later, and takes whatever is left.

- The wisdom of the ant is not mere busyness, but foresight and planning.
- “sluggard” – means “lazy, evil, good-for-nothing.”

6:7 – “no captain” – Ants are self-motivated. They don’t need a boss looking over their shoulder.

- “Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice.” (Col. 3:22)

6:10-11 – These verses are repeated in Prov. 24:33-34.

6:11 – “poverty come on you” – Finding work, takes work.

- “If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.” (2 Thess. 3:10)

6:12 – “worthless” – (Heb. “belial”) Lit. “without profit.”

- “perverse mouth” – He talks perverted.

6:13 – “winks with his eyes” – He is subtle and flirty.

6:15 – “calamity shall come suddenly” – It will all fall apart in a hurry.

6:21 – “continually upon your heart” – God is serious about this stuff.

- The word of God can keep us from adultery.

6:22 – “roam...sleep...awake” – God’s wisdom is applicable in all phases of our lives.

6:25 – “her beauty” – We can be attracted to things that are only surface deep.

- “allure you with her eyelids” – Her flirting glance.

6:27 – “be burned” – There are consequences to these decisions.

- The burns of adultery will leave you with scars.

6:29 – “not be innocent” – And not go unpunished.

6:30-33 – “thief...adultery” – Adultery is a much more scandalous sin than stealing is, but in our day a thief is sent to the stocks while the vile adulterer goes unpunished.

6:31 – “restore sevenfold” – The law required up to a 5-fold restitution. (Exod. 22:1)

6:34 – “not spare in the day of vengeance” – There is no restitution for adultery.

- In adultery, you are taking something you can never give back.

Chapter 7:

7:2 – “and live” – God’s commandments are for our life.

- “the apple of your eye” – The pupil; the most sensitive part.

7:5 – “keep you from the immoral woman” – Taking heed to the Word of God will keep me from the immoral woman. (Ps. 119:9,11; John 17:17; 1 John 2:14)

- “immoral woman” – Spiritual harlotry is in view here too.

7:7 – “simple” – The young, ignorant, fool.

- “devoid of understanding” – He lacks wisdom.

7:10 – “the attire of a harlot” – She is using her body to attract attention.

7:11 – “loud and rebellious” – In contrast to the “gentle and quiet” woman of 1 Peter 3:1-6.

7:13 – “she caught him and kissed him” – She is making the advances.

7:14 – “peace offerings” – The greater part of the flesh of the peace offerings was by the Law returned to the offerers. (Lev. 7:15)

- She covers her sin with religious talk.
- This woman is concerned with ceremonial cleanliness. Would a harlot really try to keep this part of the Law?

7:15 – “to meet you” – This is flattery. She treats him as the only one she desires, but if he denies her she will tell the next guy the same thing.

7:18 – “love” – This is how she refers to sexual intimacy. This is mistakenly called “making love.”

7:19 – “a long journey” – She doesn’t think they will get caught. But God sees. (Heb. 4:13)

7:22 – “Immediately” – We can have a tendency of playing with sin for some time, but when the fall comes it always seems to happen suddenly.

- “stocks” – Bondage.

7:24 – “Pay attention” – There is passion and pathos here. Life and death are in the balances.

7:27 – “death” – By husband, disease, divorce, or despair.

Chapter 8:

8:1 – “her voice” – The voice of wisdom stands in contrast to the immoral woman.

8:3 – “She cries out” – All of mankind is invited to wisdom.

8:5 – “simple...fools” – This is what we are without God’s wisdom.

- Our spiritual growth is not dependant on our intellectual ability, but on our obedience to the Word.
- The Word of God is plain, open, and available to all.

8:12-21 – “I...me...my” – 16 times.

8:13 – “to hate evil” – A right relationship with God will define what we love and what we hate.

8:14 – “I am understanding, I have strength” – The Word tells us what to do and it gives us the strength to do it.

8:17 – “diligently” – The idea is also “sincerely.”

8:18 – “Enduring riches” – These are the riches that last.

8:21 – “fill their treasuries” – The way to meaningful substance goes through wisdom.

8:22-31 – This section is very nearly a description of Jesus Christ.

- “In [Jesus] are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Col. 2:3)

8:23 – “everlasting” – Lit. “from beyond the vanishing point.”

8:29 – “the sea” – There is 330 million cubical miles of water on the earth. 1.5 trillion tons of water falls to the earth every day.

8:31 – “delight was with the sons of men” – Out of all creation, God looks most to people.

- “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?” (Ps. 8:4)

8:35 – “finds me finds life” – Jesus came to “that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10)

Chapter 9:

Chapter 9 contrasts the two women of Proverbs 7 and 8. There are two tables, two feasts. Which one will we attend?

9:1 – “seven pillars” – The perfect house.

9:3 – “She cries out” – Wisdom is calling and inviting.

9:4 – “simple” – Sometimes the greatest struggle is to admit our simplicity.

9:5 – “eat of the bread...drink of the wine” – Beautiful picture of the Lord’s Supper.

9:6 – “foolishness” – That is refusing to heed God’s instruction.

9:7 – “corrects a scoffer” – Jesus told us not to cast our pearls before swine. (Matt. 7:6)

- “shame” – This kind of response to truth is not a proper reflection on the truth as much as it is a reflection on the character of the hearer.

9:8 – “instruction to a wise man” – Both the wise and the foolish need reproof and correction, but only the wise will accept and grow from it.

9:9 – “Give instruction to a wise man” – “Commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Tim. 2:2)

9:10 – “the Holy One” – This title speaks of the separateness of God.

9:12 – “bear it alone” – If we reject His counsel, we reject His presence.

9:13 – “foolish woman” – Solomon is speaking from experience. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines.

- “clamorous” – The Hebrew root word means “to hum.”

9:17 – “Stolen water is sweet” – The immoral woman hints that there is more pleasure doing things her way than God’s way. She is implying that God is holding out on us.

- The pleasures of sin are passing. (Heb. 11:25)

Chapter 10:

There are 375 proverbs from 10:1-22:16.

10:1 – “But” – A contrastive psalm.

- “glad...grief” – A child can have a tremendous impact on their parents.
- “the grief of his mother” – The sensitivity of a woman causes her to feel the pain of a foolish son.

10:2-3 – “profit nothing” – There is a profit to wickedness, but it is short-lived.

- “not allow the righteous soul to famish” – “I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread.” (Ps. 37:25)
- “the desire of the wicked” – The wicked can never really be satisfied.

10:4-5 – “diligent” – The Bible stresses the importance of good, hard work.

- Our pay should not be the primary factor in whether or not we work hard.
- “summer” – One of the main harvest times in Israel.
- “harvest” – The final step in a long process of tilling, sowing, watering, and waiting.

10:6-7 – “violence covers the mouth” – Righteousness keeps us out of a lot of fights.

- “the memory of the righteous” – The impact of our lives continues long after our lives have ended.
- “the name of the wicked will rot” – Like Judas or Adolph.

10:8 – “receive commands” – He is teachable.

- “prating” – means “to babble and talk excessively.”
- “a prating fool” – The loud-mouthed know-it-all.

10:9 – “securely” – He doesn’t have to fear retribution.

10:10 – “winks with the eye” – Deceitful.

10:11 – “a well of life” – Refreshing.

- 10:12 – “Hatred stirs up strife” – Hatred adds fuel to the fire and doesn’t let it die.
- “love covers all sins” – Love has the ability to take a hit and forget about it. (James 5:20; 1 Peter 4:8)
 - It is easier to overlook the faults of a kind person.
- 10:13 – “a rod is for the back” – They will not learn the easy way.
- 10:14 – “store up knowledge” – Learning can prepare us for a more difficult day to come.
- 10:15 – “destruction of the poor is their poverty” – Poverty can trap the poor into lesser options and more difficult situations.
- 10:16 – “life” – It is a satisfying life.
- 10:17 – “the way of life” – The right path.
- 10:18 – “hides hatred” – By pretending friendliness.
- “lying lips” – Honesty is better than hypocrisy.
- 10:19-21 – “restrains his lips is wise” – “Be swift to hear, slow to speak.” (James 1:19)
- Better to keep your mouth shut and have people think you are a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.
 - We would say, “Silence is golden.”
 - “feed many” – Encouraging words.
- 10:22 – “makes one rich” – Not just materially; God’s blessings allow us to enjoy His blessings.
- “no sorrow with it” – The world’s blessings always have a bite at the end.
- 10:23-25 – “evil is like sport to a fool” – They treat sin like a game.
- “the desire of the righteous will be granted” – “Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.” (Ps. 37:4)
 - “everlasting foundation” – The wise man built his house on the rock, and the foolish man built his house on the sand. (Matt. 7:24-27)
- 10:26 – “vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes” – Aggravating and irritating.
- 10:27-29 – “shortened” – Crime and disease often catch the wicked and shorten their lives.
- “hope of the righteous” – Heaven.
- 10:30-32 – “never be removed” – The stability of a life of godliness.
- Eternity is in view here.

Chapter 11:

11:1 – “a just weight is His delight” – Fairness in business. (Lev. 19:35; Amos 8:5; Micah 6:11)

11:2 – “pride comes” – Pride makes it impossible to see our own pride.

- Satan fell through pride. (Isa. 14)
- “then comes shame” – When pride disables our ability to see ourselves properly, we then make decisions that are not based in reality.

11:3-6 – “perversity” – The idea is “subtlety.”

- “Riches do not profit” – God’s judgment is not based on bank accounts. (James 5:1-6)

11:7-9 – “expectation” – The righteous man expects to die and looks forward to heaven.

- “hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor” – Be careful what you say and who you say it to.
- “destroys” – The pain caused by gossip and slander.

11:10-11 – “the city rejoices” – The righteous unselfishly benefit all people.

- There is a benefit to righteousness in government

11:12 – “despises his neighbor” – The idea is “out loud.” It is unwise to tell others.

11:13 – “conceals a matter” – Confidentiality. It is not okay for us to say everything we know.

11:14 – “multitude of counselors” – The willingness to listen to others’ advice.

- Building meaningful relationships with godly people is critical, because their counsel will bring safety.

11:15 – “surety” – Securing someone else’s debt will make you less secure.

11:16-18 – “honor” – There are things more valuable than money.

- “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches.” (Prov. 22:1)
- “troubles his own flesh” – Bitter and hateful people actually hurt themselves physically.
- “deceptive” – Lit. “that which has no future.”

11:19-21 – “posterity of the righteous will be delivered” – Righteousness can be a blessing to many and multiple generations, even if the righteous don’t see it.

11:22 – “ring of gold in a swine’s snout” – Gold is out of place in this unclean animal.

- This is simply a waste of a gold ring.

11:23 – “desire...expectation” – Their minds match their character.

11:24-26 – “one who scatters” – They give because they are not trusting their money.

- “withholds more than is right” – Miserly.
- “generous soul” – “He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” (2 Cor. 9:6)
- “withholds grain” – Cutting the supply to drive up the price so they can sell high.

11:27 – “seeks” – Making one or the other the general course of life.

11:28 – “the righteous will flourish” – “But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Luke 12:31; Matt. 6:33)

11:29 – “troubles his own house” – Our character has the greatest impact at home.

11:30 – “who wins souls” – The highest use of a human life is to lead others to God. (Dan. 12:3; 1 Cor. 9:19-22; James 5:20)

11:31 – “recompensed” – The principle of sowing and reaping. (Gal. 6:7)

Chapter 12:

12:1 – “loves instruction loves knowledge” – You have to be taught to learn. The teachable person seeks out instruction and grows quickly.

- We are here taught to try whether we have grace or not by enquiring how we stand affected to the means of grace.

12:2 – “favor from the Lord” – The vertical view and God’s opinion.

- “He will condemn” – The justice of God will right all the wrongs people seem to get away with.

12:3 – “not established by wickedness” – There will be no sustainable prosperity gathered by refusing to do things God’s way.

- Some seem to prosper by wickedness, but it is only temporary.

12:4 – “crown...rotteness” – A wife has great influence in the life of her husband. One kind of wife adorns her husband publicly; the other hurts him privately.

12:5-6 – “thoughts of the righteous” – A changed heart.

12:7 – “the righteous will stand” – “Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon the rock.” (Matt. 7:24)

12:8 – “despised” – No respect.

12:9 – “slighted” – He may not have a long and important title, but he has a servant. He prefers content over style.

- “honors himself” – This man is all show no go. At least the servant gets something done.

12:10 – “A righteous man” – Because that is who He is.

- A thief steals because he is a thief. He doesn’t become a thief when he steals, it is already who he is. His stealing only proves that it was in him.
- “his animal” – That was this man’s farm equipment and livelihood.

12:11 – “frivolity” – He just wants to play and hang out.

- The Bible makes no distinction between the sacred and the secular. It is right to work and provide for your family.

12:12-14 – “wicked covet the catch” – They want the good benefits without the hard work to get them.

- “ensnared by the transgression of his lips” – The wicked indict themselves by what they say.

12:15-16 – “covers shame” – He practices self-control.

- “shame” – An insult.
- The fool is always right and is quick to anger.

12:17-22 – “speaks like the piercings of a sword” – We can tear people down so quickly with our words. (James 3:1-12)

- “tongue of the wise promotes health” – A little encouragement can go a long way.
- “truthful lip” – Truth vs. deceit.
- “lying tongue is but for a moment” – The truth always outlives a lie.
- “No grave trouble” – This is self-inflicted trouble.
- “deal truthfully” – Honesty in difficult situations can make a huge difference.

12:23 – “conceals knowledge” – It is not wise to say everything you know.

12:24 – “hand of the diligent will rule” – The smartest and most talented don’t get ahead without hard work.

- “You were faithful over a few things, I will make you a ruler over many things.” (Matt. 25:21)

12:25 – “Anxiety” – Also translated “heaviness.”

- “a good word” – The strength of an encouraging word.

12:26 – “should choose” – Friends are to be chosen carefully.

12:27 – “lazy man does not roast” – The lazy man won’t finish what he started and so he goes hungry.

12:28 – “no death” – Eternal life for those who go the way of Jesus.

- Jesus said, “whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” (John 11:26)

Chapter 13:

13:1 – “does not listen” – Being a good listener is a mark of wisdom. Wise people will accept counsel.

13:2-3 – “eat well by the fruit of his mouth” – What we say will impact our lives.

13:4 – “desires” – A lazy person can live their entire life in their head.

13:5-6 – “a righteous man hates lying” – The wicked man doesn’t hate lying.

- “loathsome and comes to shame” – The wicked man is a liar who will eventually be hated and come to shame.
- “wickedness overthrows” – They get caught in their own wickedness.

13:7 – “makes himself rich, yet has nothing” – They can have everything, but really enjoy nothing because they cannot put their stuff in relation to God who gives it.

- True riches are not material. (Luke 12:16-21)
- “makes himself” – Both lack sincerity. It is better to let God make you what He wants.
- “yet has great riches” – Some wealth is gained by giving money away.

- 13:8 – “the poor does not hear rebuke” – The poor man doesn’t fear getting kidnapped because he doesn’t have any money to give as a ransom.
- Rich people deal with trials the poor may not have.
- 13:9 – “the lamp” – They lose life.
- 13:10 – “pride” – means “to see yourself above.” Pride lends itself to envy and ambition and causes one to assert its will over others.
- “nothing but strife” – “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?” (James 4:1)
- 13:11 – “Wealth gained by dishonesty” – Scams, get rich quick schemes, pyramid programs, ponzi schemes, etc.
- Wealth gained by dishonesty can be “easy come, easy go.”
 - “gathers by labor” – A hard-working person understands the value of the money they earned.
- 13:12 – “Hope deferred” – Promises and anticipation can have a physical impact on a life.
- 13:13-14 – “despises the word” – The word is the difference between “life” and “death.”
- 13:15-16 – “way of the unfaithful is hard” – Disobedience yields a harder life.
- Transgression doesn’t look hard at first; sin is pleasurable for a season.
 - “prudent” – or “diligent.”
 - “lays open” – Lit. “to put out all the wares on display at the market.”
- 13:17 – “wicked” – The idea is “unfaithful.”
- “faithful ambassador brings health” – Especially concerning the Gospel.
- 13:18 – “regards a rebuke” – Always listen to rebuke...even from a donkey.
- Correction doesn’t feel good when it comes, but in the end it brings honor.
- 13:19 – “accomplished” – It is important to finish things we start.
- 13:20 – “companion of fools will be destroyed” – “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’” (1 Cor. 15:33)
- Modern proverb: If you let your German Shepherd run with a pack of wolves, do the wolves become domestic or does the Shepherd become wild?
- 13:21 – “Evil pursues sinners” – “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me...” (Ps. 23:6)
- 13:22 – “good man leaves an inheritance” – Don’t spend all your wealth on you.
- 13:23 – “food is in the fallow ground” – But they don’t know it is there or how to get it.
- “lack of justice” – There is an injustice that destroys.
 - “waste” – Lit. “what is swept away.” The rich will sometimes take what the poor, ordinary man worked so hard to earn.
 - This can be the error of those who have too much.

13:24 – “spares his rod hates his son” – The need for physical discipline.

- Benjamin Spock – “The inability to be firm is the main problem in parenting today...largely a failure...of myself.”
- Of the 13 verses in Scripture that speak of disciplining a child, 12 of them talk about using the rod.
 - “Chasten your son while there is hope.” (Prov. 19:18)
 - “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him.” (Prov. 22:15)
 - “Do not withhold correction from a child...You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell.” (Prov. 23:13-14)
 - “The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.” (Prov. 29:15)
 - “Correct your son, and he will give you rest.” (Prov. 29:17)
- “hates his son” – The excuse parents so often give for not disciplining their children is because they love them, but the Bible doesn’t call that love.
- “disciplines him” – Disciplining is not just punishment, but instruction.
- “promptly” – The idea is “shortly after the offence” or “at a young age.”
 - It is better to start off strict and then to give freedom as they grow.

13:25 – “be in want” – The wicked are never satisfied.

Chapter 14:

14:1 – “builds her house” – The woman’s primary area of ministry is her home. (Titus 2)

- Our culture doesn’t esteem housewives very highly anymore.

14:2 – “walks” – The true indication of a person is not in what they say, but how they live.

14:3 – “mouth of a fool is a rod” – He talks himself into a beating.

- “rod” – or “branch.” This word is also used in Isa. 11:1.

14:4 – “the trough is clean” – Getting work done is messier than doing nothing.

- There are problems at both extremes. They who try to maintain super-cleanliness won’t get anything done. Those who try to get a lot done will leave a mess behind them.

14:5 – “faithful...false” – The truth is the difference between faithful and false.

14:6-8 – “Go from the presence of a foolish man” – Consider the character of the person you are getting advice from.

- “prudent is to understand his way” – The prudent focuses on his task, not on other tasks he could be doing and not on others that are doing similar tasks.

14:9 – “mock at sin” – They have no ability to know what is right and wrong.

14:10 – “its own bitterness” – We cannot expect people to fully understand how we feel.

14:11 – “house...tent” – The wicked seem permanent and the righteous seem temporary, but the righteous will outlast the wicked.

- 14:12 – “seems right” – People think they know, but only God can properly lead a life. (Prov. 3:5-6)
- Man proposes, God disposes.
 - Jesus said He is “the way.” (John 14:6)
 - “end is the way of death” – We need to judge a path based on its end and not based on the smoothness of the path.
- 14:13 – “in laughter the heart may sorrow” – Laughing on the outside and crying on the inside.
- Some people are good at covering up the pain inside.
- 14:14 – “in heart” – That is where backsliding starts.
- “filled with his own ways” – The backslider is his own beating. (Prodigal son.)
- 14:15-19 – “considers well his steps” – The Bible does not encourage blind obedience. (Acts 17:11)
- “quick-tempered man” – “The wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.” (James 1:20)
 - “evil will bow before the good” – Ultimately, this is how it will end. (Ps. 149:5-9)
- 14:20-21 – “the rich has many friends” – Ungodly favoritism. (James 2:1-9)
- 14:22 – “mercy and truth” – A great reward for goodness.
- 14:23 – “labor there is profit” – The benefits of good, hard work.
- 14:24 – “their riches” – This is the fruit of their labor. These riches are not just financial.
- 14:25 – “delivers souls” – It is important to speak the truth when given the opportunity.
- 14:26-27 – “His children” – God cares for those who will let Him.
- 14:29 – “slow to wrath” – “Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” (James 1:19)
- 14:30 – “sound heart” – Lit. “healthy heart.” The idea is peaceful or calm.
- There is an amazing connection between emotions and physical health.
- 14:31 – “oppresses the poor” – God has great concern for the needy, for even the poor are made in the image of God. (James 1:27)
- 14:32 – “a refuge in his death” – The worst that can happen is still a blessing.
- 14:33 – “the heart of fools is made known” – The folly of fools is exposed quickly, while the wisdom of the wise is not always immediately seen.
- Many a foolish man takes more pains to show his folly than a wise man thinks it worth his while to take to show his wisdom.
- 14:34 – “righteousness” – Not just knowing the right thing, but doing it.
- “exalts a nation” – History proves this out in political leadership.
- 14:35 – “him who causes shame” – A wise servant will not shame his master.

Chapter 15:

15:1 – “soft answer” – Rather than responding in kind.

- In any argument, it is better to be an observer than a participant.
- It takes two to fight.

15:2 – “pours forth” – The Hebrew implies “belching it out.”

- The mouth of the fool is out of control.

15:3 – “eyes of the Lord are in every place” – God sees and hears all things. (Heb. 4:13)

15:4 – “wholesome tongue” – or “healing tongue.” Speaking good and encouraging words.

- “breaks the spirit” – Words can bring life or crush a spirit.

15:5 – “correction” – Sometimes a dad needs to rebuke and correct.

15:6 – “treasure” – Many times, a treasure is only a matter of perspective.

- “revenue of the wicked is trouble” – One man’s blessing is another man’s curse.

15:7 – “disperse knowledge” – Teaching.

15:8 – “sacrifice of the wicked” – Sometimes it seems that the Church communicates the idea that you can live like you want through the week, but pay God off with sacrifices of confession or tithing and be okay.

- “To obey is better than sacrifice.” (1 Sam. 15:22)
- “the wicked” – Proverbs 15 deals with the sacrifice (v. 8), the way (v. 9), and the thoughts (v. 26) of the wicked.
- “prayer of the upright” – God is looking to the heart.

15:9 – “the way of the wicked” – This implies that the wicked are following something as well.

15:10 – “discipline...die” – The consequences will increase if we refuse correction.

15:11 – “Hell and Destruction are before the Lord” – Only God really knows the scope of what we are dealing with.

15:12 – “Nor will he go to the wise” – A scoffer avoids anyone who will reveal his folly.

15:14 – “seeks knowledge” – The wise man keeps learning.

- “feeds on foolishness” – Fools feed on nonsense.

15:15 – “the afflicted are evil...merry heart has a feast” – Pessimism...optimism.

15:16-17 – “Better” – Contrasting our internal and external conditions.

- Godliness allows us to enjoy what we have.
- “fatted calf” – Prime rib.

15:18 – “allays contention” – A calm person can calm a situation.

15:19 – “like a hedge of thorns” – You can’t get anywhere and it hurts. It is a hard, slow go.

- 15:22 – “multitude of counselors” – Get good advice from godly counselors.
- 15:23 – “word spoken in due season” – The right word spoken at the right time can change a life.
- 15:24 – “way of life winds upward” – “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Col. 3:2)
- 15:25 – “establish the boundary of the widow” – The Lord is her security.
- 15:26 – “the words of the pure” – The Lord listens to our conversations like a good Father that cares for his children.
- 15:27 – “hates bribes” – People looking for money will compromise their own homes.
 - “Godliness with contentment is great gain.” (1 Tim. 6:6)
- 15:28 – “studies” – He doesn’t speak too quickly.
 - Put your brain in gear before you put your mouth in motion.
 - “how” – The tone of the message can be as important as the content of the message.
- 15:30 – “light of the eyes rejoices the heart” – A smile indicates good news is coming.
- 15:31 – “rebukes of life” – There are lessons all around us in life.
- 15:32 – “instruction” – or “correction.”
- 15:33 – “fear of the Lord” – This is what wisdom is trying to teach us.
 - “humility” – “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6; see also 1 Pet. 5:5)

Chapter 16:

- 16:1 – “preparations of the heart” – We can make plans, but God must have the final say.
 - “For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” (Phil. 2:13)
 - “the answer of the tongue is from the Lord” – Many times, God works in us without us really even knowing it.
- 16:2 – “pure in his own eyes” – People can justify anything.
 - “Lord weighs the spirits” – Only God can rightly discern our hearts. (1 Cor. 4:4-5)
- 16:3 – “your thoughts will be established” – If you are committed to doing God’s will, then God’s wisdom will be given to you. (James 1:5-8)
 - Do your best and commit the rest.
- 16:4 – “all for Himself” – We were made “for Him.” (Col. 1:16)
 - Being made for God’s pleasure isn’t just to satisfy His ego, but it is for relationship.

- 16:5 – “proud” – Pride was the root cause of Satan’s fall. (Isa. 14:12-15)
- Spiritually, our pride can step from the outlook that getting to God is like climbing a stairway, but really it is more like a bridge spanning a crevasse and what makes that bridge glorious is the depth of the crevasse and length of the span, not the greatness of the person walking on the bridge.
 - They are not wise who compare themselves among themselves. (2 Cor. 10:12)
- “Though they join forces” – A wicked majority will not win against the Lord. (Rev. 16:14-16)
- 16:6 – “atonement” – Always through the death of an innocent substitute.
- “God is just and the justifier of many.” (Rom. 3:26)
- 16:7 – “please the Lord” – You take care of the vertical relationship and God can fix the horizontal ones.
- 16:8 – “a little with righteousness” – Character is more valuable than wealth.
- It is better to be the poorest man in heaven than the richest man in hell.
- 16:9 – “the Lord directs his steps” – Man proposes; God disposes.
- 16:10-15 – The privilege and responsibility of kings. (Deut. 17)
- “Honest weights and scales are the Lord’s” – God will not bless lying, stealing, and deception.
 - “established by righteousness” – The might of a nation is dependent on its righteousness, not on its military strength or political influence.
 - “latter rain” – The harvest is dependant on the latter rain.
- 16:16 – “better to get wisdom than gold” – Gold without wisdom will be soon lost.
- 16:18-19 – “Pride goes before destruction” – It’s only a matter of time.
- Destruction will come, even if there is a temporary benefit at the moment.
- 16:20 – “trusts in the Lord” – It seems like the whole of our Christian experience is in trusting the Lord over and over again, even when circumstances don’t seem to comply with trusting Him.
- 16:21 – “sweetness of the lips increases learning” – Gentle speech is easier to hear.
- 16:22 – “understanding” – This transcends simple knowledge. (Prov. 4:7)
- Understanding and empathy are keys to compassion.
- 16:24 – “like a honeycomb” – God’s Word was to David as “sweeter also then honey and the honeycomb.” (Ps. 19:10)
- “health to the bones” – It seems that the spiritual, emotional, and physical are so closely connected that a kind word and laughing can actually make you healthier.
- 16:25 – Repeated from Prov. 14:12.
- 16:26 – “hungry mouth drives him on” – Hunger is a great motivator for the lazy man.
- 16:27-30 – Characteristics of an ungodly man.
- “a whisperer” – Gossip is a sure way to destroy a friendship.
 - “The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.” (James 3:6)

16:31 – “If it is found in the way of righteousness” – Age accentuates character. An old wicked man is disgusting, but an old godly man is beautiful.

16:32 – “rules his spirit” – It is possible to control your anger.

- Anger itself is not wrong. It is a matter of how you use it.

16:33 – “every decision is from the Lord” – Coincidence is not a kosher word.

Chapter 17:

17:1 – “quietness” – Genuine peace.

- “feasting” – Even if that feasting is connected to some religious ceremony.

17:2 – “wise servant will rule” – Good character will eventually rise above privilege.

17:3 – “refining” – God is in the process of changing our hearts...often through failure.

- In NT times, the smith would burn off the dross until he could see his own reflection in the molten metal.

17:4 – “liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue” – People who listen to lies and gossip carry some measure of responsibility for what they hear.

- It is a basic rule of life that the ears hear what the heart loves.

17:5 – “mocks the poor” – That is an indication of pride.

- “his Maker” – God is the Creator of both.
- “glad at calamity” – We are not to look for the demise of others, even if they are evil.
- Love does not rejoice in iniquity. (1 Cor. 13:6)

17:6 – “the glory of children is their father” – There is an amazing bond between a child and his/her father.

- As believers, our Father in heaven is our glory.

17:7 – “lying lips to a prince” – They don’t go together.

17:8 – “present” – A gift with strings attached is really a bribe.

17:9 – “covers a transgression seeks love” – “Love will cover a multitude of sin.” (1 Pet. 4:8)

- We are not to cover over transgressions, only to bring them back up again later.

17:10 – “effective for a wise man” – Wise men learn with fewer beatings.

- Wise men know they need instruction.

17:11 – “a cruel messenger will be sent” – Rebellion will be punished by those in authority.

17:12 – “a fool in his folly” – Completely irrational.

17:13 – “evil for good” – We are not even to return evil for evil. (Rom. 12:17)

- To render evil for evil is natural. To render evil for good is demonic. But to render good for evil is divine.

- 17:14 – “like releasing water” – It’s easy to start strife, but it is hard to stop it and impossible to reverse it. So deal with problems and issues when they are small.
- 17:15 – “justifies the wicked...condemns the just” – Both transgress justice.
- 17:16 – “purchase price of wisdom” – It is sad that some who have the money for an education have no capacity to learn.
- 17:17 – “loves at all times” – Even when they do not understand.
- “loves” – To love is to give.
- 17:18 – “shakes hands in a pledge” – Be careful who you deal and do business with.
- 17:19 – “exalts his gate seeks destruction” – Self-exaltation results in humiliation.
- 17:20 – “deceitful heart...perverse tongue” – “From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:45)
- 17:22 – “merry heart does good, like medicine” – Laughter can actually promote health.
- There is a book entitled “Laugh Your Way to Health.”
- 17:23 – “pervert the ways of justice” – Money can falsely influence decisions.
- 17:24 – “in the sight of him who has understanding” – Wisdom is near the perceptive. (Prov. 1:20)
- “eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth” – Fools might seem wise for looking into difficult questions or finding esoteric philosophies, but none of these things change them for the better.
- 17:26 – “to punish the righteous” – Calling good, evil and evil, good. (Isaiah)
- 17:27-28 – “calm spirit” – or “cool spirit.” This is an even-tempered demeanor.
- “a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace” – It is better to have people think you a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt.

Chapter 18:

- 18:1 – “isolates himself” – The rebel and nonconformist thinks everyone else is wrong.
- “own desire” – Selfish desire.
- 18:2 – “expressing his own heart” – He says what he feels without really thinking about it.
- 18:3 – “contempt comes also” – Sin brings dishonor and reproach.
- 18:4 – “deep waters” – Our words reveal something of the deepest parts of our lives.
- 18:5 – “partiality” – God is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34)
- Favoritism of any kind was condemned in the law.

- 18:6-8 – “his mouth calls for blows” – The fool is asking for it.
- “tasty trifles” – Gossip is appealing to the flesh.
 - “Enquiring minds want to know.”
- 18:9 – “destroyer” – Lazy isn’t just neutral, it is destructive.
- 18:10-11 – “a strong tower” – The tower was a height gained for military advantage. It is a position of power.
- 18:12 – “humility” – “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up.” (James 4:10)
- 18:13 – “before he hears it” – It is important to listen.
- 18:14 – “spirit of a man” – Inner strength.
- Even the medical profession acknowledges the “will to live” in patients.
 - “broken spirit” – The challenge of parenthood is to deal with the deal without wounding the spirit.
- 18:15 – “acquires knowledge” – A wise man keeps learning.
- “ear of the wise” – Jesus often said “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”
- 18:16 – “gift” – Bribes. People may try to pay their way in the door.
- 18:17 – “first one...seems right” – There are two sides to every story.
- 18:18 – “Casting lots” – Something as simple as a coin toss can quell a major fight.
- 18:19 – “A brother offended” – Offenses in close relationships are the toughest to bear.
- If you can keep from offending someone, do it to win the brother.
- 18:20 – “satisfied from the fruit of his mouth” – Kind and thoughtful speech can actually lead to some food, whether getting an invite to dinner or at a job interview.
- 18:21 – “Death and life” – Eternity can hang in the balance when we speak.
- 18:22 – “a wife” – Not wives (and Solomon had 700 wives).
- 18:23 – “poor man uses entreaties” – The poor man has no power, so he must talk nice.
- The wicked will throw their weight around to get their own way.
- 18:24 – “be friendly” – To have a friend, be a friend. Be a giver first.
- With many friends, there is much maintenance.
 - “friend who sticks closer than a brother” – Jesus is the only true friend.

Chapter 19:

19:1 – “integrity” – means “completeness, all of one substance.” They are the same in public and in private.

- “perverse in his lips” – He is a schemer.

19:2 – “he sins who hastens” – Take time to get the information before acting.

- Some hasty decisions have long-term consequences.

19:3 – “frets against the Lord” – He blames God for the consequences of his foolish choices.

- “More than we know, apostasy has its seeds in moral failure” – Quoted by Damian Kyle.

19:4 – “Wealth makes many friends” – James 2 speaks of our inclination to favor the rich.

- “friends” – These are not good and loyal friends.

19:6-7 – Contrasting the treatment of the poor and the rich.

- These verses are a reflection of the human heart that shows how we tend to respect people due to their wealth or power.

19:8 – “gets...keeps” – Keeping wisdom is as important as getting it in the first place.

19:9 – Nearly identical to v. 5.

19:10 – “servant to rule over princes” – Historically, this has led to much tyranny.

- It is dangerous to put power in the hand of a fool.

19:11 – “overlook a transgression” – Love and forgiveness are powerful forces.

19:12 – “like the roaring of a lion” – The power of the king was responsible for law and order.

- Solomon speaks from experience.

19:13 – “continual dripping” – We will see the progression of living with a contentious wife.
(Prov. 21:9,19; 25:24; 27:15)

- Two of the most miserable things in life are a foolish son and nagging wife.

19:14 – Similar to Prov. 18:22.

19:15 – “a deep sleep” – A lazy person can sleep their life away.

19:16 – “careless of his ways will die” – God’s commandments are given for our life.

19:17 – “poor” – There is a difference between poor and lazy. (v. 15)

- “He will pay back” – It’s an investment.
 - In the parable of the sheep and the goats, God rewards what was done for people in the words “you did it to Me.” (Matt. 25:40)

- 19:18 – “while there is hope” – When training children, the earlier you start the better.
- “not set your heart on his destruction” – Do not be put off by their tears.
 - Parents can be tempted to do whatever it takes to prevent our children from crying or feeling pain.
 - Don’t punish kids for being kids, but only for disobedience.
- 19:19 – “great wrath” – Short-tempered.
- “have to do it again” – Bailing someone out of the trouble caused by their temper doesn’t change the person’s temper.
 - This person’s greater problem is not their circumstances that you might rescue them from, but themselves.
- 19:20 – “wise in your latter days” – An old, wise individual first invests years of learning.
- 19:21 – “the Lord’s counsel” – God’s sovereignty will override, so it is best to simply submit to God’s will.
- 19:22 – “kindness” – David said it was God’s gentleness that made him great. (Ps. 18:35)
- 19:23 – “the fear of the Lord” – “The fear of the Lord is clean.” (Ps. 19:9)
- “life” – Jesus offers us “abundant life” (John 10:10), not just mere existence.
- 19:24 – “bring it to his mouth again” – Some people live to do as little as possible.
- 19:25 – “the simple” – Punishment may not change everyone, but it may deter some.
- 19:26 – “mistreats his father” – The 5th Commandment is to honor father and mother.
- Disrespect and hitting a parent were capital crimes in Israel. (Exod. 21:15, 17)
- 19:28 – “disreputable witness scorns justice” – One lie can disrupt a good judgment.
- “the wicked devours iniquity” – Ungodly people love sin.
- 19:29 – “prepared” – Hell was “prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matt. 25:41)

Chapter 20:

- 20:1 – “Wine” – Typically made from grapes and containing a very low alcohol level.
- “Strong drink” – Typically made from grains and containing a higher alcohol level.
 - There is often a progression with alcohol going from weaker to stronger.
 - “brawler” – Beer muscles.
 - “not wise” – The Bible doesn’t absolutely forbid drinking alcohol (1 Tim. 5:23), but it does forbid drunkenness (Eph. 5:18). The Bible also contains strong warnings about misusing alcohol. (Prov. 23:29-35)
 - Drinking alcohol is not just a matter of freedom, but also of wisdom. “Can I?” is not the same question as “should I?” when it comes to alcohol.
- 20:2 – “a king” – Monarchy is the most efficient form of government, but with humans it always tends to tyranny.
- 20:3 – “stop striving” – An honorable man avoids and stops fights, though he doesn’t run.

- 20:4 – “winter” – This is the time of preparation, before the planting season of spring.
 - Without plowing, there is no harvest. There is no harvest without hard work.
- 20:5 – “draw it out” – Helping people to come to their own right conclusions is better than simply telling them.
- 20:6 – “his own goodness” – Self-promotion, which stands in contrast to the “man of understanding” (v. 5) who can draw counsel out of another.
 - “faithful” – Shut up and do your job.
- 20:7 – “His children are blessed” – Parents of integrity are a blessing to their children.
 - Children learn best by observation and a life of integrity gives the children something to see.
- 20:8 – “Scatters” – or “winnows.” (Prov. 20:26)
- 20:9 – “I have made my heart clean” – A dirty cloth cannot clean a dirty dish.
- 20:10 – “abomination to the Lord” – God desires honesty in business. (Prov. 20:23)
- 20:11 – “known by his deeds” – Jesus said you tell a tree by its fruit. (Matt. 7:20)
- 20:13 – “Do not love sleep” – “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep – So shall poverty come on you like a prowler, and your need like an armed man.” (Prov. 6:10-11)
- 20:14 – “good for nothing” – He talks down the value of the thing he is bartering over.
- 20:15 – “lips of knowledge” – As rare as gold and as precious as rubies.
- 20:16 – “a pledge” – You better get some collateral when you loan money to an unfaithful person.
- 20:17 – “filled with gravel” – You will not ultimately enjoy things attained by deceit.
 - You cannot fool yourself for very long.
- 20:19 – “do not associate” – Avoid the blabbermouth.
 - “flatters with his lips” – The gossip uses flattery to get juicy secrets from you.
- 20:20 – “curses his father or his mother” – A capital crime in Israel. (Exod. 21:15)
- 20:21 – “inheritance gained hastily” – Easy come, easy go.
- 20:22 – “Wait for the Lord” – Vengeance is God’s. He will repay. (Rom. 12:19)
- 20:24 – “of the Lord...understand his own way” – When God is sovereignly doing something in our lives, it is often difficult for us to understand.
- 20:25 – “vows” – Jesus said just let your “yes” be “yes and your “no,” “no.” (Matt. 5:37)
 - Vows are expressions of self-confidence.

20:27 – “the spirit of a man” – Speaking of our conscience.

20:28 – “lovingkindness” – Grace establishes a home better than force and law.

20:29 – “strength...gray head” – From muscles to gray hair, both have their advantages.

20:30 – “depths of the heart” – It is amazing how pain can change us on the inside. God’s chastening can change our hearts.

Chapter 21:

21:1 – “He turns it” – God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men. (Dan. 4:17,25,32)

21:2 – “right in his own eyes” – People are so easily self-deceived.

- “the Lord weighs the hearts” – God sees past our actions to the motivations of our hearts.

21:3 – “righteousness and justice” – God is looking for our character over mere ritual. (1 Sam. 15:22; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8; Matt. 9:13)

21:4 – “plowing of the wicked” – Even the prosperity of the wicked is sin.

21:5 – “hasty, surely to poverty” – Against the careless, get-rich-quick mentality.

- Spiritual growth (personally and corporately) requires diligence too.

21:6 – “seek death” – The result of sowing and reaping.

21:8 – “for the pure, his work is right” – “To the pure, all things are pure.” (Titus 1:15)

21:9 – “contentious woman” – Previously likened to a “continual dripping.” (Prov. 19:13)

- Men often greatly value peace and quiet.

21:11 – “the simple is made wise” – As a deterrent. (Prov. 19:25)

- “wise is instructed” – Wise people can learn without being punished.

- We don’t have to learn only through failure.

21:12 – “righteous God wisely considers the...wicked” – We can have a hard time understanding the course and outcome of the wicked. (Ps. 73)

21:13 – “also cry himself” – “Do to others as you would have them do for you.”

21:14 – “gift in secret” – A settlement. (Rich Mullins mowed the yard of his manager, Guy Quisenerry, the morning after they got into a pretty heated argument.)

21:16 – “wanders” – It is easy to “drift away.” (Heb. 2:1)

21:17 – “loves pleasure” – Some make an idol of pleasure.

- “wine and oil” – Loving luxury can make one poor quickly.

21:18 – “ransom for the righteous” – When the wicked are punished, the righteous benefit.

- In the long haul, righteousness wins.

21:19 – “in the wilderness” – It’s getting worse. (Prov. 19:13; 21:9; 21:19)

21:20 – “treasure” – This isn’t merely money.

- “squanders” – Some would be poor no matter how much money you give them.

21:22 – “wise man scales the city” – Wisdom is a better weapon than a battering ram and brute force.

21:23 – “guards his mouth” – What we say can get us into significant trouble.

21:24 – “Scoffer” – People often mock the things of God because of their pride.

21:25-26 – “covets greedily” – Lazyness doesn’t stop someone from wanting more stuff.

21:27 – “with wicked intent” – This is sheer hypocrisy; trying to pay off God.

21:28 – “false witness” – A liar has to remember all his lies, so he doesn’t get caught in them.

21:29 – “hardens his face” – He can lie to you and steal from you without blinking or blushing.

21:30 – “against the Lord” – God wins.

21:31 – “prepared for the day of battle” – We must prepare, but leave the final outcome to God.

- “deliverance is of the Lord” – The confidence of a nation cannot be in its military power, but in God’s covering and protection.

Chapter 22:

22:1 – “good name” – One’s reputation.

22:2 – “this in common” – God may be the only thing some people have in common.

22:3 – “foresees evil” – Perception, foresight, and discernment can keep us from pain.

22:4 – “wealth and honor and life” – Things desired by many.

22:5 – “Thorns and snares” – The unseen pain of ungodly living.

- 22:6 – “will not depart from it” – This does not say that a child who was raised in the Lord will return to the Lord later in life, but rather it says they will never leave the Lord at all.
- “Train up” – Not simply teach, but also train. The idea is “to dedicate.” (1 Kings 8:63) But it comes from the Hebrew root referring to the mouth as in “a bridle in the mouth” or “creating a desire to drink or suck.” A good way to think about this may be “giving children a thirst for the things of God.”
 - “the way he should go” – This refers to the child’s bent (Ps. 7:12; see also Exod. 20:5) and seems to imply that two bents are present: the natural bent of the child and the bent God placed in the child before birth. We need to teach our children the difference and train them according to the design of God on their lives.
 - You cannot make all kids live by the same rules, because they are all different. God has worked different bents into them.
 - You can run your house based on law or based on grace; law makes our kids relate to the rules, grace makes our kids relate to us.
 - “the way” – Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6)
 - “old” – Lit. “hair on the chin.”
- 22:7 – “servant to the lender” – “Owe no one anything except to love one another.” (Rom. 13:8)
- Debt can steal the freedom that Christ provided for us on the cross.
- 22:8 – “reap sorrow” – It benefits nothing.
- “his anger will fail” – People who win by power will one day see their power fail.
- 22:9 – “a generous eye” – We either see our stuff as a way to benefit us or to bless others.
- 22:10 – “Cast out the scoffer” – One bad apple can ruin the whole bunch.
- The healthy body is one that can purge impurities from its body.
- 22:11 – “king will be his friend” – Pure heart and gracious speech are great traits of a friend.
- 22:13 – “a lion outside” – Excuses.
- 22:14 – “mouth of an immoral woman” – Mere talk is a powerful tool of an adulterer.
- “who is abhorred by the Lord will fall” – There are times when God gives people over to what they desire. (Rom. 1:24,26,28)
- 22:15 – “Foolishness is bound up in the heart” – Children are not born good, but deceitfully wicked.
- 22:16 – “oppresses the poor...gives to the rich” – Both are self-serving.
- 22:17-21 – “Incline your ear” – Exhortation to get wisdom, much like Proverbs 1-9.
- There are 30 sayings from 22:22-24:22.
 - “it is a pleasant thing if you keep them” – It is for our good to keep God’s commandments.
 - “to those who send to you” – When we are learning wisdom and the Word of God, we aren’t only learning for ourselves, but we are learning for all whom we come into contact with for the rest of our lives.
- 22:22-23 – “at the gate” – The place of the city council.
- “the Lord will plead their cause” – God keeps the poor and afflicted as His own.

22:24-25 – “with a furious man do not go” – A moment of raging anger can ruin the rest of your life.
- “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’” (1 Cor. 15:33)

22:26-27 – “surety for debt” – Avoid co-signing on a loan or making a deal with an irresponsible person.

22:28 – “ancient landmark” – These are the boundary stones that mark property lines. (Deut. 19:14)
- Don’t change boundaries until you know why they were put there in the first place.
- Hosea overlays this principle on the rulers and priests who removed the established boundaries of right and wrong.

22:29 – “man who excels in his work” – When a skilled man works hard, he can excel.
- One of the blessings of diligent labor is the joy of developing the kind of ability and character that others can trust, thereby fitting ourselves for the next responsibility God has prepared for us.

Chapter 23:

23:1-3 – “deceptive food” – There can be strings attached to these meals. It is not always what it appears to be.
- Do not be enamored by the glamorous life. Seek substance over style.
- Someone can “wine and dine” to manipulate people.

23:4-5 – “overwork to be rich” – This is not a prohibition to be industrious, but of making money your goal and your God.
- “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” (1 Tim. 6:10)
- “set your eyes” – Lit. “let eyes fly upon.”
- “riches certainly make themselves wings” – Gayle Erwin says “Money talks; mine says ‘goodbye.’”
- Money is too volatile and too inconsistent to sacrifice your life, health, and family for.

23:6-8 – “the bread of a miser” – The pressure of eating with a stingy person can make you sick.
- “his heart is not with you” – This miser gives the appearance of being generous, but he is a hypocrite.
- “you will vomit up” – You will want to give it back to them at all costs.

23:9 – “not speak in the hearing of a fool” – “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine.” (Matt. 7:6)

23:10-11 – “the fatherless” – We are not to take advantage of the powerless.
- “Redeemer” – (Heb. “goel”) The kinsman-redeemer was also the avenger of blood.

23:12 – “Apply” – Learning comes through diligence and hard work.

23:13-14 – “he will not die” – Even though they may sound like they are going to die when they are being disciplined.
- Rebellion will be dealt with at some point; it is better to deal with it early on.
- “beat him with a rod” – Physical discipline should not leave marks.

23:15-16 – “my inmost being will rejoice” – A wise son can bless the deepest part of a father.

- This is similar to vv. 24-25.

23:17-18 – “Do not let your heart envy sinners” – To do so would be to forget eternity.

- “fear of the Lord all the day” – A lifestyle of worship.

23:19-21 – “guide your heart” – We are to take responsibility to guide our own hearts, and not let the media, entertainment, or the culture direct our hearts.

- “Do not mix” – Choose your friends wisely. (1 Cor. 15:33)

23:22 – “do not despise” – But rather honor her.

23:23 – “do not sell it” – Get wisdom and keep it.

23:24-25 – “rejoice” – The blessing of raising godly children.

23:26-28 – “give me your heart” – God desires a response from our hearts.

- “harlot is a deep pit” – You can’t really understand the motivation of one given to adultery. It’s beyond logic.
- “deep pit” – It is easy to fall into and hard to get out of.

23:29-35 – “Do not look on the wine” – 14% of everyone who takes 1 drink will become an alcoholic.

- Of the 250 million Americans, there are 18-20 million alcoholics.
- “At the last” – These consequences of alcohol should be considered before drinking it.
- “like a viper” – Its poison can be deadly.

Chapter 24:

24:1-2 – “to be with them” – Proverbs has a lot to say about the company you keep. (Prov. 23:17)

- Psalm 73 speaks about dealing with the prosperity of the wicked.

24:3-4 – “a house is built” – Running a household takes a lot of godly wisdom.

- These are excellent vows for a marriage built up by wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. It is not necessarily love that keeps marriage alive, as love goes through its seasons. But the Bible teaches that it is marriage that keeps love alive.
- “built” – Lit. “rebuilt, restored.”
- “established” – Lit. “set upright.”

24:5-6 – “strong” – Wisdom is stronger than physical strength.

- “multitude of counselors” – Seek out godly counsel.
- Counsel is not something you want jammed down your throat by someone who thinks they are a counselor.

24:7 – “too lofty” – Wisdom is beyond him; he just can’t get it.

24:8-9 – “abomination” – These three are abominable: plotting evil, devising foolishness, and mocking the things of God.

24:10 – “adversity” – Difficulty reveals character.

- It is okay to understand that we are not as strong as we think we are.

24:11 – “Deliver those” – We are to care for the plight of the lost.

- There is a time to stand up for the hurting and refuse to turn a deaf ear.

24:12 – “He who weighs the hearts” – God will not be put off by excuses.

24:13-14 – “sweet to your taste” – We are to want and enjoy getting wisdom like the sugar in our favorite candy bar or ice cream.

- “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” (Ps. 34:8)

24:15-16 – “rise again” – It’s not that we don’t stumble, but we have the grace to try again.

- This is a consolation to the righteous.

24:17-18 – “when your enemy falls” – Whether the enemy falls into sin or falls out of power, this is not for celebration, but a warning.

- “Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.” (1 Cor. 10:12)

24:19-20 – “Do not fret” – Don’t worry about what God has under His control. (Ps. 37:1)

- “lamp” – The life and lineage.

24:21-22 – “fear the Lord and the king” – Christians are to be good citizens.

- “those given to change” – The rebellious.

24:23-25 – “not good to show partiality” – We must uphold justice.

24:26 – “kisses the lips” – It just feels good.

24:27 – “afterward build your house” – This is talking about priorities. We must take care of the necessities in life before we concern ourselves with convenient and frivolous things.

- Comfort and safety result from work in the field.
- The urgent things in life are rarely important, and the important things are rarely urgent.

24:28-29 – “render to the man according to his work” – We are to leave vengeance to God.

24:30-34 – “little sleep, a little slumber” – Lazy people don’t get anything done.

- Repeated from Prov. 6:10-11. (See also 2 Thess. 3:10)
- “overgrown with thorns” – The natural course of life is to disorder.

Chapter 25:

25:1 – “Hezekiah” – A godly king; he lived about 250 years after Solomon.

25:2 – “search out a matter” – Even a king could never expect to know all that God knows. There is so much around us that we don’t understand yet.

- A God small enough to be understood isn’t big enough to be worshipped.
- When we deal with things that we do not understand, we must fall back on those things that we do understand.

25:3 – “heart of kings is unsearchable” – It’s lonely at the top. Others don’t understand the perspective and responsibility of rulers.

- 25:4-5 – “for jewelry” – Removing the dross makes something valuable.
- Refining makes us fit for the master’s use.
 - “Take away the wicked” – Blessed subtractions.
- 25:6-7 – “Do not exalt yourself” – Jesus said the same thing in Luke 14:7-11.
- “exalt yourself” – If we exalt ourselves, we will be humbled.
- 25:8-10 – “Debate your case” – Just talk and work it out before it becomes overblown. (Matt. 18:15)
- Many fights and arguments have been started by false assumptions.
 - “do not disclose the secret...expose your shame” – Do not embarrass another in front of anybody else or else they may make all your secrets public too.
- 25:11-12 – “fine gold” – Beautiful and valuable.
- The gift of saying the right thing at the right time.
 - “Like an earring of gold” – Heeded correction and advice makes a life more beautiful.
 - “rebuker” – A person willing to give you a reproof is very valuable.
- 25:13 – “harvest” – September/October. It is still relatively hot in the Middle East at that time of the year and a little snow would prove very refreshing.
- “faithful messenger” – He only says what the one who sent him wanted him to say.
 - “faithful” – Faithful people are refreshing to those around them.
 - When you know what you are going to get from someone, it produces stability.
- 25:14 – “clouds and wind without rain” – Making the appearance of refreshment but not producing is more disappointing than no clouds at all. (2 Pet. 2:17; Jude 1:12)
- 25:15 – “forbearance” – Great change can be produced by simple steadfastness.
- “gentle tongue” – Gentle, consistent teaching.
- 25:16 – “filled with it and vomit” – Don’t overdo a good thing; moderation is important.
- 25:17 – “Seldom set foot” – You can wear out your welcome.
- Expecting, needing, or asking too much of the people around you will only cut you off from relationship with them.
- 25:18 – “sharp arrow” – A liar can do great harm.
- 25:19 – “bad tooth and a foot out of joint” – Painful.
- 25:20 – “vinegar on soda” – This creates agitation.
- It is better to “weep with those who weep.” (Rom. 12:15)
- 25:21-22 – “enemy is hungry” – He is hurting and vulnerable.
- Quoted by Paul in Rom. 12:20.
 - “coals of fire” – This is either to burn up or to purify; both come from the same coals.
 - The best thing you can do to an enemy is make him your friend.

25:23 – “backbiting tongue” – Slander makes people angry.

- Don’t put up with a gossiper.

25:24 – “contentious woman” – Repeated from Prov. 21:9.

- At least he’s back in the house.

25:25 – “cold water to a weary soul” – Refreshing.

25:26 – “righteous man who falters” – His failure muddies his witness.

- It does more harm for a good example to fall before wickedness than to never have had that example in the first place.

25:27 – “seek one’s own glory” – It will make others sick.

- “We are never more like Satan than when we take the glory” – Billy Graham.

25:28 – “no rule over his own spirit” – He is always flying off the handle in anger or arrogance.

- “without walls” – He is defenseless.
- We are to put on the whole armor of God. (Eph. 6:12)

Chapter 26:

26:1 – “honor is not fitting for a fool” – It is out of place.

26:2 – “a curse without cause” – God’s established order overrides some personal motivation to curse or harm another. You will reap what you sow. (Gal. 6:7)

26:3-12 – “fool” – One who says in their heart there is no God. (Ps. 14:1)

- “Do not answer a fool according to his folly” – Do not stoop to his level.
- “Do not answer a fool...Answer a fool” – There is no good way of handling a fool. It is a mess either way.
- “binds a stone in a sling” – This is pointless. It keeps the sling from firing the stone.
 - A fool with authority wields a formidable weapon, but it is useless in his hands.
- “a dog returns to his own vomit” – Quoted in 2 Peter 2:22.
 - If it made you sick the first time, odds are it will make you sick the next time.
- “more hope for a fool than for him” – Pride is worse than foolishness.

26:13-14 – “a lion in the road” – People can invent difficulties for themselves.

- “door turns on its hinges” – Motion without progress.

26:15-16 – “wiser in his own eyes” – He is self-deceived.

- Some people work hard at being lazy, and they are proud of the work they get out of.

26:17 – “takes a dog by the ears” – He is going to get bit.

26:18-19 – “joking” – Those who cover lies and deceit by calling it a joke.

- This may also speak of the practical joker who takes things too far.

26:20-22 – “the fire goes out” – Gossip needs fuel to keep the fire going.

- “the inmost body” – The emotional scars from hurting words can be more painful than physical pain.

26:23 – “Fervent lips” – Fiery people and strong speech are dangerous without purity.
- Be careful with people who cannot or will not shut up.
- “earthenware covered with silver dross” – Hypocrisy. Like whitewashed tombs that are full of the bones of dead men.

26:24-26 – “deceit” – Another word for “hypocrisy.”
- “speaks kindly” – He is gracious, but not truly sincere.
- “wickedness will be revealed” – The truth and their true nature will come out.

26:27 – “roll back on him” – Evil plans backfire on those who make them.
- Haman hung on his own gallows is a perfect example of this.

26:28 – “ruin” – A simple lie can ruin a life.

Chapter 27:

27:1 – “Do not boast about tomorrow” – Planning and setting out for the future is Biblically permitted, but it all must be submitted to the Lord’s will. (James 4:13-17)
- “Do not boast” – This also applies to ministers with long-range goals and proud objectives.

27:2 – “not your own mouth” – Don’t toot your own horn. Self-Praise Stinks!
- In heaven, no man will glory in God’s presence.

27:3 – “fool’s wrath is heavier” – An angry fool who is shooting off his mouth is likely to crush something.
- A fool’s wrath is completely unreasonable.

27:4 – “Wrath is cruel” – It is easier to reason with an angry person than a jealous person.
- “jealousy” – Jealousy is a trust issue, and trust must be earned. (Songs 8:6)
- Envy drove the religious leaders to kill Jesus.

27:5 – “Open rebuke” – Public rebuke.
- “love carefully concealed” – Love needs the proper expression to be received as love.

27:6 – “the wounds of a friend” – Honest rebukes motivated by love and concern.
- Love requires vulnerability and vulnerability makes you susceptible to pain.
- “wounds” – This can feel like a whip.

27:7 – “a hungry soul” – “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” (Matt. 5:6)
- One tends to appreciate things more when hungry.

27:8 – “wanders” – People have a natural tendency to leave their responsibility to just flit around in some mindless direction, and it can be dangerous.

27:9 – “perfume delight the heart” – It covers over the stink.

27:10 – “your father’s friend” – Rehoboam went against this proverb.

- “friend” – The blessing of friendship.
- Blood is thicker than water, but Spirit is thicker than blood.

27:11 – “make my heart glad” – Children represent more than just themselves.

27:12 – “foresees evil” – Repeated from Prov. 22:3.

- Planning and foresight are good as long as we allow God to direct our paths.
- In the NT, men are taught to “provide” for their families. To “provide” means “to see ahead of time” and involves more than mere material stuff

27:13 – “pledge” – Repeated from Prov. 20:16.

27:14 – “loud voice, rising early” – Even a blessing, when given at the wrong time and in the wrong way, can feel like a curse. Be sensitive.

- There is a right way to wake people up.

27:15-16 – “contentious woman” – How can she be changed? She cannot be controlled from the outside; she must be changed on the inside.

27:17 – “iron sharpens iron” – Even as we beat on one another.

- You become like who you are with. That is why it is important to make friends with Godly people, not just those who call themselves Christians.

27:18 – “honored” – Faithfulness and diligence will be rewarded.

- It is a stewardship issue.

27:19 – “heart reveals a man” – The truest picture of a man is from the heart, not the face.

27:20 – “of man are never satisfied” – The lust of the eyes cannot touch the spirit.

- Lust is never satisfied by seeing more.

27:21 – “by what others say of him” – Much can be refined in us by what people say about us.

- You can tell a lot about a man by how he handles praise.

27:22 – “foolishness will not depart from him” – He is a fool clear to the core. You can’t grind the foolishness out of him.

27:23-27 – “diligent” – The blessing of diligence.

- We are to handle our responsibilities with diligence, while keeping it all in proper perspective.

Chapter 28:

28:1 – “wicked flee when no one pursues” – Their guilty conscience leads to paranoia.

- “bold as a lion” – Because they have nothing to hide.

28:2 – “many are it princes” – A lack of integrity requires more bureaucracy and leads to a more frequent turnover in leadership.

- 28:3 – “A poor man” – The Hebrew implies he is “poor, yet strong.”
 - “leaves no food” – Without mercy. It is a mark of our selfishness.
- 28:4 – “law” – “Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ.” (Gal. 3:24)
 - Proverbs 28-29 mentions “law” 5 times.
 - “contend with them” – The wicked promote the wicked, but the righteous stand against both the promoter and the promoted.
- 28:5 – “understand all” – The spiritual man discerns all things. (1 Cor. 2:15)
- 28:6 – “integrity” – A more valuable commodity than money.
- 28:7 – “gluttons” – Associated in that culture with partying and drunken feasting.
- 28:8 – “pity the poor” – God will give it back to the poor.
- 28:9 – “prayer is an abomination” – They are neglecting God’s will, but seeking good things from Him anyway. This hypocritical religion is an abomination to God.
 - God is more concerned with relationship than with stuff or performance.
- 28:10 – “fall into his own pit” – Like Haman in the book of Esther.
- 28:11 – “rich man is wise in his own eyes” – He thinks he is better than others simply because he is wealthy.
- 28:13 – “covers his sins will not prosper” – Like David in Ps. 32 and 51.
 - “confesses” – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)
- 28:14 – “reverent” – means “stands in awe of God.”
 - God is looking for humility, as opposed to those who harden their heart.
- 28:15 – “roaring lion and a charging bear” – Destroyers.
- 28:16 – “hates covetousness” – A ruler can have a tendency to use their power for personal gain.
- 28:17 – “a pit” – He is to be incarcerated; he is not to be hidden.
- 28:19 – “frivolity” – Empty pursuits.
 - There are always new fads and schemes promising riches and prosperity.
- 28:20 – “hastens to be rich” – Those who want to get rich quick, will get into trouble.
 - Some want to get rich quick because they desire ease and frivolity. (Prov. 28:19)
- 28:21 – “partiality” – James 2:1-13 has much to say against showing favoritism.
 - “a piece of bread” – It doesn’t take much to make a bribe.
- 28:22 – “an evil eye” – Those who will break the law to get rich.

28:23 – “afterward” – Sometimes it takes a while to appreciate a rebuke.

- There is a great appreciation for those who honestly speak their mind rather than tell me what they think I want to hear.

28:24 – “robs his father” – Caring for our parents in their old age.

28:25 – “proud heart stirs up strife” – “By pride comes nothing but strife.” (Prov. 13:10)

28:26 – “trusts in his own heart is a fool” – The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. (Jer. 17:9)

28:27 – “hides his eyes” – Conveniently failing to see or look at the needs of the poor.

Chapter 29:

29:1 – “suddenly be destroyed” – Every sudden fall is preceded by many warnings.

- Jesus spoke of the danger of the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.

29:2 – “righteous are in authority” – It’s okay for the righteous to run for office.

29:3 – “companion of harlots wastes his wealth” – Fornication, adultery, and pornography.

- Proverbs 2-9 speaks about the foolishness of adultery and harlots.

29:4 – “justice” – Justice is more important than the personal gain of any one individual.

29:5 – “flatters” – Lit. “to make smooth.” The smooth talker who says the things he thinks you want to hear, rather than speaking the truth to warn and help your neighbor.

- “a net for his feet” – Flattery is a trap.

29:6 – “snared” – Transgression will never bring us greater freedom.

29:7 – “considers the cause of the poor” – We need to take time to think about others.

29:8 – “Scoffers set a city aflame” – Anyone can be a critic, but solutions are hard to find.

- We live in a culture that honors deconstruction, but has very little that is better to replace it.

29:9 – “no peace” – Don’t argue with a fool.

29:10 – “hate the blameless” – There seems to be an agenda against righteousness and godly values.

- A righteous life is proof that you have a choice.

29:11 – “vents all his feelings” – Don’t let emotions makes decisions for you.

- Some people cannot afford to give away a piece of their mind.
- “wise man holds them back” – Wise men gather all the facts before they speak.

29:12 – “pays attention to lies” – He will elevate liars by paying attention to them. And the servants will learn to speak lies, because that is what the ruler wants to hear.

29:13 – “poor man and the oppressor” – The Lord is the Maker of both.

- 29:15 – “rod and rebuke” – Both discipline and instruction are necessary.
 - “a child left to himself” – Hands-off parenting.
- 29:16 – “the righteous will see their fall” – The wicked will not outlast the righteous.
 - Time and eternity is for the righteous.
- 29:17 – “Correct your son” – Discipline children early.
 - “Correct” – Lit. “instruct.”
- 29:18 – “revelation” – Speaking of God making His will known to humanity, primarily through the Word of God.
 - This is not talking about the need for strange, charismatic behavior.
 - Truth is not found within; it is revealed to us.
 - The Word of God was removed from the public school system in 1963.
 - “cast off restraint” – Can also be translated “be made naked.”
 - This speaks of the importance of the prophet who speaks forth the Word of God.
- 29:19 – “not respond” – A supervisor needs a servant to do what he says so he can see whether he is right or not.
- 29:20 – “more hope for a fool than for him” – Similar to Prov. 26:12.
- 29:21 – “pampers his servant” – Gently handling a servant establishes a relationship.
 - A trusted servant could become part of the household in Bible times. (Gen. 15:2)
- 29:24 – “partner with a thief” – If a man can steal with you, he can steal from you.
 - A man is his own worst enemy if he chooses poor friends.
- 29:25 – “fear of man” – Lit. “dread of man.”
 - We are not to admire them based on what they drive, how they dress, where they eat, or any of that.
 - “brings a snare” – It will make you do things against your own convictions.
 - “shall be safe” – Lit. “put on high.”
- 29:26 – “the ruler’s favor” – Trying to get close to a person of power to get things for ourselves.
 - “the Lord” – We need only please an audience of One.
- 29:27 – “an abomination to the wicked” – The just will be hated by the wicked.

Chapter 30:

- 30:2-4 – “more stupid” – He takes a position of humility.
 - God and His wisdom is not found, but received.
 - “understanding” – Without understanding, humans are no different from animals.
 - “Who has ascended?” – Deut. 30:11-14; Rom. 10:6-8.
 - “what is His Son’s name” – Implying that the Holy One has a Son.
 - There is a mystery of God to this.

- 30:5-6 – “Every word” – The Bible is the Word of God; it doesn’t just contain it.
- “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...” (2 Tim. 3:16)
 - “word of God” – This gives us the answer the question of Prov. 30:4 – “What is His Son’s name?”
 - God has given us all we need to know about Him in His word.
 - “pure” – Lit. “flawless.”
 - “Do not add to His words” – God hates adding to or taking away from His word. (Duet. 4:2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18-19)
- 30:7-9 – “Remove falsehood and lies” – He doesn’t want to be deceived, but he also doesn’t want to contribute to confusion and deception in other lives either.
- “neither poverty nor riches” – Simply praying for daily bread.
 - The godliness of moderation.
- 30:10 – “not malign a servant” – Do not stick your nose in someone else’s business to bad-mouth them. It is not for us to beat up another’s servant. (Rom. 14:4)
- Satan is “the accuser of the brethren.” (rev. 12:10)
- 30:11-14 – “generation” – These people are found in every generation.
- “does not bless its mother” – Disrespectful.
 - “pure in its own eyes” – Hypocrites.
 - “eyelids are lifted up” – Proud.
 - “teeth are like swords” – Oppressive.
- 30:15 – “leech” – One who tries to suck his life from the life of another person will never himself be satisfied. We were meant to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood. (John 6:53-58)
- 30:16 – “never satisfied” – Some things never get enough.
- 30:17 – “scorns obedience” – Children not taught to obey are likely to be disobedient the rest of their lives and that may lead to a short and pain-filled life.
- 30:18-19 – “do not understand” – There is no path, pattern, or method to these things.
- 30:20 – “no wickedness” – The adulteress who refuses to admit any wrongdoing.
- 30:21-23 – “perturbed” – Lit. “disturb, tremble, or agitate.” These are aggravating.
- “servant when he reigns” – An unqualified and unprepared leader.
 - “fool when he is filled” – The prospering fool.
 - “hateful woman when she is married” – There is no escape.
 - “maidservant who succeeds her mistress” – Passing an inheritance to someone who cannot handle it.
- 30:24-28 – “exceedingly wise” – They recognize their weakness and act accordingly.
- Preparation can overcome weakness.
 - “make their homes in the crags” – The tenant is weak, but the house is strong.
 - “locusts have no king” – They may not have a king, but each one has a little bit of the king inside of them.

- 30:29-31 – “majestic in pace” – These things can keep moving forward.
- “greyhound” – or “horse.” The Hebrew refers to strong thighs springing forth.
 - “male goat” – The one that leads the herd.

- 30:32-33 – “put your hand on your mouth” – The blessing of not speaking.
- “wrath produces strife” – You reap what you sow.

Chapter 31:

- 31:1 – “Lemuel” – Bible scholars think this is a name Bathsheba gave to Solomon.
- Some believe this is a non-Jewish, believing king of a Gentile nation whose mother was a descendent of David.
 - “his mother taught him” – The powerful influence of a godly mother.
 - Those who didn’t get godly instruction as a child can get great benefit from the wisdom of the Proverbs.
- 31:2-3 – “my son” – Bathsheba lost her first son to David at birth.
- “give your strength” – Women sapped Solomon’s strength.
 - David also gave some of his strength to women and it ruined much of his life.
- 31:4-7 – “not for kings to drink wine” – Church leaders are not to be given to wine. (1 Tim. 3:3)
- Washington, DC is the greatest consumer of alcohol per capita of any city in the US.
 - “remember his misery no more” – This may be speaking of medicinal purposes. (1 Tim. 5:23)
- 31:8-9 – “plead the cause of the poor and needy” – Defending the defenseless.
- 31:10-31 – “Who can find?” – It is not impossible, but rare. They do exist and they are valuable like a ruby.
- “virtuous wife” – She is a woman of valor; that is a godly wife.
 - This section is written as an acrostic, each verse starting with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
- 31:11 – “her husband safely trusts her” – Trust brings stability to a household.
- “no lack of gain” – She is not frivolously spending all he makes.
- 31:12 – “does him good” – Some say this is referring to sexual intimacy.
- “all the days of her life” – She is in for the long haul.
- 31:13 – “works with her hands” – She is industrious.
- 31:14 – “food from afar” – She is personally inconvenienced to provide for her family.
- 31:16 – “buys it” – She is a wise and savvy businesswoman and investor.
- 31:17 – “strengthens her arms” – She is strong and a hard worker.
- 31:21 – “not afraid of snow” – She is prepared for the storms and seasons of life.

31:22 – “She makes tapestry” – She makes everything in the house.

- “clothing is fine linen” – She wears good, nice-looking clothes.
- It is okay for a Christian woman to be fashionable.

31:23 – “husband is known in the gates” – He is among the leaders of the city.

- A woman can empower her husband.
- Behind every good man is a great woman.

31:25 – “rejoice in time to come” – She is free from anxiety and worry.

31:26 – “kindness” – She is kind, not nagging, hateful, or mean-spirited. She doesn’t cut her husband or her family down.

- Her speech is in contrast to the contentious woman who drove her husband to the roof and out into the wilderness.
- Wisdom is necessary for kind speech so one knows when and when not to speak.

31:27 – “idleness” – She is not looking for the easiest way possible.

- Lazy will lead to stupid.

31:30 – “fears the Lord” – The source for all these other virtues – for a man or a woman.

- “beauty” – This is one of the main gods of vanity in our culture.
- Beauty is weak and temporary, in comparison to these other things.
- Lemuel’s mother is directing him away from that which ensnares so many men.

31:31 – “praise her in the gates” – There is an eternal reward for the person of virtue.