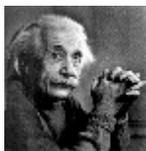


The Beginning of Wisdom



*"From where then does
wisdom come? And where
is the place of understanding?"*

- Job 28:20



The Beginning of Wisdom

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1. A Basis For Our "Understanding"

Proverbs 1:1-6 (NKJ)

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:

- 2 To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding,
- 3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity;
- 4 To give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion --
- 5 A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel,
- 6 To understand a proverb and an enigma, the words of the wise and their riddles.



Q1: The following words are described in Proverbs 1:1-6 as things that will be attained, acquired and 'lived out' as a result of reading and living by the proverbs...it is important that we define each one!

Wisdom	<i>chokmah</i> <i>khok-maw'</i>	<i>judge</i> The ability to ju_____ correctly and to follow the b_____ course of action, based on the correct ap_____ of knowledge and understanding <i>application</i> Chokmah implies to pound in by continuous study!
Instruction	<i>muwcar</i> <i>moo-sawr'</i>	<i>discipline</i> A disci_____ that that teaches how to live in the fear of the Lord so that the wise man learns his lessons be_____ encountering temptation and trials <i>before</i> <i>versus learning from one's mistakes (an ounce of prevention=lb of cure)</i>
Perceive <i>beneP</i>	<i>biyn</i> <i>think U</i>	<i>discern</i> To disc_____ something in such a way as to be able to cons_____ it, <i>consider</i> thi_____ it through and then be able to use it in the future
Understanding	<i>biynah</i> <i>bee-nawh'</i>	<i>knowing</i> The act of kn_____ what one should know to go thorough life
Judgment	<i>mishpat</i> <i>mish-pawt'</i>	A combination of skill, discretion, and common se_____ enabling you to come to cor_____ conclusions. <i>U correct U sense</i>
Prudence	<i>'ormah</i> <i>or-maw'</i>	In a good sense, shrew <i>shrewdness</i> or craftiness, so that you are not easily <i>deceived</i> dec_____ by what appears on the surface to be good <i>in the context, giving a simple-minded, easily deceived person the ability to not be seduced!</i>
Knowledge	<i>Da'ath</i> <i>dah-ath'</i>	To know by obser_____ and reflecting as well as to know by personally expe_____ it <i>observing</i> <i>experiencing</i>
Discretion	<i>mezimmah</i> <i>mez- e-maw'</i>	A purposeful 'thin_____ through' of something to come to a correct <i>thinking</i> conclusion about it

Definitions from the Thomas Nelson Bible Dictionary and Vine's Expository Dictionary

Proverb: *mashal* (maw-shawl'); a pithy saying, usually of metaphorical nature; hence, a simile (as an adage, poem, discourse); often of 2 lines each. *Like a pole against which a plan grows...*

2. What is Wisdom and Where Does it Come From?

Job 28:12-28 (NKJV) *Based on the previous page, Wisdom is indeed to be sought after...*

"But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? 13 Man does not know its value, nor is it found in the land of the living. 14 The deep says, 'It is not in me'; And the sea says, 'It is not with me.' 15 It cannot be purchased for gold, nor can silver be weighed for its price. 16 It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, in precious onyx or sapphire. 17 Neither gold nor crystal can equal it, nor can it be exchanged for jewelry of fine gold. 18 No mention shall be made of coral or quartz, for the price of wisdom is above rubies. 19 The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, nor can it be valued in pure gold.



Q1: According to Scripture, what conclusions can you draw from where wisdom does NOT come from? List at least three points that this Scripture makes.

- § *Man does not know how valuable it is, nor where he can obtain it (v13a)*
- § *It cannot be found anywhere in the physical world, nor anything from man's philosophy (v13b)*
- § *It cannot be found in nature...despite what the outdoorsy types say (v14)*
- § *Its price is beyond that of anything that men place value upon (v15-19)*
 - *This Scripture clearly points out that WISDOM is beyond the realm of man. Regardless of whatever 'system' he works out, it cannot grasp wisdom. Similar to salvation, wisdom cannot be found in work!*

20 "From where then does wisdom come? And where is the place of understanding? 21 It is hidden from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the birds of the air. 22 Destruction and Death say, 'We have heard a report about it with our ears.' 23 God understands its way, and He knows its place. 24 For He looks to the ends of the earth, and sees under the whole heavens, 25 To establish a weight for the wind, and apportion the waters by measure. 26 When He made a law for the rain, and a path for the thunderbolt, 27 Then He saw wisdom and declared it; he prepared it, indeed, He searched it out.

Q2: According to Scripture, what additional conclusions can you draw from where wisdom does and does not come from? List at least three points that this Scripture makes.

- § *Wisdom is hidden from everything living (v20-21)...which tells you that man cannot even know what to look for or what it is, because apart from God he has no idea of wisdom...*
- § *Death and Destruction, tools of Satan, know that such a thing exists, but they (as well as Satan) do not know how to get at it or get it (v22)*
- § *Only God, who created wisdom, knows it as only a creator can know his creation, and knows where to obtain it (v23).*
- § *V27: God created wisdom AFTER he created the heavens and the earth, He saw it (ra'ah: behold, gaze upon, consider, behold joyfully), He declared it (caphar (saw-far): verbalized it into existence) he prepared it (kuwn: erected it, set it up, fashioned it, perfected it), and then searched it out (chaqar: examined it intimately) – God planned for wisdom to be part of His creation at the proper time, before He created man...and therefore meant man to have it, but only in complete dependence upon Him!*

28 And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.'"

Q3: What does "the fear of the Lord" really mean? What would be some examples in our lives today that would illustrate someone living 'in the fear of the Lord'?

It means reverence, complete and utter respect, awe, knowing your own place and God's place and not confusing the two.

- § *Asking what would honor God, and then doing it*
- § *Recognizing your dependence upon God for it*
- § *Being completely blown away that the God of the universe would love you enough to FREELY share with you things that are beyond your ability to obtain...He makes the impossible possible.*

3. How Do You "Get" Wisdom?

Scripture tells us about how wisdom was gotten by the wisest man whoever live....

1 Kings 4:29-34 (NIV)

God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. v30 Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. v31 He was wiser than any other man, including Ethan the Ezrahite - wiser than Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. v32 He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. v33 He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. v34 Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.



How great was Solomon's wisdom? How many grains of sand are in all of the seashores?

Q1: What are Solomon's credentials regarding wisdom?

- § It was given to him by God and did not come from himself
- § Along with wisdom, he got the tools to use it correctly (ins Insight and und understanding)
- § His wisdom exceeded that of the combined wisdom of the two leading cultures of the day (*God only recorded the important ones?*)
- § He spoke 3000 proverbs (were they all recorded in Scripture? _____)
- § Metaphorically, his proverbs covered the sm small things (hyssop) to the gr great (cedar) and covered the entire realm of all that is li living (animals, birds, reptiles and fish)
- § As a result of his wisdom, people of all nations came to lea learn from him

maybe if we want God to appear to us, we need to give great sacrifice first, without expecting something from God (out motives betray us????)

2 Chronicles 1:6-12 (NIV)

Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it. v7 That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." v8 Solomon answered God, "You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place. v9 Now, LORD God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. v10 Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?"

Q2: How did Solomon view God, both before speaking to Him and in response to God's question? What could he have asked God for, and why do you think he asked God for what he asked?

- § *First, He gave a sacrifice to God out of joy and thankfulness for all God had done for him, including making him king in a time of peach for the kingdom. – do we only turn to God when we need Him????*
- § *Solomon gave God His 'props' and evidenced living in the FEAR of the Lord*
- § *Only after he thanked God, he asked God to confirm the promise God had already made to David (the growth of the people to be a great nation)...only after this did he answer God's question and ask for wisdom.*
- § *Solomon at this time in his life already viewed his need for wisdom as his greatest, so that he could be successful for the task set before him – he was not looking for the easy road to success!*

Q3: What are the practical applications for us in this passage?

Discussion!!!!

- § *Like Solomon, we need to look around us and take stock of all that God has done for us, and be thankful for all of it. When we line in an attitude of thankfulness, God continues to bless us.*
- § *We need to distinguish between feeding our greed and asking God for what is truly important*
- § *When we talk with God we should ask God to confirm what He has already promised – we have His letter to us where He promises oh, so much. Our prayers ought to be inconfirmation...*
- § *Recognize that all blessings come from God, and while delivered via inheritance, parent's planning, the hand of others, etc., it ALL came from God*

v11 God said to Solomon, "Since this is your heart's desire and you have not asked for wealth, riches or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king, v12 therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, riches and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have."

Q3: According to this passage, what does God provide to Solomon along with what he asks for? Does God do this as a special 'one-time' offer to Solomon because of how he asked?

In addition to wisdom and knowledge, God provides wealth, riches and honor.

A close examination of Proverbs 3:13-16 indicates that wisdom comes with her hands full, ling life in the right hand (hand of authority (who would not say that long life, implying the health to go with it, is not seen as the most precious of the three)), wealth and honor in the left hand. ÜÜÜÜ

Proverbs 3:14-16 (NIV) Wisdom comes with her hands full!

{wisdom} is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. v15 She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. v16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.

The story so far...

- § The ONLY place wisdom can be found is in God's Word, because wisdom comes from God
- § The BEGINNING of wisdom is the reverence of God
- § God gives us wisdom so we can be equipped for *living*



Joshua 1:7-8 (NIV) - God's directives to Joshua after the death of Moses:

Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. v8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Q4: What are the practical applications of this passage? What happens to get us to focus on the right hand or the left hand? What ultimately happens to us when we do? Was that what happened to Solomon at the end of his life?

- § ***Success and prosperity are guaranteed when we are firmly following God's law and DOING it***
- § ***It is possible to meditate on God's Word day and night 24/7***
- § ***Wisdom IS the Word of God...and if you turn from it you lose what is in the right and left hand!***
- § ***When people begin to get blessed , and start to focus on their blessing instead of God, they are not reverencing God, and what is focused on becomes their god, and they become idolaters!***
- § ***When you focus on God, the other stuff comes as a bonus. When you focus on the other stuff, you lose it all!***
- § ***Tragically, Solomon's life bears this out. After God blessed him with wisdom, honor and wealth, he began to follow after other gods (those of his 3000 wives) and he died a deranged old man, allowing what his father had built to be frittered away into a divided kingdom...***

Proverbs 21:21 - He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor.

How we can obtain wisdom today...

James 1:5 (NIV)

If any of you lacks wisdom , he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

- § We have to understand our I _____ (not prideful) and turn to the sou_____
- § God provides it gen_____ ***generously***; therefore we get more than enough _____ ***gives to ALL who ask***
- § God does not get mad at us when we ad_____ we are dependent upon Him ***I give you some yesterday???***

4. The Structure of Proverbs

 <p>The Hebrew word for wisdom is <i>chokmah</i>, which literally means to "pound in" by repetition!</p>	<p>There are 31 chapters of Proverbs. Most months have 31 days. If we are to obtain wisdom by "pounding in" does it not make sense for us to learn by reading a chapter a day?</p> <p>It is the "pounding in" day after day that will give us the wisdom necessary to make consistently wise decisions for the way that we live our lives...</p>
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Proverbs are 2-line p Poems that are useful in helping us learn wisdom. We learn by repe repetition
Repetition is pounding it in...like we learned our multiplication tables...

Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

Train up a child in the way he should go,

Train up = chanak; to train up, initiate or discipline, as one would initiate a new-born in nursing its mother (smear date paste in a newborn's mouth to prompt the sucking response).

And when he is old he will not depart from it.

- Thus topically we should view the Book of Proverbs as a parent instructing us...

Q1: Who wrote the Book of Proverbs? (remember, chapter and verse designations are man-made)

- Chapters 1 - 9 identify themselves as written by Solomon
- Chapters 10 - 24 identify themselves as written by Solomon
- Chapters 25 - 29 identify themselves as proverbs of Solomon
- Chapter 30 identifies itself as being the sayings of Agur, son of Jakeh (a'gur = gatherer)
- Chapter 31 identifies itself as being the sayings of King Lemuel (little known of him)

Six types of proverbs:

1. *synonymous* - both lines say the sa same thing but each in a little dif different way

Proverbs 11:25 - A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

- *One who is generous is one who is a giver; when one gives, God will refresh him*
- *Refreshing means to make as new; the One who gave us new life did this for us to start off*
- *Do we find ways to do this with the people whom God has placed in our lives? Encourager...*

Proverbs 11:29 - He who brings trouble on his family will inherit only wind, and the fool will be servant to the wise.

- § *The troublemaker causes the family to inherit nothing (wind); if you can't manage your household, eventually all you have will wind up in the hands of those who can*
- *This is why communism and socialism cannot work! If you took the wealth of the world and distributed it equally, within a few years the wise and hardworking would have it all back*

Proverbs 11:30 - The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.

Q2: Who is the fruit of your righteousness? *Those whom you win to the Lord...*

Q3: What is a "tree of life?" *Gives eternal life; being born again, live forever!*
Thus those who win souls for the Lord are applying wisdom and are therefore wise!

2. *antithetical* – a thought is given in line 1 while the negative res_____ ^{result} is given in line 2

§ you always find a b but

Proverbs 14:30 – A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.

*As a believer, we have the supernatural ability to manifest peace and joy
Envy is a sin of our choice, and it a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-26)
When we allow envy to rule our lives, most people manifest physical illness*

Proverbs 17:22 – A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

§ There is a dir_____ con_____ between our health and attitudes Q4:

Why is this a 'repeat' of the prior verse?

*because wisdom has to be pounded in!
ex: multiplication tables*

Proverbs 15:5 – A fool spurns his father's discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence.

§ "When I was 8, my dad was brilliant, at 18 I was amazed at how dumb he got, but when I was 28 he got brilliant again!"

- *Parents have a God-charged responsibility to instill discipline...to disciple their kids in wisdom*
- *A child who willingly seeks wisdom will go far...do we as parents show our kids verses like this so that they can understand the BIBLICAL reason why???*

3. *synthetic* – both lines teach a dif different thought but upon careful inspection you discover that the two seemingly disparate thoughts are con_____ connected (this is the rarest type of proverb)

§ *fool* – one who keeps his mouth open when it should be shut and shut when it should be open

Proverbs 10:18 – He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool.

- *He should have kept his mouth shut about the person he dislikes but didn't, and thus made a fool out of himself...*
- *I show myself to be a fool every time I slander someone! (slander = insult, malign, defame, smear)*

4. *integral* – the second line comp_____ completes the thought of the first line so that the whole thing looks like one complete thought

Proverbs 13:14 – The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death.

We avoid the snares of death by listening and heeding the teachings of the wise

Proverbs 19:20 – Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.

- *If you don't listen now there will come a time when you will wish you had – importance of learning the instructions of your parents*

Proverbs 22:6 – Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

§ When someone yo_____ ^{young} learns a lesson s/he will benefit from it throughout their lifetime

§ Note: THE way, not many ways! *I am THE way, THE truth and THE life*

- *While some teens may drift a bit, they usually come back (lesson of the prodigal son) when a firm foundation was laid through parental discipline in teaching wisdom – and by our living example*



All believers are to exhibit the fruit of the spirit, which includes peace and joy (both of which are medical prerequisites to a healthy life!)

5. *parabolic* - the first line *illustrates* _____ the second (the teaching), the first line is the analogy
Proverbs 11:22 - Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.

Q5: What is this verse saying?

nothing is more useless than a beautiful woman who has no sense

Q6: What are two specific applications of this verse for us?

- *Don't date someone just based on their looks...that may be the only thing they have going for them. Is there any substance on the inside?*
- *When you go out with someone just because they are good looking, you are more interested in you than you are in them! Is it "all about me???"*



Proverbs 25:25 - Like cold water to a weary soul is good news from a distant land.

When you are homesick there is nothing quite so nice as hearing from home... our US troops???

Proverbs 26:9 - Like a thorn bush in a drunkard's hand is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

Drunk people hurt themselves and cannot feel it...it starts to hurt when he sobers up - when you see a drunk person hurt you feel for him; likewise, when a fool stands up and speaks something wise you hurt for him because you see that what he is saying is aimed right at himself but he cannot see it! It begins to hurt when he starts getting wisdom.

6. *comparative* - the first line expresses something as better than what is in the second line
- key word in a comparative proverb is *better* _____

Proverbs 15:16 - Better a little with the fear of the LORD than great wealth with turmoil.

While prosperity is good, if you have prosperity with strife in your house, you'd be better off with little and having peace with God

Q6: How does Proverbs 10:22 support what is said in 15:16?

The blessing of the LORD brings wealth, and he adds no trouble to it, so it is better to be blessed by God and be poor than to have wealth and be without God

Proverbs 15:17 - Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened calf with hatred.

Q7: How does this verse stack up against the statement that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach?

If a woman wants to win a man's heart, love him. Food is great, but love is greater. Does anyone want a meal filled with tension and fighting???

Proverbs 17:1 - Better a dry crust (moldy piece of bread) with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife.

Proverbs 21:9 - It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house. *KJV*

The importance of mealtime without tension and strife is echoed throughout the Book of Proverbs There is a connection between a peaceful home and the health one gets from proper meals...

BTW ladies...The men will get theirs... (see the sluggard)

Proverbs' Structure: A Self-Commentary

The wisdom of God does not come through natural discipline, it comes through the Holy Spirit...which is an ability to perceive things as God does, not as people do...our spirit tells us something is wrong that our senses do

The first seven verses of Proverbs 1 are a self-commentary...

Wisdom = chakmah – pounding in...

Proverbs 1:1-7 (KJV)	
1	The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; <i>Remember ch 30 by Agur and 31 by Lemuel</i>
2	To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; <i>progression: v2-know, perceive v3-receive v4-give – suggests a systematic way to know where it is, understand it, arrange it, receive it and then use it</i>
3	To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; <i>opportunity to sit under wisdom's instruction and learn...</i>
4	To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.
5	A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:
6	To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. <i>dark sayings = chiydaw (kee-daw) a puzzle or riddle</i>
7	The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

- § Instruction – 'discipline' – to learn by discipline
 - Ex. of discipline: daily dev_____ *devotional*
Satan nickels & dimes you not to do this
Ü obtain, arrange, use
 - § Knowledge – the ability to obt_____ the facts
 - § Understanding – the ability to arr_____ the facts
 - § Wisdom – the ability to u_____ the facts
impartially
 - § Treating others impar_____ requires discipline
 - § Subtilty – *tachbulah* – guidance, a plan
 - § Simple = simple minded
- Q8: Why does a young person need discretion?
because they live in the world ruled by Satan; flesh
- Q9: How does wisdom help the learned and wise?
for smart people, Proverbs will make them even smarter, and for someone who understands already, it will give them more wisdom (how to better apply what they know)
- Q10: Explain verse six.
we must not only understand the proverb but also its application as to how we can use it in this world we live in. Since Satan won't give us any help, and man cannot, we need to use the book of the wise to guide us where life otherwise would be a riddle...and it all starts with us revering God (v7)

An application of Proverbs 1:5-7 is found in Proverbs 9:7-10..

Proverbs 9:7-8a – He who corrects a scoffer gets shame for himself, and he who rebukes a wicked man only harms himself. Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you;

§ Scoffer – one who scorns, says "Church is for weaklings" or "God doesn't exist"

§ Wicked man – one who acts with evil and malice; a criminal

Q10: What specific direction do you get on how to not handle a scoffer or a wicked person, knowing that your ultimate mission is to win them to the Lord? Instead, what should you do?

This says that if I correct a scoffer ("You are wrong...Church is for everyone"), he'll get mad and if I rebuke a wicked person ("What you are doing is illegal"), he'll possibly harm me. In either case, I've only managed to make them hate me personally and go even further away from anything I might tell them about God. Instead, I need to do what Jesus did and love them back, and so they will be attracted and not repelled (love the unlovely)

Proverbs 9:8b-9 – Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Q11: What specific applications can be made about this passage?

- § *Both a wise person and a just person will be thankful for your input*
- § *The wiser most people are the harder you can rebuke them, because they want to be corrected*
- § *The wiser you are the more you want; you'll look anywhere for it*
- § *Wise people can learn in about 2 minutes what takes the fool years to learn*
- § *Do I get mad when someone corrects me? When someone corrects me they thought I was wise, but if I get mad I tell em I'm a fool – if I get mad and retaliate, then I am a fool or scorner! – remember 2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training*
- § *Will I increase in knowledge as a result of teaching and rebuke?*

5. The "Person" of Wisdom

Who or what is "Wisdom?"

The best commentary on Scripture is Scripture!

Proverbs 8:22-35 KJV

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

Beginning (re'shiyth)- first in rank or order; specifically firstfruits

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.
nacak (naw-sak'); a primitive root; to pour out, especially a libation, or to cast (metal); by analogy, to anoint a king:

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.

AWESOME promise of eternal life through the ONE and only way to God's favor!



§ Verse 22: in = this word was added by the translators; there is NO WORD here in the original text, so you should read it:

"The Lord possessed me, the beginning of His way..."

§ Compare with John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God!"

Q1: Who (or what) does Scripture say "Wisdom" is? What specifically can you learn about the origins of "Wisdom?"

The only Person who fits this description is Jesus Christ, who was there in the beginning, joined with the Father, and thus verse 22 states that the Lord possessed Jesus Christ, Who is literally the Beginning of His Way

Jesus was there at the creation in Genesis 1:1(also supporting John 1:3 and Col 1:16 that Jesus created all things...

Q2: Explain the 'joy' and the 'delight' connections in verses 30 and 31.

While Jesus was with God at the creation, Jesus was God's joy and delight; Jesus was rejoicing at all times 'before His Father.' Similarly, mankind is Jesus' delight and by extension, the Father's delight (the delight of the Son is the delight of the Father) – this is a picture of totally unqualified love, something that we cannot/do not understand although we want to!

Q3: What are the key lessons of verses 32 – 35?

- *We (mankind) are to hearken to (listen intently to and for) Christ to direct us*
- *We are to keep His ways (recall the blessings promised for those who keep His ways when Moses spoke to the children of Israel)*
- *We are to listen to Jesus' instruction through His Word and never refuse it*
- *We are to do this daily (v34) with a watchful and expectant attitude*
- *We have to seek it diligently (v35 – findeth suggests a diligent search)*
- *You cannot count on wisdom to aid you in the time of distress unless you get it into you (pound it in!)*

Q4: Why is wisdom portrayed as a woman in the Book of Proverbs?

- § *if you don't treat her right, she won't treat you right.*
- § *If you treat her poorly, she will not be there to support.*
- § *You reap what you sow. A proper loving husband generally gets love in return; an unloving husband gets in response to what he gives.*
- § *Solomon used this analogy to help us understand the nature of wisdom.*
- § *Solomon oughta know about women, good ones and bad ones!*

Solomon

§ Son of David & Bathsheba
 § 700 wives
 § 300 concubines
 § among these 1,000 no record of any being an Israelite
 § eventually turned from being wise to appeasing his wives and following after the gods of his wives

Q5: If godly wisdom is seen as a woman, why is worldly wisdom seen as an adulteress or prostitute?

Because it seduces for gain. In this case, Satan stands to gain because he gets to exercise rule and control over you

Q6: According to Scripture, where does wisdom go? Does it:

- a. Stay in the Bible?
- b. Stay in church?
- c. Stay in the home?
- d. Follow you wherever you go? *therefore you find it in the streets and byways (But you go to church to get recharged so that you can be a blessing wherever you go)*

Proverbs 1:20-33 KJV

20 Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:
 21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,
 22 How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?
 23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.
 24 Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;
 25 But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:
 26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;
 27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.
 28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:
 29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:
 30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.
 31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.
 32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.
 33 But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

- § Without = ou outside, literally outside the place where wisdom is marketplaces
- § In the streets = where people cong congregate
- § Colossians 4:5 - Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. KJV
- § v23 Simple = stu _____ or slow witted
- § *loves living in ignorance; unmotivated to change*
- § Scorer = unbeliever who m mock the Word *takes pleasure in mocking*
- § Fool = knows better but cho chooses wrong *loves following their own way contrary to God's direction*
- § v23: If you rep repent at Wisdom's reproof and get bo born again, God's Spirit will guide you.

Q7: How is the law of reaping and sowing illustrated by verses 24-31?

when a person refuses to listen to godly wisdom, then wisdom is never built up in that person's heart to call upon when it is needed, so you get ignorance when you sow ignorance

Q8: How do you reconcile a 'loving God' with this passage?

God says wisdom cries out (v21-21), speaks to all in the streets (v21-22), calls out and is heard but refused (v24) by those who desire not to listen and hearken. He tries, they refuse, they suffer the consequences. Sovereignty of God vs. sovereignty of man...

- § A fools prosperity is usually fast, and his loss is equally as fast, since he known not how to handle it... (lessons from Lottery winners) UU
- § You stick with wisdom, it sticks with you to enable the Christian to handle calamity

7. Portrait of a Fool

Proverbs 22:15a NKJ: Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child but the rod of correction will drive it far from him *correction Ú muwcar – instruction (p2)*

§ While you'd excuse a child, in an adult it's a different story *you expect kids to struggle with foolishness since it is discipline that corrects it over time*

nabal – one who is wicked and immoral (17:7-21)

'evil – hasty, impatient, quick to anger and to speak without thinking (1:7, 12:15)

kecil – self-confident, slow to see own faults, hates instruction (1:22, 14:16)

"fool" in Proverbs



Careless Feet – doesn't look where he's walking, repeats mistakes often

Proverbs 14:15 (NIV) A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.

Proverbs 22:3 (Msg) A prudent person sees trouble coming and ducks; a simpleton walks in blindly and is clobbered.

Proverbs 12:15 (NIV) The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice.

Characteristics of foolish behavior: *Someone who never fears until they fall; someone who does not see the signs of danger until it is too late; someone who doesn't learn from their mistakes (not foolish to make a mistake, it is to repeat it often)*

Practical examples of how this might be lived out:

Workaholic with a family in ruin; permissive parenting, credit card debt (pain of not having small compared to the pain of dealing with the debt)

Not staying in God's Word every day (if you don't things will unravel!)

Quick Fists – quick to respond in anger or to quarrel or fight

Proverbs 18:6 (NLT) Fools get into constant quarrels; they are asking for a beating.

Proverbs 20:3 (NIV) It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.

Proverbs 14:29 (NIV) A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly.

Proverbs 12:16 (NIV) A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.

Characteristics of foolish behavior:

Someone who is contentious and argumentative, always looking for a fight; someone who delights in arguing without considering the good of others (refiner vs, a fool); short fuse

Practical examples of how this might be lived out:

§ *getting thin skinned at small offenses and making them large*

§ *holding grudges (not allowing God to deal with it)*

§ *anger behind slow people*

§ *not realizing how hurtful your words might be to one listening*

What's Your Anger Level?

You respond in anger when:

- o Level 1 – you are ignored
(“nobody even noticed what I did!”)
- o Level 2 – you are insulted
(“how dare you say that to me!”)
- o Level 3 – you are caused to have pain
(mental, physical, or verbal)

The #1 characteristic of Jesus (Whom we are to emulate) during His trial and crucifixion was to remain silent to the insults and pain caused by others...even to the point of having the High Priest, Herod and Pilate all marvel at this.

Loose Lips – gossips, runs off at the mouth, says things without thinking, quick to speak *Ú brief commentary on verses...*

Proverbs 14:3 (NIV) A fool's talk brings a rod to his back, but the lips of the wise protect them.

Proverbs 26:20 (NKJ) Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.

Proverbs 17:28 (NIV) Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.

Proverbs 18:6-7a (NIV) A fool's lips bring him strife, and his mouth invites a beating. His mouth is his undoing

Proverbs 29:11 (NIV) A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.

Characteristics of foolish behavior:

§ *someone whose talk is always 'me-focused' (we should be other's focused)*

§ *gossips who incite others to get upset*

§ *you just want to smack them!*

Roaming Eyes - looking for answers in all the wrong places

Proverbs 17:24 (NIV) A discerning man keeps wisdom in view, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth.

Proverbs 26:12 (NIV) Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

Proverbs 27:20 (NIV) Death and Destruction are never satisfied, and neither are the eyes of man.

Proverbs 30:12 (NIV) those who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not cleansed of their filth;

Proverbs 27:12 (NIV) The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.

Characteristics of foolish behavior:

- § *Drawn to and preoccupied with the wrong things (appearance, body parts, hobbies, TV, whatever 'shtick' we are into at the time*
- § *Always seeking but never seeming to find; perpetual unrest*
- § *Lack of focus on the Word of God*
- § *Supreme belief in self (right in own eyes; self-justified)*
- § *Someone who lives from crisis to crisis because they do not walk circumspectly and stay close to God*

Practical steps we can take to secure our "eye gates:"

- § *Strongly examine ourselves to see if we are into behaviors that are inappropriate with regard to this matter*
- § *Do a 'household inventory' to identify the idols in our lives and destroy them (VHS tape story)*
- § *Look at our checkbook and credit card statement to see if we have our priorities right*
- § *Avoid placing ourselves in situations where we could be compromised (Internet, relationships, flirting, etc.)*

**Do the Eyes Have It?**

Three kinds of roaming eyes that look for answers in the wrong places:

- o *Material eyes – focus on things*
("I'd be a lot happier if I had...!")
- o *Distracted eyes – move from fad to fad*
("what I need is a new....!")
- o *Lustful eyes – drawn to sin*
("no harm in just looking...")

Bible scholars have pointed out that while faith comes by hearing the Word of God, our eyes seem to be the gates that Satan uses to tempt us. Eve saw the apple, David saw Bathsheba, and 1 Jn 2:16 tells us the lust of the eyes is of this world.

Plugged Ears - one who hears but does not listen because his/her ears are plugged up

Child: "I'm not listening na na na na na na..." vs. *Adult:* "Thanks for sharing that..." and then ignores it
Cover these verses expositively...

Proverbs 15:5 (NKJV) A fool despises his father's instruction, but he who receives correction is prudent.

Proverbs 17:10 (NKJV) Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool.

Proverbs 18:2 (NKJV) A fool has no delight in understanding, but in expressing his own heart.

Proverbs 18:13 (NKJV) He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.

Proverbs 19:27 (NKJV) Cease listening to instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Proverbs 28:9 (NKJV) One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.

Proverbs 13:10 (NIV) Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.

If your ears are 'plugged,' you won't be able to detect this quality in your life because you won't listen!
Even the world knows these folks...

I know I'm teachable when...

- o I get a lot of input from people who tell me things to help me
- o I'm seeing measurable growth and character development in myself
- o I don't answer my critics with defensive statements or attitudes
- o I don't feel obligated to return the favor when someone criticizes me
- o I hear different suggestions, not the same old ones I'm not learning!

Characteristics of foolish behavior:

- § *A 'dull' and closed mind (Heb: kecil = fool)*
- § *Defensiveness; being a hardhead*
- § *Having your answer before they complete their statement*
- § *Quick to answer; always has an answer*
- § *Deeply persuaded you are always right & "misunderstood"*

Practical steps we can take to unplug our ears:

- § *Ask our spouses for an honest assessment*
- Ū *Assess ourselves honestly to see how well we do on the checklist*
- § *Look at Scripture to point out our faults*
- § *Journal our faults and revisit after 6 months*

Our practical life is a direct reflection of our spiritual life

The Beginning of Wisdom "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding" - Proverbs 4:7
A lot of talk today about work and its place among the things we do...America has become leisure-focused

8. Working in Wisdom

work: providing necessary res_____ **results**
through act_____ **actions**



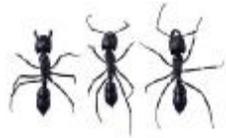
Do you hold God's view about the work you do inside and outside the home?

laziness: disinclined to work or action

work is supposed to be a joy in life for us to invest ourselves in it, to enjoy and feel good about

Proverbs 6:6-11 (NIV)

6 Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!



§ v6 defines laziness as the opposite of wi_____ and therefore foolishness.
what a lesson to us all wise to have to use an ant as our teacher (consider and be wise) – God even uses the natural world to teach Scriptures! (Rom 1)

§ "Go to" = consider and learn from

§ sluggard = 'atsel "to lean idly" - a slug that eats & digests while stationary

Genesis 1:26, 31a (NIV) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." v31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Q1: Did God curse work in Genesis 3:17-19, or the terms under which it would be accomplished?
He cursed the ground and said that work would be hard, requiring sweat of the brow to do...but he did not say that work was no longer good...

Q2: What do the following verses say about how God views 'work'?

§ Colossians 3:23

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,

§ Ephesians 4:28

He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

§ 2 Thessalonians 3:10

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

§ 1 Timothy 5:18

For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

7 It has no commander, no overseer or ruler,

§ laziness requires constant supe_____ **supervision**; ants have no 'boss' to tell them what to do...

Q3: If ants have no boss and we have both an earthly and heavenly one, why do we not work as hard as an ant? **do you work just as hard when no one is looking? Do you see your boss being away = freedom? Do you keep work as a thing between you and God? Û the ant is like a believer, guided by the Holy Spirit and doing what he should do when**

he should do it and not needing to be "managed"

8 yet it stores its provisions in summer and **consistently** gathers its food at harvest.

§ A lazy person never works consis_____ but rather off and on and sloooooowly...

Q4: Does this passage mean that the Bible is promoting workaholism?

Not at all...note that there are two seasons noted in which the ant works, and works very diligently during those two seasons...the rest of the time it either hibernates or has social time...even during its work season, it ends its day at sundown and does not work into the night...it lives therefore a BALANCED life, working in due season!

§ 2 reasons why we work:

1. To provide for our families: 1 Timothy 5:8 (NIV) If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.
2. To avoid poverty: Proverbs 28:19 (NIV) He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty .



Proverbs advocates a BALANCE between poverty and riches...
Read and then cover key points

Proverbs 30:7-9 (NIV)
Two things I ask of you, O LORD; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

9 How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep?

§ Lazy people are always ti tired and 'needing to rest'

Q5: By what age will we have pretty much formed our work ethic? How is it formed? *by 10-12; we get much of it from observing our parents and what our parents require us to do to help out, parents attitudes and comments about work, etc. (why welfare generations occur) We do our own kids a great disservice if we don't teach them a strong work ethic.*



"I lost my last job because of illness and fatigue." [the boss got sick and tired of his work ethic]

§ Max Webber - the Protestant Work Ethic

a set of attitudes that stresses the moral value of work, developed from the Protestant belief that people don't work for themselves, but for God because work is good. Unnecessary comforts distract people from God, as it tempts people to idleness and sinfulness... "Idle hands are the devil's tools..." see add'l notes page

§ Proverbs 22:29 NKJV Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men. *even the secular world honors those who excel at work*

§ Ephesians 5:15-16 NKJV See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. *redeeming the time - having a sense of urgency about it....*

Ü picture of a person slumbering when there is work to be done... "aaah, I'll do it later...too tired now..."

10 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest--

11 and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man. *Ü it's end is often sudden poverty*

§ Laziness leads to sudden, certain pov _____ and like a bandit, you cannot escape it

the flow of income leads to more income; the reverse is true

§ Economic principle of the flow of income:

Q6: Explain the connection between work and the soul according to this verse:

Proverbs 13:4 NKJV The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.

there is something debilitating about someone who will not work and who pursues leisure and comfort over using the skills and abilities that God has given them, so a lazy person wants the good life but refuses to work and sacrifice to get it, while the diligent worker prospers over time because of his/her diligence. The attitudes of diligence or laziness permeates a person's very being and is reflected in their values, attitudes, communication, thankfulness, purposefulness and their entire outlook on life... Dad Boyer: retire and be dead in 10 years

Self Evaluation: How I Live Out God's Principles of Wisdom in My Work

Instructions: evaluate yourself for your own habits and attitudes about work and how you spend your time according to the Biblical principles we've covered.	
Scale: very unhealthy attitude 1 2 3 4 5 very healthy attitude	
Self Evaluation	Biblical Principle
	1. I see work as something I look forward to doing every day.
	2. I strive for excellence in the work that I do, expecting to please Jesus Christ with it.
	3. Regardless of what is typical for others with whom I work, I do not take excess breaks, absences, etc.
	4. Regardless of the assignment, I work urgently and diligently and avoid slacking off or taking it easy.
	5. I work diligently regardless whether or not my supervisor is watching me.
	6. I work consistently until the job is done.
	7. My work is characterized by a sense of urgency and consistency.
	8. I keep my work time and leisure time in balance - neither a workaholic or a leisureaholic.
	9. I keep my leisure activities in check (TV, shopping, etc.) and redeem the time wisely.
	10. I set reasonable economic goals and frequently evaluate my progress towards them.

A Lazy Person's MO...

Scripture is full of practical applications...think of these in both a home setting as well as a business setting (hiring, supervising)...

Proverbs helps to identify some of the characteristics of a lazy person and how these characteristics can lead to problems for the people around them...



Proverbs 12:24 NKJV The hand of the diligent will rule, but the lazy man will be put to forced labor. *Diligent people set goals and priorities and work hard to get them done, so they rise*

§ Lazy people never rise high in authauthority while the diligent do

Proverbs 10:26 NKJV As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy man to those who send him. *U a picture of constant irritation, unpleasant taste left in your mouth...*

§ A lazy person is always undepdependable and thus a constant irritant to those around him/her *in a work environment, causes dissention and strife because they never pull their weight and force others to do their work BUT they are usually the first ones to complain to others about how hard they work!*



Proverbs 12:27 KJV The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious. *U a picture of having food but being too lazy to cook it and lets it rot*

§ A lazy person always has plans but never gets araround to doing them

§ Lazy people always look for the eaeasy way, the shortshortcut it"U

Proverbs 24:30-31 NKJV I went by the field of the lazy man, and by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; and there it was, all overgrown with thorns; its surface was covered with nettles; its stone wall was broken down. *while they might talk a good game, eventually their MO will be perfectly clear by the results: a messy house (car), everything in need of repair...when you take a close look, you see that it took a lot of time doing nothing (time it takes*

§ A lazy person has the best of intfor a wall to break down but is all talk and never does anything about them

§ A lazy person never takes cU care U intentions of what s/he has, so God will never give them more *U God cannot trust them with more!*

§ A lazy person may talk about how things are falling apart, but never acts to fix them *U they'll complain and complain about this, maybe even hoping to elicit pity and diligent folks fixing it for them*

Proverbs 10:4-5 NKJV He who has a slack hand becomes poor, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. He who gathers in summer is a wise son; he who sleeps in harvest is a son who causes shame. *harvest is a known window of time*

§ A lazy person never takes action at the appropriate time, looking to extend his/her leiU leisure U poor time

§ A lazy person is usually poshirtsleeves to shirtsleeves in three generations"

Proverbs 21:25-26a NKJV The desire of the lazy man kills him, for his hands refuse to labor. He covets greedily all day long... *U in the day in which this was written, harvests were made to allow gleaning for the poor so that they could have, but the lazy person will not even go gleaning and instead focuses on how unfortunate s/he is... U get rich quick*

§ The lazy person often dreams of (and may even act on) get rq schemes

§ The lazy person may be consumed with enenvy of the 'haves,' complaining that their lot in life is not ffair

Proverbs 18:9 NKJV He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great destroyer. *a great destroyer destroys suddenly, while a lazy person destroys a group slowly U ruin*

§ Like a rotten apple, one lazy person can ruU to the lazy person, life seems full of tremendous crises and difficulties, like trying to walk thru thorns... things for the entire group



Proverbs 15:19 NKJV The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is a highway. *...while someone who is not lazy seems to have a clear pathway to travel*

§ A crisis-filled life is a symU symptom of a sluggard

Proverbs 20:4 NKJV The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing. *a lazy person always has a ready excuse for why they can't ; C'WON'T*

§ A lazy person always have an excexcuses and will blblame others or circumstances



Proverbs 26:13 NKJV The slothful man says, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets. *U make*

§ A lazy person may mamake up excuses, sometimes incredible ones

§ A lazy person is often prone to exagexaggeration

9. Wisdom With Money

1 Timothy 6:10 KJV

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.



Q1: Is money - or for that matter, possessions and all forms of material wealth - evil?

Money is not, but the love of it is! 'Love of money' = philarguria (fil-ar-goo-ree'-ah); from NT:5366; avarice: It causes people to depart from following God and instead following after money, leading to a life pierced with sorrow...

"The Biblical standard about money can be summed up in one statement:

Money: gain it honestly, esteem it accurately, share it generously, or it will destroy you." Dr. James MacDonald

Can money actually destroy a person's life?

This little piece of paper...I'm in control, aren't I????

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

Bondage: being enslaved or controlled in a way to limit freedom

Q2: In what ways does borrowing lead to bondage?

When you owe, you are enslaved to them to whom you owe - they can control your life in many ways, bringing pressure on you, causing worry and fear, introducing friction in your life, and leading to worrying about serving mammon rather than God...fundamentally you cannot serve both!

Matthew 6:24 NKJV {Jesus said} "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

Jesus tells us that you cannot serve two masters, and especially not God and money



Psalm 135:15-18 (NKJV) The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. v16 They have mouths, but they do not speak; eyes they have, but they do not see; v17 They have ears, but they do not hear; nor is there any breath in their mouths. v18 Those who make them are like them ; so is everyone who trusts in them. [see also a parallel passage in Psalm 115:3-8]

Q3: Scripture tells us that we become just like the idols we serve. Describe how a person becomes if they serve money and mammon?

for starters, money is COLD, HARD, HEARTLESS and UNCARING...at least a pet loves you back! So they become cold, hard, heartless and uncaring, absorbed with becoming rich...

Proverbs 15:6 NIV The house of the righteous contains great treasure, but the income of the wicked brings them trouble.

- The 'righteous' are those believers who are totally so sold out to the Biblical plan for handling money
- According to the passage, those not having God's perperspective on handling money are in ttrouble

Proverbs 11:4 NIV Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death

Q4: What is God's perspective on wealth? **It is totally useless when faced with eternity...it won't alleviate any of the eternal problems it caused when a person lived for wealth during this lifetime... there are no ATMs in hell.**



There are no ATMs in hell.

Debt Facts:

- The average American has 4 credit cards
- Americans owe \$1,200,000,000 on their credit cards
- Every man, woman and child in America carries an average of over \$4,200 in credit card debt
- 30,000+ articles on the Internet on "how to" file for personal bankruptcy
- Money matters are currently the #1 cause for marital breakdown in America >>> DIVORCE
- #1 cause of behavioral disorders in children is DIVORCE
- #1 cause of crime in America is behavioral disorders
- Average family debt has doubled in last 7 years

Source: Walk in the Word

So what do I do?

1. To keep money from destroying you, gain it honestly

Proverbs 20:17 NIV Food gained by fraud tastes sweet to a man, but he ends up with a mouth full of gravel.

Proverbs 13:11 NKJV Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, but he who gathers by labor will increase.

Q5: What does God promise about managing money gained by honest labor versus gaining it dishonestly?

The ability to manage it wisely comes with gaining it honestly...as you labor and see small increase, you gain God’s perspective of slow & steady increase. When you ‘get rich quick’ you lose the desire to place God first, so He gives you the world’s foolishness in managing it!

Q6: Are gambling or lottery winnings the same as money gained by labor? How does the principle of managing it apply?

While it is ‘legal’ to play the lottery or gamble at AC, there is still the benefit of honest labor that brings with it the wisdom to manage money! Ex: Scottish Tom gave their family’s lottery winnings away because of the problems it caused, fighting as to who gets what.

Û every one of us comes to a point where we have opportunities to compromise our integrity...

Proverbs 28:6 NKJV Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one perverse in his ways, though he be rich.(ex: lying to make the sale, boss asks you to cover something up, etc.)

§ Perverse = *iqqesh* (ik-kashe’) – crooked, knotted, distorted

Q7: Applying the “Law of the Harvest,” compare the harvests of integrity and perversity.

 <p style="text-align: center;">Harvest of Integrity</p> <p><i>Wealth gained honestly Dependence upon God Ability to manage it Eternal rewards</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Harvest of Perversity</p> <p><i>wealth gained dishonestly dependence upon self and wealth lack of ability to manage it bankruptcy</i></p>
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Proverbs 20:7 NKJV The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.

Q8: How does a parent’s compromise of integrity affect his/her children? Even if that compromise is used to better the child’s life?

If we compromise to give to our kids, we are ripping from their grasp the things that they will need –

- *You cannot serve God and mammon*
- *We’d be far better off if we said to our kids that we aren’t going to lavish lots of stuff on them, and instead, live a life of integrity, living out our faith in their lives as an example*
 - *Giving them a new car...the best college...and denying them you*
 - *in the end, they will see our wisdom and be far, far better off*



Proverbs 19:22 NKJV What is desired in a man is kindness, and a poor man is better than a liar.

A poor man thinks a good weekend is just a meal at home with their family

Q9: Give some examples of how you have personally seen money changing people.

Discussion...

*“For every 99 who can pass the test of poverty, there is only one who can pass the test of prosperity.”
- Dr. David Jeremiah*

2. To keep money from destroying you, esteem it accurately (keep it in its proper perspective)

Proverbs 18:10-11 NKJV The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. v11 The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall in his own esteem.



Q10: What does Scripture tell us the proper and improper perspectives about wealth are?

- *When you have wealth, you tend to think of it as your security for the future...I don't know what will happen in the future, but since we have all this money, we will be OK whatever happens.*
- *God is supposed to be our security, so if we substitute wealth, we err*
- *When we have riches, we look to them to do what God alone is to be looked to, to do*

Proverbs 23:4-5 NKJV Do not overwork to be rich; because of your own understanding, cease! v5 Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven.

- Stop it!
- God is fo forever while riches are fleeting

USA TODAY Snapshots

In a survey conducted among the wealthiest 1% of Americans, the average price the wealthy would be willing to pay:

- \$55,000 to be President of the US
- \$83,000 to have great beauty
- \$206,000 to have a reunion with a deceased loved one
- \$259,000 to have eternal youth
- \$287,000 for great intellect
- \$289,000 for talent
- \$487,000 for true love
- \$640,000 for a place in heaven

A look at the statistics that shape the nation

5 wrong estimations people have of money: MONEY WILL

1. make me happy *most people quickly realize this is not true...*
2. make me content *Ü content is the next best thing*
...so I buy and buy on credit until I'm overwhelmed, then I go on a spree to get my bills down so I can load 'em up again.
3. will give me family appreciation *- my kids will one day thank me for scrimping and saving to give them a better life than I had...NOT!*
4. will make me feel better about myself *if I were a rich man, I Ü could buy these things - USA Today (earned \$280k++)*
5. give me acceptance with others *people will like me more if I'm rich ...and when the money runs out???* (Prov 19:7 - A poor man is shunned by all his relatives-how much more do his friends avoid him! Though he pursues them with pleading, they are nowhere to be found.

BONDAGE is believing that money will do something for us that it really cannot do!

3. To keep money from destroying you, share it generously

Proverbs 22:9 NIV A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor. *Ü more, more, more Dead Sea is dead (no outlets, only inlets!)Ü*

- The mo___ you give away the mo___ God will trust you with mo___

Proverbs 28:22 NIV A stingy man is eager to get rich and is unaware that poverty awaits him.

- The secret of getting is first g *giving* *firstfruits - the best and first ones... Ü*

Proverbs 3:9-10 NIV Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; v10 then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

- God does on record to say that if we honor Him first, then He will bless us

Ü catching a monkey



VS.



à hands, people, people

- What he wants is people with open h___
- In God's economy, He uses peo___ to bless other peo___



10. Five Truths About Friendships

Our own friendships and Godly direction parenting to help our kids in this area...

"Friendship:" a unique usually same-sex relationship where common interests and direction form a bond (commitment) which stretches (growth) and satisfies (joy and fun) both people (mutual).



Q1: Comparing romance and friendship, is friendship on the decline in today's society? *Does society make us think two same sex people must be homosexuals?*

Friendship is something quite marginal in our day. How has the devaluing of friendship come about? (CS Lewis)

Romance is everywhere, but somehow we've devalued friendship

Even married men and women need friends outside of the marital relationship

Proverbs reveals FIVE KEY TRUTHS about godly friendships: *This is GOD'S WAY to do it right...*

1. Chochoose your friends wisely (you are knknown by the comcompany that you keep!)

Proverbs 12:26 NKJV The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray. *we become like the people we hang out with; therefore choose very carefully*

Q2: Provide an example from your own observations or experience of how an ungodly friendship in high school impacted someone's life later on.

we probably could not see this clearly back then...we were all too busy seeking to be liked and accepted by others hanging with the druggies...become a druggie, etc.

Four words to help you choose the right kinds of friends

a. **ETERNITY** – choose friends who are going where you are going

Q3: What does this mean regarding associating with unbelievers?

We should be friends with those who are committed followers of Jesus Christ...this doesn't mean not to associate with unbelievers...but we should choose believers to meet our relationship needs, not unbelievers

Amos 3:3 NIV Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? [Choose friends who are going where you are going!] If you want your son or daughter to grow up with equal or more of a relationship with Jesus than you have, it is impossible if they are not part of a youth ministry – have them there EVERY time. Some of our kids are more easily influenced by others.

b. **AFFINITY** – choose friends who are doing what you are doing.

Have common interests and enjoy the same kinds of things

c. **CHEMISTRY** – choose friends who are feeling like you are feeling.

Feel the same way about things in general...have a connection that runs deeper than the superficial

d. **LOYALTY** – choose friends who are standing for what you are standing, who will stand with you

Strong mutual commitment is important in times of difficulty – sad commentary from Paul in 2 Tim 4:16: at my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them.

2. Lolove your friends deeply (talk is cheap, and talk of love is cheaper...but actions reveal true love)

Proverbs 17:17 NKJV A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Q3: At what times is it *hardest* for you to love someone based on their attitudes, behavior or actions? Hardest for you based on what *you* are going through at the time?

Good discussion question...usually when we are certain they are wrong or living in a sinful way, we withdraw...and when we are in the midst of turmoil, we often are not very loving

The litmus test for friendship: how do they relate to you during your times of hardship?

§ a brother is born for adversity *This is the person who says to themselves: "You are in trouble? Deep trouble? Well, I was placed on this earth so that I could be there for you in times like this. Man, I was BORN for this...to stand by you and help you and strengthen you, to be a true friend who won't desert you. Acquaintances back away in times like these; I will not.*

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

WHAT KIND OF FRIEND AM I? (according to 1 Corinthians 13)									
Always	Sometimes	Never							
			1. I am patient with my friend						8. I keep no inventory of wrongs with my friend
			2. I am kind to my friend						9. I do not enjoy evil things with my friend
			3. I do not envy my friend						10. I enjoy a truthful relationship with my friend
			4. I do not boast around my friend						11. I protect my friend
			5. I am not rude around my friend						12. I trust my friend
			6. I am not selfish around my friend						13. I am always optimistic with my friend
			7. I don't get easily angered around my friend						14. I persevere with my friend

3. Enj^{enjoy} your friends (time is never so sweet as when spent with your friend)

Proverbs 27:9 NKJV Ointment and perfume delight the heart, and the sweetness of a man's friend gives delight by hearty counsel.

Q4: What is meant by 'hearty counsel' and how does it apply to being able to discuss matters of the heart with a friend?

- § *Real friends get past the fun times together and they are soul friends – they can talk to you about real heart matters*
- § *You can talk to them about the real heart issues*

Proverbs 27:10 NKJV Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, nor go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.

Q5: What does this passage say about friends and family when it comes to you dealing with crises?

- § *A genuine real friend is someone you want to hang onto*
- § *Don't even forsake your father's friends - As a parent, you know you have a real friend when your kids look to that person along with you for guidance...*
- § *No go to your brother's house...better is a neighbor nearby – a close personal friend often has a greater willingness to support you than your own family will (vs blood is thicker than water)*
- § *The folks you spend time with the most likely know you better than your own family members because they are spending so much time with you and have learned to know you*
- § *Jesus: “these are my brothers, my sisters, my mother!!!!” - Christian fellowship exceeds in quality over blood relationships*

4. Prot^{protect} your friends (Are you an advocate for them? Even when others speak ill of them?)

Proverbs 16:28 NKJV A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.

Q6: Who is the 'whisperer' and how does he go about separating even the best of friends?

- § *There is a certain kind of person (they are everywhere) who is subtly perverse who for some reason delights to separate friends*
- § *You never see 'em coming*
- § *They 'sow strife' like a farmer plating seeds – the seed is not apparent but only as the seeds grow up and separate friends...not just any friends, but the best of friends*
- § *They aren't obvious...they are a whisperer. It happens off to the side, in a moment or three, “hey have you heard about so and so...”*
- § *Why is this verse here? To convict the heart of the perverse people reading this? Well, the perverse person is a fool, and they won't be reading it. It is here for the folks that want to protect their friendships. So*



HOW WHISPERERS SEPARATE THE BEST OF FRIENDS

- o Bad Reports – "it's none of my business BUT..."
- o Half Truths – a kernel of truth wrapped in subtle speculation
- o Exaggerations – a kernel of truth expanded into a full report
- o Motive Assessments – "I think that why they are doing it is because..."



Proverbs 17:9 NKJV He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates friends.

This is how you protect the friendship:

- o Stop the repetition *Q: do bad reports stop with me or do I carry them on? If I do, I'm a lousy friend*
§ you stop it by saying "I do not have ears for that...do these ears look like a trash can? I do not want to hear that"
§ "why are you telling me this?" – this question will stop the person (they may realize their wrong motives...) you'll have the oppty to do this at least once a week!
"Why are you _____?"
- o Cover the transgression – saying "I don't believe this" *1 Cor 13:6: love covers all things – if you love them then cover it up with love and don't give it heed*
Q: What if the transgression is really true?
§ Outwardly you cover it, inwardly you pray for them and then ...

5. Cor_____ your friends (Not pretending that "I'm OK, you're OK" when there are real problems)

Proverbs 27:6 NKJV Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

Q7: How do enemies 'kiss up' in today's society?

The kisses of an enemy = the compliments of an enemy; An enemy 'kisses up' and flatters, making a show of how great so and so is, when it is all false (Greg Butz) Proverbs 27:14 NKJV He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, It will be counted a curse to him.

- i. *This is the guy that makes a big show of it but has evil intent at heart*
- ii. *He will be found out for what he really is, and it will be 'a curse' to him*

Q8: In what ways are true friends willing to risk the friendship by telling the truth?

The wounds of a friend = the friend who is willing out of a true love for the other, to tell them the don't want to hear, this is the true friend who risks their friendship to tell you the truth

- § *Proverbs 27:17 NKJV As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*
- § *Real friends risk to tell the 'hard truth' to their friend in an effort to 'sharpen' them*
- § *Countenance = character*
- § *Iron sharpening iron >>>> sparks fly! But the result is growth in character*
- § *Think about the potential of genuine friendship to sharpen one another*



Conclusion: Friendship is maintained supernaturally and through our own hard work

Proverbs 18:24 NKJV A man who has friends must himself be friendly, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

- o *At the first stages of friendship you need to be willing to reach out and invest in being a friend (to have a friend, be a friend)*
- o *The friend that sticks closer than a brother = Jesus Christ*
 - *The HS put this here 1000 years before Jesus went to the cross for me*
- o *So this says that the sustainer of friendship is Jesus*
- o *You can never ask too much of Him; He is unconditional; will carry us when even the best of friends departs*
- o *What a friend we have in Jesus, SEE ADDITIONAL NOTES PAGE*

11. Parents & Children

Proverbs 1:8-9 NKJV

8 My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother;

§ my son = *ben*; builder of the family name

§ instruction = *muwcar*; discipline, chastening

§ law = *towrah*; precept, teaching from the Pentateuch

Division of childrearing labor:

mom taught the child from

Scriptures while Dad handled the

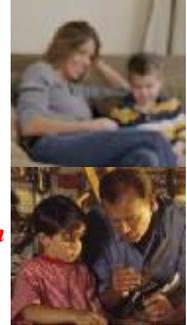
Discipline and practical application

Q1: What is the connection between building the family name and obeying parents?

A family's name is that which it passes from generation to generation, and the name represents the character you are known by. A godly character is a prized heritage to pass on.

Assuming godly parents, training up a child in the way s/he should go demonstrates the parents modeling a godly lifestyle and training the child to follow a life that pleases God, thus when the child has children of his/her own, the same process is repeated for his/her children, thus building the family name....

§ The parenting specified here is parenting from the Bible, using godly principles



9 For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, and chains about your neck.

§ The head houses the mind, which is to be guided by thoughts of grace, which have their origin in godly teaching and discipline from the Word of God.

§ Chains about your neck = analogous to guidance

This is a picture of what happens when parents train their children properly...when they are not there to guide, the lessons learned through the child's parenting guide him/her into right decisions that they will make while living in a land full of evil (we are sojourners, not residents!)...

Proverbs 3:11-12 NKJV

11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction;

12 For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.

Q2: What is the connection between a loving father and discipline of a child? Does this same principle carry beyond the childhood years and into adulthood?

It is because a parent loves his/her child that s/he chastens the child. The context here is to discipline a child in a godly manner, for correct reasons, because the child has broken a precept of God, and the consequences of breaking it is discipline.

This principle carries over into adulthood, when God may use natural consequences to discipline us, or discipline us through the hand of men.

Û love, anger, Biblical, restore

§ Discipline in love, not in anger *must connect behavior to sin to God's standard*

§ Explain the Biblical reason why (not: "because I said so")

§ Once disciplined, respond in love

Proverbs 13:24 NKJV

He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

§ Discipline quickly after an offense - do not gunnysack it

§ Discipline quietly - do not ignore it as kids being kids *Û discuss these permissive; child-centered*

§ Discipline quietly - don't think that it will fix itself (it is just a phase)

"Don't make me come up there. I really mean it this time."



Proverbs 15:5, 12 NKJV

5 A fool despises his father's instruction, but he who receives correction is prudent.

12 A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise.

Q3: According to the passages above, what is the connection between refusing correction as a child and that person's adult patterns of behavior in later life?

This set of verses offers real insights into what happens when parents fail to parent according to Scripture. Failing to accept direction, as a child, will cause that same attitude in later life, when the person believes they are always right, others do not matter, the person is a law unto themselves, they deeply resent and dislike those who try to correct them (you are on eggshells around them); etc.

Proverbs 22:1-6 NKJV

1 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold.

2 The rich and the poor have this in common, the LORD is the maker of them all.

3 A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.

4 By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life.

5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards his soul will be far from them.

6 Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

They usually do not forget this (after a period of self-testing!)



“Train up” = chanak figuratively, to initiate or discipline;

§ *Orientalism*: a picture of training a newborn baby to suck (and thus take nourishment) by making a paste of sweet dates and applying it to the roof of the baby's mouth to start the reflex of learning to take nourishment.

Ü Good list to build; perhaps assign out to be worked on as homework

“My son” (*ben*) means *builder of the family name*. According to the passage above, following are some specific areas where a godly parent needs to be training up the child in order to have a good name:

Verse	What	Practical Steps to do This:
1	The true value of a good name, and its comparison to worldly wealth	§ <i>“Others may do XYZ, but Boyer's don't”</i> § <i>Share family heritage with them, especially your won salvation story</i> § <i>Reinforce having a good reputation; maintaining a good name</i> §
2	Understanding God is sovereign, who made each person individually	§ <i>Tell why your choice in a matter is God-honoring</i> § <i>Teach sovereignty of God vs. free will</i> § <i>Explore how God has made the child unique with strengths and talents</i> §
3	The prudence to anticipate where evil might attempt to influence you, and avoid it.	§ <i>Set boundaries (curfews, friends, activities) and point out what may become evil</i> § <i>Monitor television and media, pointing out what Satan uses to tempt you</i> § <i>Discuss how you & spouse safeguard the purity of your marriage</i> § <i>Discuss the ‘banquet of consequences’ of all of our actions (Sowing & Reaping)</i>
4	The power of humility (as opposed to pride) and living a life characterized by humility	§ <i>Avoid “me-centered” talk, activities; discuss how we are to be others-minded</i> § <i>Discuss why God hates pride (story of Satan's fall from Isaiah 14 & Ezekiel 28)</i> § <i>Keep a low profile; avoid self-promotion; allow others to be in front</i> §
4	Having a true respect and reverence for God and His Word	§ <i>Let your quite time be known by your children</i> § <i>Study the Word with them</i> § <i>Avoid any swearing, even “gosh darn it”, discuss why swearing leads to irreverence</i> §
4	Putting God first instead of riches, honor and life – living humbly and in reverence of God	§ <i>Practicing & sharing the principle of tithing and the Scriptural support for it</i> § <i>Living below your means</i> § <i>Not giving them BMWs but having them work for it</i> §
5	Guarding your soul and not allowing it to be seduced by the flesh, the devil and the world	§ <i>Share your reasoning with kids as to why certain activities should be avoided</i> § <i>Discuss the real temptations of this world and some of the consequences</i> § <i>Point out that there is a devil who only has the power to influence a believer to the extent that we allow it....the power of choice empowered by the Holy Spirit</i>

Proverbs 29:15 NIV The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.

Proverbs 19:18 NIV Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.

Proverbs 22:15 NKJV Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him.

Proverbs 23:13-14 NIV Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.

Q4: What is today's modern equivalent of the 'rod of correction?' What do these passages say about a child's need for, and a parent's use of, corporal punishment?



The spanking...God designed this real estate to be ideally suited for punishment, stinging but not damaging.

Scripture is clear that a child is born with foolishness bound up in his heart, his nature. A baby would be terrifying if it had adult physical skills from birth – me centered, cruel, prone to violence. A parent must use outward means of driving the foolishness away to help the person learn to be under authority and to yield to the Father's will. Punishment does not kill – just the opposite: it saves for eternity as the child learns lessons of consequences...

Proverbs 23:22-25 NIV

22 Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

23 Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding.

24 The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise son delights in him.

25 May your father and mother be glad; may she who gave you birth rejoice!

- § Honor your parents because they are w^{wise} though their life experience
- § Principle: Care Reciprocity *they took care of you when you were young (sacrificed, etc.), do not abandon them in their dotage but take care of them*
- § From the 'age of understanding' on, volu^{voluntary} honoring parents brings a blessing
- § Buy the truth = *often the lessons we learn are costly, especially when we learn them the hard way. value them greatly because they can be used to raise godly children & disciple others*
- § The results of parenting are revealed *in how they turn out as adults and as parents*
- § Mut^{mutual} delight in one another as parent and child, child and parent

Proverbs 17:6 NIV Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children.

Just as the younger child looks up to their godly parents and thinks they are "the best!", so as grandparents, we look at our godly grandchildren and take as much pride

Proverbs 20:11 NIV Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.

Proverbs 29:3 NIV A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father, but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth.

- § *One's judgment and actions are revealed fairly early in life*
- § *The actions/results (what folks see) often reveal the heart behind the actions*
- § *As an adult, a child's choices can bring joy or grief to a parent, even though the child is on 'his own'*

Proverbs 20:20-21 NIV If a man curses his father or mother, his lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness. 21 An inheritance quickly gained at the beginning will not be blessed at the end.

Proverbs 28:24 NIV He who robs his father or mother and says, "It's not wrong"-- he is partner to him who destroys.

- § *Aged parents are to be revered, not put away in a home or left destitute or uncared for*
- § *If the child is focused on what s/he gets when the folks die, this will not be blessed by God...it will waste away*
- § *Robbing father & mother – of the honor due them, of taking care of them as they took care of us when they get old*

12. The Sovereignty of God Versus The Sovereignty of Man

Today we want to talk about choices...free will..decisionmaking, and what the Bible says about these things...

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood, and looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth

Then took the other as just as fair, and having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear, though as for that, the passing there
Had worn them really about the same



U have someone read; then discuss the question below

Q1: What are the 'significant choices' that you had to make over the past year? On what did you base your choices (how did you figure out what to do)?

good general discussion to talk about difficult choices, weighing between options, maybe someone does the Ben Franklin list

Q2: What does the passage below say about a person's free will and decision-making?

Proverbs 16:1-3 NKJV

- 1 The preparations of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.
- 2 All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirits.
- 3 Commit your works to the LORD, and your thoughts will be established.

- § *Man's MO is to make plans and preparations for most things, even when it seems like there is no plan*
- § *A man will reason out his thoughts in his head and say to himself that the plans seem good, correct and pure*
- § *The answer to questions is not coincidental, but from God, who delivers His answers through the hands of men (usually!)*
- § *God is the one Who weighs the heart, intents, etc.*
- § *By placing God FIRST on a list of ONE, your thoughts will have Him as their foundation, upon which good things can be built. ASK HIM before doing; do not presume!*

Proverbs 21:1-5 NKJV

- 1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.
- 2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the hearts.
- 3 To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.
- 4 A haughty look, a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked are sin.
- 5 The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.

Important Principles

- § God is in cocontrol of all aspects of this life (even kings and mighty rivers!) (v1)
- § Man is decdeceived by his own "goodness" and cannot see even his own heart as God can (v2)
- § Even the wrong way may seem rright before you get started (v2)
- § God desires in us both right outcomes and right metmethods (v3)
pride U examine your motives...why are you REALLY doing this?
- § Things done out of prdiligence and wickedness are SI N, regardless of good outcomes (v4)
Udefine what this is ex: grow a garden; investments
- § God blesses dildiligence and not haste (v5)
consider Bask self WWJD; meditation on Scripture
- § God wants His people to consconsider things first before jumping into action (v5)
- § God honors growth by sure degrees and not the quick fix (v5) *see also Prov 13:11b*

[So where is free will versus predestination?](#) *Read Scriptures, discuss*

Proverbs 19:21 NKJV There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the Lord's counsel - that will stand.

Proverbs 20:24 NKJV A man's steps are of the LORD; how then can a man understand his own way?

Proverbs 16:33 NIV The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

U lot - see additional notes page

Q3: We are told in Scripture that:

- § God is in control;
 - § Nothing that happens surprises Him;
 - § Nothing happens by accident; and
 - § He already knows what will happen...
- ...so how much free will do we really have?

Discussion question.....use diagram to explain the reality of BOTH Free will and God knowing the outcome

THREE THINGS THAT GOD CANNOT DO:

1. He cannot lie *U He cannot be surprised by any event; He already knows what I'm about to do before I do it, therefore He cannot be "disappointed" in me (I can hurt Him)*
2. He cannot learn *He desires love out of our sovereign and free will - this is His ultimate desire, that we would love in response to Him first loving us...*
3. He cannot force us to love Him *He desires love out of our sovereign and free will - this is His ultimate desire, that we would love in response to Him first loving us...*

God gave us WISDOM to help guide our free will choices in this life:

Proverbs 4:10-19 NKJV

Read and discuss...

10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of your life will be many.

11 I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths.

12 When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble.

13 Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life.

14 Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil.

15 Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on.

16 For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall.

17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

18 But the path of the just is like the shining sun that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.

19 The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.

Proverbs 4:23-27 NIV

23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

24 Put away perversity from your mouth; keep corrupt talk far from your lips.

25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you.

26 Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm.

27 Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.

Proverbs 5:21 NKJV

For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He ponders all his paths.

Proverbs 21:30-31 NIV

30 There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the LORD.

31 The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD.

Without Him we c Cannot _____; without us He w will not _____

Two Different Perspectives:



Two views of a parade...we see it like a fuzzy black and white photo taken at street level and don't know what is coming next.

God sees the beginning from the end and knows the whole route, how it started, how it ends, and every little detail along the entire route.



2. It causes discondiscontent and trouble among people, destroying relarelationships.

§ Proverbs 13:10 NIV Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.

§ Proverbs 27:4 NIV Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy ?

Q: Why does pride breed quarrels? Because it creates a "I MUST be right" attitude. Why is jealousy more destructive than anger and fury? Because it is concealed.

3. It is the opposite of wiwisdom and therefore leads to foolishness and destruction.

§ Proverbs 16:18 NIV Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

§ Proverbs 11:2 NIV When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

§ Proverbs 29:23 NIV A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.

Pride always causes God or natural circumstances to deal with it...and destruction follows, removing the source of pride. The long-term effect of wisdom is being built up, of pride is being torn down.

4. It causes bad behbehavior and un-edifying worwords because it is eevil.

§ Proverbs 8:12-13 NIV "I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. **pride and arrogance promotes evil behavior and perverse speech**

§ Proverbs 21:24 NKJV A proud and haughty man -"Scoffer" is his name; he behaves with arrogant pride. **one becomes known by his/her behavior – who wants to associate with an arrogant person?**

What an arrogant person does is to build himself up by putting others (including you) down – they compare themselves with themselves and establish ungodly standards, self-focus and self-love (never others-minded)

5. It falsely promotes outwoutward health and appearances while acting as an intinternal cancer.

§ Proverbs 14:30 NKJV A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones.

§ Proverbs 21:4 NKJV A haughty look, a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked are sin.

outward appearance internal rottenness outward evil action
a sound heart comes only through humility of accepting instruction from God and the lessons of discipline
envy rots from the inside, since it consumes the person's life focus and turns it from God to self

RECOGNIZE THAT GOD WILL DEAL WITH PRIDE AND HER TWO SISTERS:

§ Proverbs 16:5 NKJV 5 The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.

§ Proverbs 15:25 NIV The LORD tears down the proud man's house but he keeps the widow's boundaries intact. **God deals with pride with both active (15:25) and passive (15:29) actions**

§ Proverbs 15:29 NIV The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

§ Proverbs 18:12 NIV Before his downfall, a man's heart is proud, but humility comes before honor.

THREE STEPS TO FREEDOM FROM PRIDE AND HER TWO SISTERS:

1 John 1:5-10 NKJV Like Proverbs, I John deals with the very practical aspects of living a godly and wise life...

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

Identify it for what it is (pride, envy and jealousy) and confess it as sin. We cannot walk with Him and hold onto our pride, envy and jealousy. We need to confess it AS SIN, an act of humility...

1. Call it out: **Recognize that it is the blood of Jesus Christ alone that can cleanse us from sin...we cannot, only He can. We must be willing to accept His payment for this one, and His help to deal with it.**

2. Pray it over: **Giving it up means no longer walking in it. Because we have been freed from it through confession and forgiveness, we are able to walk with God, free from pride, envy, and jealousy – we need His help to have the strength and conviction to follow through in dealing with it...**

3. Give it up: **Giving it up means no longer walking in it. Because we have been freed from it through confession and forgiveness, we are able to walk with God, free from pride, envy, and jealousy – we need His help to have the strength and conviction to follow through in dealing with it...**

A SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR DEALING WITH PRIDE, ENVY AND JEALOUSY

This self-assessment requires you to be totally honest with yourself. You might begin by praying that God would open your eyes to areas of your life where pride, envy and jealousy have gotten hold of your heart, and that they would become very obvious to you. There may be areas that are not specifically identified below that you'll want to identify. Regardless of the hold that a particular area might have, remember that God + you = a majority in every situation...call upon Him through prayer to help you deal with it. Renounce it as sin. Allow Him to help you develop an action plan to deal with it and to give you the strength and conviction to follow through.

<p>The area(s) of pride that I see in my life at this time include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> my knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> my vocabulary/speaking <input type="checkbox"/> my physical appearance <input type="checkbox"/> my physical skills <input type="checkbox"/> my talents and skills <input type="checkbox"/> my children/grandchildren <input type="checkbox"/> my job/profession <input type="checkbox"/> my vehicle(s) <input type="checkbox"/> my travel / vacations <input type="checkbox"/> my 'being right' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> my intelligence <input type="checkbox"/> my discipline/dedication <input type="checkbox"/> my strength <input type="checkbox"/> my people skills <input type="checkbox"/> my family <input type="checkbox"/> my reputation <input type="checkbox"/> my house <input type="checkbox"/> my possessions <input type="checkbox"/> my Bible knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> my achievements <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>Ask: Who other than God gave me these things/attributes?</p>	<p>In thinking about it, why I believe I am prideful about these things:</p>
<p>These are the things that I wish I had that I tend to envy in others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> vocabulary/speaking <input type="checkbox"/> physical appearance <input type="checkbox"/> physical skills <input type="checkbox"/> talents and skills <input type="checkbox"/> children/grandchildren <input type="checkbox"/> job/profession <input type="checkbox"/> vehicle(s) <input type="checkbox"/> travel / vacations <input type="checkbox"/> 'being right' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> intelligence <input type="checkbox"/> discipline/dedication <input type="checkbox"/> strength <input type="checkbox"/> people skills <input type="checkbox"/> family <input type="checkbox"/> reputation <input type="checkbox"/> house <input type="checkbox"/> possessions <input type="checkbox"/> Bible knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> achievements <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p>Ask: Am I judging God because He chose not to give me these things/attributes?</p>	<p>In thinking about it, why I believe I envy these things in others:</p>
<p>These are the people I tend to be jealous of, and the reasons why I believe that am jealous of them:</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>People I am jealous of:</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The specific things about which I tend to be jealous of them:</i></p>
<p> </p>	<p> </p>

14. Portable Wisdom for Special Occasions

The Book of Proverbs is FULL of WISDOM to address many different aspects of practical living... *We'll explore God's perspective about a lot of different topics...*



A. A Question of Balance

Honey & neighbors = good???

Proverbs 25:16-17 NIV If you find honey, eat just enough--too much of it, and you will vomit. 17 Seldom set foot in your neighbor's house--too much of you, and he will hate you.

Key Point: too much of a good thing is no longer good.

Area(s) in my life where I tend to overdo it:

pause a minute or two; ask them to do as homework

Ü Jesus first miracle – water into wine at Cana; Jesus drank wine with meals; so it cannot be 'forbidden', right???
Too much of a good thing is not good!

B. Well, Jesus Drank Wine, So It's OK, Right? ; Applying Wisdom About Alcohol

Ephesians 5:18. KJV And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit...

Q1: Why doesn't God want us to be drunk with wine (or anything else)?

- § *When we are not in control, we allow Satan, the world and the flesh to control us*
- § *We are told in 1 Peter 5:8 to: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour NKJV*
- § *Drunkness NEVER edifies God; it ruins our testimony; it causes others to stumble...*

Proverbs 23:29-35 NKJV

29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes?

30 Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine.

31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly;

32 At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper.

33 Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things.

34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying:

35 "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; they have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?"

Key points:

29 - 6 results of alcoholism:

Woe, sorrow (internal; contentions, complaints (external); wounds w/o cause (sarcastic); redness of eyes (evidence that lingers on)

30: the an Answer to "Who has?" of v29

Linger long – not talking about a glass of wine with meal
Context: those who linger long over alcohol....

31 - a rebuke to the wine connoisseur
Rebuke to wine (beer, mixed drink) connoisseur who lingers long but outwardly gets into the 'cultured' aspects of the brew...

32 - in the end, alcohol: *Destroys like a poisonous snake, quick and deadly*

33: drunkenness is linked to imm immorality
it clouds your thinking, vision and tongue

34: drunkenness makes you lack good jud judgment
who would go to sleep in the sea, or on top of a ship's mast? Only if your drunk do either seem a good idea. When drunk you think you are with it, but you're not.

35a: What drunkenness does to the senses:

The natural reminders of doing dumb things (pain) are deadened

35b: Alcohol is ad addictive, so BEWARE

ÜÜÜ KEY POINT ÜÜÜ

Almost all alcoholics deny they have a problem...their spouses and children would not agree.





Some Sobering Facts About Alcohol in the United States

Quickly review list

- § 3 bottles of beer = net loss of memory of about 13%
- § 1 oz of alcohol:
 - § retards muscular reaction by 17%;
 - § increases by 10% the time to make a decision;
 - § increases error rate by 35% due to lack of attention; and
 - § increases error rate by 35% from lack of muscular coordination



- § Alcohol plays a major role in 36% of all suicides
- § The cost of treating alcohol abuse 1987 was \$117B
- § Alcohol related accidents = 1 every 22 minutes
- § 1 out of 10 people on the road each weekend are alcohol impaired
- § 2,200,000 car crashes per year due to alcohol impairment
- § In the past 10 years 4 times as many people died in alcohol related crashes as died in Vietnam War
- § 25% of all family problems are alcohol related (domestic violence, child abuse, rape, etc.)

This is not a lecture on the evils of alcohol...but a call to evaluate your own life to see if there is an issue...

Areas of my life where I should reconsider my use of alcohol:

3 kinds of people: those who drink socially, those who drink out of addiction, and those who don't drink

Ü this is not to pick on the women...but think about how we enter into crucial decisions that affect our lives...

C. Avoiding Bad Decisions

love is blind...we make quick decisions based on the way we feel and do not look beyond tomorrow...

Proverbs 21:9 NKJV Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

Proverbs 21:19 NKJV Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman.

Proverbs 14:12 NIV There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.



They seemed so perfect for each other a year ago...now just look at the results of a bad decision to marry!

Q2: What are the key points of these three Scriptures?

- § *Decisions that are made furiously are almost always bad*
- § *There is value to thinking through things before we act*
- § *There are consequences to every decision that we make*
- § *We can be carried away with the emotion of the situation and not evaluate the long-term consequences of our decisions*

Q3: Given the lessons we've already covered in this study, what are some practical steps we can take to avoid making bad decisions?

- § *Be in the Word (where you get wisdom) and in prayer (where you discuss wisdom with God)*
- § *Identify areas of our lives where we tend towards alignment with the world's wisdom*
- § *Stay in fellowship with other believers*
- § *Seek the counsel of godly people and discuss difficult decisions before making them*
- § *Commit them to God*
- § *Guard your heart*

Proverbs 15:28-33 NKJV

28 The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

§ Studies - *hagah* - to ponder, imagine, meditate- *a sense of "hmmm" in turning it over and over in your mind*

§ Wicked - *rasha* - morally wrong, ungodly, an actively bad person

§ Those who are wicked will deliberately try to deceive you *often with a quick, seeming confident answer not all who answer 'quickly' are evil...by direct connection, an evil person will*

Q4: What is the benefit of pondering first, versus just jumping in with an answer? *assuming you aren't a wicked person*

§ *you are allowing the holy Spirit time to instruct your heart*

§ *since Satan deceives by appearances, you are may be avoiding being taken in by his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11 - lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices .NKJV)*

§

29 The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.

Q5: What is the context of God hearing a righteous person's prayers?

§ *that the person is seeking God's will in a matter of decision, and in an attitude of humility and godliness
Û repentance, consequences*

§ The only prayer of the sinner that God hears is the prayer of rep_____ unto salvation

§ God withdraws from these folks; they suffer the natural cons_____ of walking outside His protection

30 The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and a good report makes the bones healthy.

I believe that this is saying, in its context, that when one diligently seeks God's will in a decision, God illuminates the correct answer, and that in turn creates an enlightenment of one's outlook, which in turn makes the heart happy. A sense of burden is lifted, one seeks the best decision to be made, and that tends to have a direct impact on one's attitude, countenance, and overall health (i.e.; the absence of worry. Worry is you taking on God's responsibilities in addition to your own! More on this in the next section

31 The ear that hears the rebukes of life will abide among the wise.

§ Context: hearing the corrections/rebukes/reasonings that have "life" as their end-purpose

§ Good self-examination question: how ready to listen am I? *Listening = life!*

James 1:19 - My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry NIV

32 He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds rebuke gets understanding.

§ Instruction = *muwcar* = *Discipline; that which is learned through being open to God's instructions*

§ As you go down the path of decision-making, how o_____ *open* to God are you?

§ God's tools of rebuke: *the Word; people, circumstances/situations/consequences*

33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.

§ It all starts and ends with God, being wi_____ *willingly* ly and obed_____ *obediently* ly led by God
humble

§ This requires a truly hu_____ and teachable spirit

§ Key lesson: God raises up those who honor Him in each decision they make
truly reverencing God is to demonstrate this by coming before Him in prayer, with a humble attitude, seeking His direction in even the smallest decisions of life

Area(s) of my life where I need to apply this lesson:

Good opportunity for self-examination....

D. Health is Where the Heart Is

In God's design, there is a direct connection between one's general health and the condition of their heart...not just a physically healthy heart, but an emotionally and spiritually healthy heart, too:

Ū Circle the words merry and broken or afflicted in the 4 scriptures below Ū

Proverbs 15:13 NKJV A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

Proverbs 15:15 NKJV All the days of the afflicted are evil, but he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast.

Proverbs 17:22 NKJV A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.

Proverbs 18:14 NKJV The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, but who can bear a broken spirit?

saym-e-ack

- § Merry - sameach - rejoice, rejoicing, making merry, be glad, joyful (Proverbs 15:13; 17:22) - first use: Exodus 4:14: ...when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart *Used `20 times in Tanakh*
- § Merry - towb - cheerful, at ease, joyful, kindly, loving, bountiful (Proverbs 15:15) - first use: Genesis 1:4: God saw the light, that it was good *Used over 100 times in Tanakh*

Q6: Based on the definitions of the word translated 'merry,' what kinds of personal characteristics / attitudes would you expect to see the person described as having?

Good discussion! Content in whatever circumstances they are in; thankful; calm; not blown away by life's hurricanes; optimistic, pleasant; even-tempered; cheerful

Is it a coincidence that the first uses of towb centers on creation...only God can create a merry heart???

nah-kee

- § Broken - nake' - broken, wounded, stricken (Proverbs 15:13; 17:22, 18:14) - first use: Psalm 109:16:: ...he persecuted the poor and needy man *used 6 times in Tanakh (3 times in Proverbs)*
- § Afflicted - 'any - afflicted, needy, poor, wretched (Proverbs 15:15) - first use: Exodus 22:25 *If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you... used over 50 times in Tanakh*

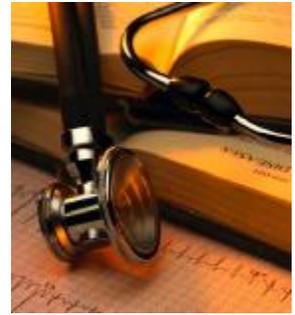
Q7: Based on the definitions of the word translated 'broken' and 'afflicted,' what kinds of personal characteristics /attitudes would you expect to see the person described as having?

Pessimistic, expecting the worst, dour and sour expression; complaining, whining, always finds something to complain about;

Q8: Is being characterized by a 'merry heart' versus a 'broken spirit' a matter of choice or a matter of circumstances? (i.e.; can a person who is afflicted with misfortune in his/her life maintain a 'merry heart despite the circumstances?)

Good discussion!

While misfortune certainly provides ample opportunity to get down, a person who is generally merry is that way despite and through the difficult circumstances of life





Choosing Choice Over Circumstances

None of us has ever had to endure the massive and painful losses that

Job 1:20-22 NKJV *Job did, yet he, by his actions, retained a 'merry heart'*

Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong. *our natural (fleshy) tendency is to blame God, charge Him with wrongdoing*

§ We blame God whenever we lament: "W why is this happening to me?"

§ Instead, we should be asking: "Lord, what le lessons do you want me to learn from this?"

Remember, everything that happens is Father-filtered and for the benefit of our learning, growth and dev.

Prv 19:3 – a man's folly ruins his life yet his heart rages against the Lord!

SIX KEYS TO DEVELOPING A MERRY AND HEALTHY HEART

Proverbs 3:5-8 NKJV

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;

Trust = batach – boldly become sure, confident and secure

6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

All = kol – altogether, whole, complete

Acknowledge = yadah – know, perceive, understand

7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil.

Remember that the fool is wise in his own eyes

8 It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones. *Û here is your health payoff for doing this God keeps His faithful witnesses around!*

§ *Note: no attitudinal 'osteoporosis' in old age = living a joyful life for a lot of years, even in old age*

Proverbs 4:20-23 NIV

20 My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words.

21 Do not let them out of your sight; keep them within your heart;

Û life = eternal life when they are discovered and believed in

22 for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body.

Û health, when they are lived out daily in a believer's life

23 Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

guard = natsar – diligently watch over

Key 1: Trusting in God instead of yourself

§ *Our senses tell us to trust ourselves (believe half of what you see and none of what you hear = YOU decide)*

§ *We are cautioned AGAINST relying on our own understanding WHY? Because we are easily deceived – Satan works full time at this – very intelligent, long lived*

Key 2: Committing even the little things to God

§ *Do we come to God only for the big things? I do this! I confess it as sin, because I'm relying on myself*

§ *Note unconditional He SHALL (not might) direct*
§ *'direct your paths' Hebrew idiom The path becomes straight, pleasant and prosperous*

Key 3: Don't believe Satan's lies about wisdom

§ *on the Top 10 list of Satan: "you really got it going on, you are all that..." a lie from the pit of hell to make you think you have it figured out – leads to pride, arrogance and a sure downfall (pride goeth before the fall)*

§ *this is the evil we are to depart from*

Key 4: You are the builder of the family name

§ *my son = builder of the family name*

§ *what family name are you building? Your earthly family? Heavenly family? Both? Recognize all that is at stake!*

§ *Living victoriously in this area causes people to notice!*

Key 5: Work the Word until it is 'first nature'

§ *Pay attention, listen closely, don't let 'em outa your sight, keep them = exhortations to make God's Word truly live in us each moment of our lives*

§ *This is the very diligent work that we are to do daily*

§ *First nature = do it without thinking>discipline! chakmah*

Key 6: Eyes and ears are the heart's gatekeepers

§ *The eyes and ears process what comes into our hearts*

§ *Have you eliminated the bad things that can come?*

§ *Philippians 4:8 - Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-think about such things.*

E. Life's Not Fair...But God's Justice Is

Q9: Is life fair? Why or why not?

Life is not fair because sin is in the world and God has not yet carried out the sentence on this world to end injustice (that God for that, because if He decided to do it last generation, you and I would not be here!)

- § *Just as we cannot know peace without the Prince of Peace, we cannot know fairness without the Prince of fairness*
- § *We live in a world run by Satan and he is not fair*
- § *We are WRONG to expect fairness: GET OVER IT!*
- § *We know this, but we still whine about it, don't we???*



Justice - doing what is fair and right - Webster's Dictionary

Ū it seems that fairness is the essential element of justice, according to the modern definition of justice...

The Book of Proverbs has a lot to say about justice, injustice, and what God is doing about it...
However, we need to look at fairness and justice in light of God's Word and see what it says...

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

- § justice - *tsedaqah* - rightness, correct (may also be rendered 'righteousness' in RSV) - right conduct in relation to others especially with regard to the rights of others

Q10: Why did God establish the sacrifice system? What does it mean that God views justice above sacrifice?

God set up the sacrifice system to help people realize their utter and sole dependence upon Him. Yet He esteems justice and righteousness above sacrifice, which means that evidence of living out God's love for people is our responding to others in a just and righteous way...

Things that God prefers more than offerings and sacrifices: *See additional notes page for Scriptures*

- § Proverbs 21:3: Do righteousness (live it out) and do justice
- § I Samuel 15: 22: Obedying the voice of the Lord (not obeying is as bad as witchcraft)
- § Hosea 6:6: Mercy; the knowledge of God

Thus JUSTICE is something in very elite company...God favors JUSTICE over many things!

Proverbs 21:15 NIV When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers.

- § Those who live a righteous life are those who live according to God's ststandards for living
- § Joy is brought to those who love God because His will is being done by them
- § Terror is brought to evildoers because they must face the consquences of their acts

Seven kinds of INJUSTICE that God specifically condemns in Proverbs:

1. Bribes given to pervert justice Proverbs 17:23 NIV
A wicked man accepts a bribe in secret to pervert the course of justice.
Note the accepter is wicked for accepting it while the giver is trying to deceive
2. Punish the innocent and favor the guilty Proverbs 24:23-25 NIV
These also are sayings of the wise: To show partiality in judging is not good: Whoever says to the guilty, "You are innocent"-- peoples will curse him and nations denounce him. But it will go well with those who convict the guilty, and rich blessing will come upon them.
What does God think of our legal system today? What did He think of it in, say, 1800?
3. False witness, lying Proverbs 19:5 NKJV
A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies will not escape.
The wheels of justice grind slowly, but ever so finely





4. Cheating and fraud Proverbs 20:10, 17, 23 NKJV

Diverse weights and diverse measures, they are both alike, an abomination to the LORD. Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel. Diverse weights are an abomination to the LORD, and dishonest scales are not good. *Differing scales = artificially raising the weight to charge more*
Abomination is akin to idolatry, God hates intensely

5. Victimizing the helpless Proverbs 22:22-23 NKJV

Do not rob the poor because he is poor, nor oppress the afflicted at the gate; for the LORD will plead their cause, and plunder the soul of those who plunder them.

The advocate of the poor is Jesus Christ...ultimately those guilty will themselves be plundered

6. Betraying a confidence Proverbs 25:9-10 NKJV

Debate your case with your neighbor, and do not disclose the secret to another; lest he who hears it expose your shame, and your reputation be ruined.

Reputation = character; is the one thing of value people remember you by after you are gone

7. Deceit with intent to harm Proverbs 26:23-27 NKJV

Fervent lips with a wicked heart are like earthenware covered with silver dross. He who hates, disguises it with his lips, and lays up deceit within himself; when he speaks kindly, do not believe him, for there are seven abominations in his heart; Though his hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness will be revealed before the assembly. Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him. *Like pottery covered by silver plate but presented as all pure silver*

Likened to flattering lips that deceive, but at heart are waiting to do you harm



Is it genuine?

Proverbs 21:12 NKJV

The righteous God wisely considers the house of the wicked, overthrowing the wicked for their wickedness.

Proverbs 24:19-20 NKJV

Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the wicked; for there will be no prospect for the evil man; the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

God takes note and deals with those who cause injustice:

- § Through natural con_____ *consequences*
- § Through divine int_____ *intervention*
- § In the final jud_____ *judgment*



Some final thoughts about JUSTICE...

Proverbs 21:12 NIV

The Righteous One takes note of the house of the wicked and brings the wicked to ruin.

God sees and although He may withhold judgment for a time, it will most certainly come

Proverbs 17:3 NIV

The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests the heart.

A crucible applies tremendous heat on silver and gold to drive out the impurities. Even the hidden injustices, bad motives, etc. of the heart are tested and removed by God, either in this life, or at the judgment of the wicked

Proverbs 18:17 NIV

The first to present his case seems right, till another comes forward and questions him.

A warning for us to not be hasty in deciding matters – we must hear both sides and allow God to work in our hearts to reveal the truth to us...

F. Contentious Folks

Do you know some folks who enjoy getting into 'heated discussions?' Debating every little issue? Seemingly looking for situations or circumstances over which to be contentious, but saying that they are only interested in having a 'good discussion?'



1. It takes 2 to quarrel but only 1 to avoid it

§ Proverbs 22:10 NIV Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended.

§ Proverbs 26:20-21 NIV Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down. As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.
Recognize that a quarrelsome person seeks contention. There are just some folks that are driven by the need to be contentious – they lack to peace of God in their lives

2. We become like those we Hang out with

§ Proverbs 22:24-25 NKJV Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul.

Notice that it says not to make friends with not that we cannot reach out to in Christian love. Becoming friends with someone means supporting and approving of their behavior. These are the folks that you reach out to very carefully, and not seek to get into an argument with...

3. If you can't avoid them, don't take their bbait

§ Proverbs 16:32 NKJV He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

§ Proverbs 20:3 NIV It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.
We control whether or not we get angry in response to something. A fool is quick to anger, but a Spirit-led believer does not need to become angry, because they have Christ's patience within them! It is to a Christian's HONOR to avoid getting into a conflict, so don't take the bait!

4. Let it GO!

§ Proverbs 19:11 NIV

§ A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.

Wisdom is the thing that gives us the patience to deal with contentious folks and perhaps be the agents that God uses to love them into the kingdom. When we are patient and don't get embroiled in the contention, God honors us – it is to our GLORY when we overlook an offense and forgive...

Q11: A get-honest-with-yourself question: What are the offenses that I need to overlook in my life:

Good homework question....

