

Woodland Baptist Church
 Wednesday October 15, 2013
 Seeking Wisdom Together - Proverbs 1:8-15
 The Enticement of Sinners

1) READ Proverbs 1:8-15

- a) We travel in groups—whether they are our social friends, our service club, our prayer partners, our tennis set, our business colleagues, or our street gang. What we become is determined in some significant measure by the company we keep.¹
- b) The Lesson has three parts: Introduction, a summary of the seductive situation introduced by “if”, followed by brief admonition, “do not yield.”²

2) Verses 8-9

- a) **Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, 9 for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.**
 - i) The young must note that the “fear of the Lord” is linked with respecting parents.
 - (1) **Hear [shema]** - we must be completely focused on what we are being taught; many times the distractions of electronic devices or any other kind can be the destroying obstacle of transferring the teachings.
 - (2) **My son** - paternal tenderness; although this is written to boys, the advice can obviously be taken by a daughter, older child or anyone else.
 - (3) **Your father’s instruction and forsake not your mother’s teaching** - there is emphasis placed on the importance of both the parents in the upbringing of children.
 - (4) **Instruction and teaching** - not “blind submission”
- (a) **2 Timothy 1:5 -5** I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.
- (b) **2 Timothy 3:14-15** - 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom[\[a\]](#) you learned

¹ Hubbard, David. The Preacher’s Commentary, 33

² Waltke, 189

it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

- (5) **Instruction and teaching = graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck**



(6)

- (7) **Graceful Garland for you head** - the picture says it all - heeding the instruction and teaching of parents makes a tremendous difference in our lives.
- (8) God always upholds parental authority. The one who learns early in life to bow to parental authority will learn to respect all authority. Eventually the one who has been raised to respect authority will be entrusted with authority.³

³Phillips

(a) Take note of Solomon's son, Rehoboam - did not lean to be submissive nor respect authority - he lost half his kingdom - 1 Kings 12:1-10.

(9) **Pendants for your neck** - The reference to the neck is interesting. The submissive neck, the neck that bows to authority, is set in contrast to the stiff neck, the symbol of pride and rebellion.⁴

b) These are symbolic metaphors signifying victory and vindication over enemies, power and life, as well as prestige and high social status.⁵

3) Verses 10-18 - **The Voices Heard Outside the Home**

i) It is interesting to notice that the first lessons of parental instruction do not teach directly, they quote. The parents direct attention away from themselves, turning the young man's attention to the voices he will hear when he leaves them to make his way in the world. This sort of simulation training is designed to show where the different invitations will ultimately lead those who speak them as well as those who accept them. The parents hope to quote and then refute seductive messages that will inevitably try to undo their teaching.⁶

b) **10 My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.**

i) Parent's simulated situation

(1) Sinners' Temptation Unfolded:

ii) **11 If they say, "Come with us, let us...."**

(1) Notice the collective "us," makes it sound like a fellowship worth seeking - "everybody is doing it."

(2) **Deed - lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason; 12 like Sheol let us swallow them alive, and whole, like those who go down to the pit;**

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Waltke, 187

⁶ Koptac, 73, NIV Commentary

- (a) Speaking literally about the purposeful taking of life - murder
 - (i) **1 Peter 5:8** - 8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
 - (b) They condemn themselves by designating their target as innocent.
 - (c) Taking life in a way where the innocent never see it coming and are undeserving of what is about to happen; they are not given any chance to fight back; these attackers are highly skilled and strike fast and hard.
 - (i) They see themselves as being a partner with Sheol [The abode of the dead in Hebrew thought. Sheol was thought to be deep within the earth (Psalm 88:6 ; Ezekiel 26:20 ; Ezekiel 31:14-15 ; Amos 9:2) and was entered by crossing a river (Job 33:18). Sheol is pictured as a city with gates (Isaiah 38:10), a place of ruins (Ezekiel 26:20), or a trap (2 Samuel 22:6 ; Psalm 18:5). Sheol is sometimes personified as a hungry beast (Proverbs 27:20 ; Isaiah 5:14 ; Habakkuk 2:5) with an open mouth and an insatiable appetite. Sheol is described as a place of dust (Psalm 30:9 ; Job 17:16) and of gloom and darkness (Job 10:21).⁷
- (3) Arguments - **13 we shall find all precious goods, we shall fill our houses with plunder; 14 throw in your lot among us; we will all have one purse**—
- (a) They make it sound profitable - they will have so much they can literally fill their houses with the plunder.
 - (i) “Houses” may infer that they were part of the established society, not brigands living outside of it.⁸
 - (b) The idea is that they can make much more working together, pooling their wicked resources than apart - can we really trust people like this to be fair with the proceeds?

⁷ Holman Bible Handbook - copied from www.studylight.org/dic/hbd/view.cgi?n=5741

⁸ Waltke, 192

- c) Although the father gives their invitation the roar of a lion to repulse the son, he also invests it with the subtlety of a serpent. It's allurements are not far to seek: excitement, easy money and the camaraderie of being one of the gang.⁹

i) Parent speaks directly again - He calls his son to "reject" them

(1) **15 my son,**

(a) do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths, 16 for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.

(i) **Psalm 1:1-2** - Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

(ii) The Lord vividly reminds us that two paths run through life - **Matthew 7:13-14** -13 "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few."¹⁰ [Cain and Abel]

(b) 17 For in vain is a net spread in the sight of any bird, 18 but these men lie in wait for their own blood; they set an ambush for their own lives.

(i) Most take verse 17 as a jab at the foolishness of scattering seed on the net while the birds are watching, assuming that the birds see the trappers and stay away, but is this accurate? Once the trappers have left, would not the birds head for the seed, because they do not know the difference between food and bait.

1. This is the whole idea of the trap; birds are caught unaware. Therefore the phrase "in the eyes of" may refer to the bird's understanding (or lack of it). The saying could follow the Hebrew word order and read, "For nothing is the net spread in the eyes of every bird." Whatever translation is chosen, the

⁹ Waltke, 191

¹⁰ Phillips, 38

point of the Proverb is that birds are only trapped when they are unaware that there is a trap.

(ii) Like the birds that see “no reason” to avoid a net strewn with seed, these men are caught unaware. These men believe they lie in wait for someone’s blood, for “no reason” yet, they lie in wait for their own.¹¹

d) The son’s allegiance to the family’s inherited worldview must be sharply delineated from that of the gang.¹²

4) Verse 19 - The Motivation Behind Their Actions

a) **19 Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.**

- i) Family, teachers, bosses all make their contribution. But in our society the peer group, the tight circle of intimates, may determine whether a young person dabbles with drugs, experiments with sex, or toys with crime.¹³
- ii) The warning is apt: Who of us can say that he or she has felt no tug of attraction, no glint of envy (the Hebrew root can mean to be “jealous of”), upon hearing stories of wealthy criminals, flamboyant desperadoes, or fast-living gangsters? Which of us has not silently cheered for the robbers in some police stories we have read or seen? There is enough rebellion in all of us to lure us to look sympathetically at a life of waywardness, particularly if we can keep from getting caught. A heart that meditates about destruction a misuse of our human ability to think and choose! Our hearts or minds (Hebrew includes both English concepts) were made to frame prayers, memorize Scripture, write poems, plan acts of love, compose symphonies, design buildings, discover medicines. Yet the evil people in Proverbs used that God-given capacity for plots of violence. Whose cattle could they rustle? Whose house could they loot? Whose caravan could they hijack? Whose reputation could they ruin? Whose blood could they spill? An exercise in emptiness it was to make common cause with such perverted minds.¹⁴

¹¹ Koptac, 75

¹² Waltke, 188

¹³ Hubbard, David. Preacher’s Commentary, 34

¹⁴ Hubbard, David. Preacher’s Commentary, 35

iii) The first lesson in wisdom then, asks each of us to think about the messages we hear. Can we tell the difference between truth and deception, between promise and seduction? It asks us to think about the consequences that will come if we follow the urgings of those messages. Do they bring life to ourselves and our communities, or do they take it away? It asks us to think about what we really want in life. Finally it urges us to consider the choices we make to fulfill our desires, mindful of the danger that those desires can get hijacked by greed. Wisdom offers to guide us in asking those questions, as we will see in the next section.¹⁵

(1) Galatians 6:6-10 - 6 Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. 7 Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

¹⁵ Koptac, 81