

Woodland Baptist Church
 Wednesday, October 15, 2014
 Seeking Wisdom Together - Proverbs 24
 More Wise Sayings

1) READ PROVERBS 24

a) Don't desire company with the wicked - **1 Be not envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them, 2 for their hearts devise violence, and their lips talk of trouble.**

i) Previously the writer cited the ruinous end of evil companions as motivation to avoid their company (23:20-21). Here, it is their essential character ("their minds devise violence") that is the basis for the same advice (cf. 3:31; 23:17; 24:19).

(1) "A great deal of modern entertainment—whether short story, novel, film, or ballad—is based on the celebration of the wickedly unconventional. It banks on the fact that we as audience members have a perverse attraction, even affection, for those who act out the mischief that we only dream of." When the psalmist Asaph remembered the end of the wicked, his envy of their prosperity evaporated (Ps. 73). King Jehoram of Judah is one example of many in the Bible who illustrate verse 2 (2 Chron. 21).¹

b) Wisdom can build a beautiful house - **3 By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; 4 by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.**

i) This could be speaking literally or metaphorically; if you are going to build a house you must know how to build a house; how to pour the foundation, how to erect the framing, run the wiring, the plumbing. If any of this is done by someone who does not know what they are doing, the results could be deadly. The same is true about the soul nurturing on the inside once the physical home is built. What words are spoken in each room? What lessons are taught? What television programming is watched? Who gets to come inside the home and fellowship? It takes a person that is interested in virtue and godliness to fill the rooms of the house with all "precious and pleasant riches."

¹ Constable

- ii) This is another reminder that our homes must be built on the rock of Christ and must be used to advance the cause of Christ. [Matt. 7:24-27].
- c) Wisdom can guide you to victory - 5 **A wise man is full of strength, and a man of knowledge enhances his might, 6 for by wise guidance you can wage your war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory.**
- i) The proverbs have been consistent in teaching that strength is in wisdom, and in wisdom is knowledge and in knowledge is wisdom. Therefore it would be consistent that a man of knowledge enhances his might, as there is strength in knowledge and wisdom.
 - (1) **Hosea 4:6** - My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.
 - ii) *Wise guidance wage war/abundance of counselors* - any form of conflict should cause one to get advice in how to deal with it. All of us seek advice when dealing with difficult situations, as we know that there are those that have already dealt with it and failed...or dealt with it and succeeded.
 - iii) Why would we want to make the exact same mistakes someone else is made when we can learn from the wisdom and knowledge?
- d) Fools can't gain wisdom - 7 **Wisdom is too high for a fool; in the gate he does not open his mouth.**
- i) Wisdom is beyond the fool's reach. Therefore "a fool" does not, if he has any wisdom at all, seek to give advice in the decision-making places of his world ("in the gate").
 - (1) Fortunately Nabal's [message for PM worship this Sunday night] folly seems to have been limited to his own household. Even so, by opening his mouth against David, he sealed his own fate (1 Sam. 25). "This saying inferentially commends becoming competently wise by warning against being an incompetent fool."
 - ii) If someone comes to us seeking wisdom and we don't have it concerning what they are seeking...DO NOT lie and say you do if you don't.

e) Schemers get exposed - **8 Whoever plans to do evil will be called a schemer. 9 The devising of folly is sin, and the scoffer is an abomination to mankind.**

i) Most people develop reputations over time based on a number of different variables, but primarily it's their actions that define who they are long term. If someone constantly plans evil schemes, they will be known as a "schemer."

(1) What is a scheme? What would a scheme look like in the church?

ii) The writer tells us plainly that whoever this deviser of schemes is, is also planning sinful folly and he/she is an abomination to mankind, which means they are a harmful presence that we would be better off without.

(1) **Timothy Ray Jones** - that killed his 5 children this year - he was listed as an engineer from Intel making big \$\$ - the children were 2 girls and three boys - ranging from 1 year old - 8 years old.

(2) **Bernie Madoff** - "made off" with billions of dollars from investors over a 10 year period.

(3) **Kenneth Lay** - Enron CEO in 2001 scandal that implicated Arthur Anderson in assisting with fraud and conspiracy which cost investors over 1 billion dollars.

(4) **Richard Scrusby** - Healthsouth CEO charged with extortion and money laundering - when caught he went televangelist and was a ploy to try to sway those selected for the jury that were majority african american.

f) The strong help the weak - **10 If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small. 11 Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. 12 If you say, "Behold, we did not know this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?**

i) If our strength is small, most likely it is not found in God through Christ; if there is one thing Christians need to be prepared for, it's adversity, as Christ consistently warned us that a life of following him would lead to adversity. God told us to "wait on him" and he would "renew our strength."

(1) **Isaiah 40:28-31** - Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. 29 He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. 30 Even

youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; 31 but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

(a) What does it mean to “wait on the Lord.”

ii) **Rescue those being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter** - we are to put ourselves in the way of danger those of us that are not small in strength and faith in the face of adversity. We are supposed to put ourselves in harms way for the weak and the oppressed. We CANNOT pretend that it is not happening either...we try to do that sometimes...just turn our heads and hope it goes away - God won't let us get away with that either...**12 If you say, “Behold, we did not know this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?**

(1) **Romans 15:1-3** - We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”

g) Wisdom tastes good and is good - **13 My son, eat honey, for it is good, and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste. 14 Know that wisdom is such to your soul; if you find it, there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off.**

i) Honey compared wisdom - Comparison of the sweetness and benefits of honey to the benefits of wisdom. In the consumption of wisdom, your soul is built up, there will be a future for you filled with hope.

(1) **Eat the scroll** - Ezekiel 3:1-3 - And he said to me, “Son of man, eat whatever you find here. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” 2 So I opened my mouth, and he gave me this scroll to eat. 3 And he said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly with this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it.” Then I ate it, and it was in my mouth as sweet as honey.

ii) What does man not live on alone? What did Christ also say we had to do to have life in him in John? What do we have to do with his flesh and blood?

h) **Leave the righteous alone - 15 Lie not in wait as a wicked man against the dwelling of the righteous; do no violence to his home; 16 for the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.**

i) Fighting the righteous is a losing battle...why? Because God is on our side, even though many times it may not seem that way, ultimately, God is on our side.

(1) **Romans 8:31** - What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

i) **Have mercy on enemies - 17 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles, 18 lest the Lord see it and be displeased, and turn away his anger from him.**

i) Not only should we not lie in wait on the righteous, but we should not rejoice when your enemy falls. So, when Saddam Hussein was executed, were we wrong to rejoice over his execution? When Bin Laden was killed, were we wrong to rejoice over his death?

ii) Love does not gloat over the sorrows of others, even though richly deserved, and although the one who is suffering has been a bitter foe. Remembering that he is himself a subject of grace, the humble, contrite soul walks softly, having tears, not sneers, for the afflictions of his enemies. When it is otherwise, the eye of Jehovah will note it; He will see that he who is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.²

iii) **Ezekiel 18:23** - 23 Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?

j) **Don't envy the wicked - 19 Fret not yourself because of evildoers, and be not envious of the wicked, 20 for the evil man has no future; the lamp of the wicked will be put out. 21 My son, fear the Lord and the king, and do not join with those who do otherwise, 22 for disaster will arise suddenly from them, and who knows the ruin that will come from them both?**

i) One of the those passages that we know does not always hold true in this life, as there have been plenty of evil doers and wicked people that have lived long, prosperous lives, so there must be an eternal dynamic here in Proverbs. The evil man has no future with God in eternity - he will be consigned to hell,

² Ironside

shut out from God and what he has built up on earth will be consigned to ashes. Many times however, **the lamp of the wicked is put out.**

k) Seek the truth when judging - 23 **These also are sayings of the wise. Partiality in judging is not good. 24 Whoever says to the wicked, "You are in the right," will be cursed by peoples, abhorred by nations, 25 but those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them. 26 Whoever gives an honest answer kisses the lips.**

i) **Partiality** - we are to always seek truth in all situations, irregardless of who the situation involves. We should never have the mentality that someone "can do no wrong." We should not show favoritism to those that are our friends or family in situations of conflict, we should always seek the truth and hold those found to guilty responsible for their actions. We should also not go on the hearsay of others about anyone, we should study the evidence and then judge as fairly as possible who is innocent or guilty.

(1) We must not turn a blind eye to the wicked, we must punish them for their wrongdoing, regardless of who they are...when we give an honest answer, **it is as though it is a sincere kiss to the lips.**

l) Build the foundation first - 27 **Prepare your work outside; get everything ready for yourself in the field, and after that build your house.**

i) Before one contemplates marriage he should be sure he can support a wife and family. He should first "establish," i.e., finish, his outside work, and make his field ready. The idea is to have the ground prepared with crops and livestock. Then the man might "build" his house, i.e., marry and rear a family. Economic viability has much more to do with a successful marriage than romantic passion.³

(1) How would we write this Proverb today?

(2) How would we answer the much quoted saying of today, "if you wait until you can afford children, you will never have them?"

m) Restrain yourself from vengeance - 28 **Be not a witness against your neighbor without cause, and do not deceive with your lips. 29 Do not say, "I will do to him as he has done to me; I will pay the man back for what he has done."**

³ Wisdom and Psalms, Logos

- i) We need to use good judgment when we see someone doing something that we believe is wrong, whether to report them or not. Has a law been broken? How would you respond if someone turned you in for what you did?
- ii) Many people in today's culture are far too eager to tell on others for trivial matters. Anyone have an example from social media?
- iii) We are completely forbidden by God to seek vengeance on those that have done us wrong.

(1) **Romans 12:19-21**—19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it[i] to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

n) Laziness reaps a harvest of brokenness - 30 **I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of a man lacking sense, 31 and behold, it was all overgrown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. 32 Then I saw and considered it; I looked and received instruction. 33 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, 34 and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.**

- i) Matthew 13:24-27 - 24 He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, 25 but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. 26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. 27 And the servants[d] of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?'