

PROVERBS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Proverbs chapter 10 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we move into this portion of Scripture, this is the section in which most people think of as Proverbs. Each verse focuses on a subject and here they are contrasting Proverbs, mostly contrasting the righteous with the wicked. Now why in the world would Solomon jump so quickly from subject-to-subject? I think the reason is that he wants us to meditate, think about one verse and grapple with its meaning and application before the reader moves on to the next one.

This section, from Proverbs 10:1 through Proverbs 22:16 form a section of 375 different proverbs; each one is distinct in itself. So let's begin reading and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through the book of Proverbs.

PROVERBS 10

VERSE 1

1. Understand this, both parents grieve over their children's failures and rejoice in their success. But women do tend to be more emotional than men, for the most part. Now let me say this. We tend to brag and boast when our children get good grades in school, when they make the football team, when they do this or do that and there is nothing wrong with that but what if they are the biggest success in the worlds eyes and yet don't know the Lord? That would grieve me. That would be a foolish son! Our children may never grow up to be the president of the United States but if they know the Lord then they have succeeded, they are wise!

VERSE 2

1. I think this proverb builds off of what we just read in verse 1. That you can accumulate a lot of wealth, great fortune and in the end, you can't take it with you. And if you are living for money you will never have enough, you will become a slave to it. Many people have sold their soul for the things of this world, trying to gain as much as they can in this life. And when it's over they have nothing to show for it because you can't buy your way into heaven.

But the righteous man, the one who has come to the Lord, you will be delivered from death! That is not just hyperbole, it is true! Jesus said in John 3:16, "**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**" There is the promise to us, everlasting life with Him. I like what the Psalmist said in Psalm 37:16, "**A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked.**"

VERSE 3

1. God will care for His children, He will provide for their needs. It is as Psalm 37:19, 25 says, "**They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. . . . I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.**"

On the other end of the spectrum are the wicked and look at how they are reaching out to try and grasp satisfaction in their lives and it seems to elude them. It seems to be just out of their reach and they keep trying. The only satisfaction, the only contentment we can find is in Jesus. That is where we find our rest and joy, in Him! If you walk with Him then you will not only find richness for your soul but He will provide for your life!

VERSE 4

1. As you look at the Scriptures you will not find these two words together, faith and laziness. They are not compatible! If you are lazy you will be empty. But for those that go out and work, they will be rich. In other words, they will be able to have food and clothing. God does not want us to be lazy.

Paul said in II Thessalonians 3:10, **“For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.”** That may seem unfair, but it is not. If you don't want to work then you will go hungry. What happens when we reward this kind of behavior as a people, a nation, as we promote laziness it will continue to grow because if you have a choice of working and not working and still be cared for, guess which one you will do! You are not going to work, that is just the reality! That should not be for the Christian!

VERSE 5

1. This trend seems to be growing today. Children growing up and instead of moving out on their own, remain home with their parents. And many times they become lazy, sponging off their parents, not willing to care for themselves. When your forty years old you should not be asking for an allowance from your parents! And Solomon is saying that lazy children bring shame upon their family.

2. And this is not only speaking of occupational work but also of ministry. We should not be lazy in ministry. We should not sit around and wait for others to do things. If we see a need we should take care of it. Jesus said in John 4:35, “**Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!**” The work is there, are you willing to step out and do it?

I am sure some of you remember the space shuttle, Challenger and the disaster that took place with this spacecraft. The last words from Mission Control to the Challenger were, “Challenger, full throttle.” And the last words from the space shuttle, Challenger were, “Roger. Full throttle.”

I don’t know about you but that is how I want to end my life on this earth. No, not blowing up in the sky, but at full throttle! I want to be in full service for the Lord, I don’t want to be lazy, sitting around doing nothing. I hope you feel the same way because the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few!

VERSE 6

1. This just makes sense. If you live a righteous life, an upright life, then you will receive blessings from God and the praise of your fellow man. But, if you sow the seeds of wild sin you might say, then your mouth will be covered with violence! It is as Jesus said in Luke 6:45, “**A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.**”

VERSE 7

1. We, as Christians, should leave blessings wherever we go. And that life we lived should linger on long after we are gone, the fragrance of Jesus should be left behind. But, for the wicked, they are not fondly remembered, not like the righteous. The wicked tend to leave a stench and not a beautiful fragrance. And think about this for a minute. When Solomon says that **“... the name of the wicked will rot”** I think that is very true. People today still name their children Paul, or Peter, or Joseph but how many call their children Judas or Jezebel? Something to think about!

VERSE 8

1. Some people won't stop talking long enough to learn anything. They think they know it all, but they are only showing the folly of their ways. And that kind of foolishness will lead to their ruin. But a wise person will listen, will receive instruction and will be blessed because of it.

VERSE 9

1. In other words, **“Your sin will find you out!”** People think they can hide their sin and they are always wondering if it will be exposed even though they are trying their best to hide it. You can't and you won't! One example of this is seen in some communities where if you are caught soliciting prostitution, you will be arrested and your picture, with what you did, will be placed on the local cable channel! Remember what the Lord told David regarding his sin with Bathsheba, **“For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.”** II Samuel 12:12.

VERSE 10

1. This is speaking of someone who is scheming to take advantage of another person, they are nothing but trouble. They may wink with their eye or look like they are with you but their actions speak just the opposite. A great example of this is Judas Iscariot. In the Garden of Gethsemane he went up to Jesus and kissed Him on the cheek, a kind of wink you might say that he was with Jesus, but he was betraying Him with his actions.

VERSE 11

1. The words that come forth from our lips should be words of refreshment, encouragement, comfort, edification, counsel. It should bring life to those around us. On the other end of the spectrum are the words of the wicked and they are filled with filth. When I was younger, 17 or 18 years of age, I was living on my own in Arizona and I went to this doctor for a check-up. Because I was young I suppose he felt the need to use foul language and it was so bad that I was embarrassed by what he was saying! I never went back to see him. His words did not bring refreshment to me, encouragement, comfort, edification; there was no wise counsel at all!

It is like the saying goes, “Some men’s minds run like race horses, they run best on a dirt track!” May our words be sweet to those around us and not like an open sewer!

VERSE 12

1. Think about what happens when you let hate fill your life. You are never satisfied to forgive and forget. You will bring up old grudges, old issues, old quarrels and it does not solve anything! In fact it will just make the situation worse. The flesh loves to jump in and stir up the idea that they did you wrong, that you need to do to them what they did to you!

But the Spirit of God tells us to love them. Listen to what Paul has to say about love in I Corinthians 13:4-8a. As you will see, it's completely different than hatred. He said, "**Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. . . .**" Love brings peace and hatred just stirs those embers so the conflict explodes into a raging fire, a raging conflict!

VERSE 13

1. In other words, learn from others, from their failures and their successes. Learn God's Word and gain His wisdom for your life! If you don't you will learn those lessons the hard way and suffer the consequences of your folly.

VERSES 14-17

1. Not only learn lessons of faith, but store them up, use them to help you grow and mature in the Lord. Don't forget what God has shown you! If you do learn those lessons and apply them to your life, then you will be rich, you will be strong and I think the idea here is spiritually speaking! But if you reject the lessons, if you turn from God then you will be in poverty and it will be devastating to your life, spiritually speaking!

2. And we obtain this wisdom by digging into God's Word, and the fruit that is born in the righteous is not only life to them but also to those around them, it is a blessing. They are on the road to life and many are following them. The wicked, the fruit that is born in their life is evil and it leads to death and they take many with them.

3. And the key here is that we need to keep these things, hold onto them. And I am sure that we can see this in our own life. When we listen and follow the ways of God we are at peace even through the storms of life. When we refuse to listen to God's instructions and follow our ways, our life is in turmoil, there is no peace.

VERSE 18

1. Does this mean we are not to hide our hatred towards a person? Not at all, you are not to hate them; this is a heart issue with you. What a horrible thing it is to pretend you are a friend to someone and the reality is you hate them. You are being deceitful, you are a hypocrite if you are doing that and if you feel that way towards someone you need to deal with it in your own heart! If you slander someone you need to apologize you need to get your heart right and correct that problem or you are a fool! Both those choices are wrong but a third alternative is to not hate and not slander but love them as Christ loves you and gave His life for you!

VERSES 19-21

1. The more we talk the more we can get ourselves in trouble. It is as the old proverb goes, "Better to keep your mouth shut and have people think you are a fool than to open it and remove any doubts!" Keep a guard on the door of your mouth and let no foolishness come forth.

You see, the words we say can feed and nourish people or they can cut them up and destroy them. And it is very easy to be condemning towards people, to tear them down, but it is a lot harder to build them up. Maybe that is why we tear them down.

A few weeks back I watched Sarah Palin at a Republican meeting and all she did was mock, make fun of, cut down the President. And I have to admit it was funny but it bothered me. We are to respect the office of the President and as a politician and a Christian she should be ashamed of herself. Her words were cutting, they were putting down the leader of our country and I may not agree with everything that he is doing, but I am to respect that office. Paul put it like this in Colossians 4:6, **“Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”**

2. Before we move on let me just say this regarding our speech, what we say. Out of the 915 verses in the book of Proverbs a high percentage of them deal with our speech. I think God is trying to tell us something, don't you?

VERSE 22

1. There are blessings with a chocolate custard ice cream with caramel and pecans but there is also sorrow that comes with it when I step on the scale! But the blessings of the Lord will make us rich! Not necessarily monetarily but spiritually. You see, God's blessings are inward and those inward blessings are manifested in outward joy. Yes God does bless us with physical things, but those things He does in us will last a lifetime.

Several years ago they interviewed some million dollar lottery winners to see how things were going some 5 years later. Some were broke, others had family and friends that were mad at them, and not one was truly happy. And yet look at all the people that are playing the lottery to become rich and happy. Riches didn't bring them what they thought it would bring them, only heartache. We need to be content with what God has given us and rejoice in Him! He does not add sorrow to the blessings He gives to us, not like that chocolate custard ice cream with caramel and pecans does in my life!

VERSES 23-24

1. It is amazing the people who see evil like a sport. They do it for their own pleasure. But for the wise man, there is peace; there is pleasure in how he conducts himself. There is no fear for him. But for the wicked, they live in fear of the evil that they have done to others, they are fearful that it will come upon them. C. S. Lewis put it like this,

In the end, the Face which is the delight or the terror of the universe must be turned upon each of us either with one expression or the other, either conferring glory inexpressible or inflicting shame that can never be cured or disguised.

- C. S. Lewis, *Weight of Glory*, p. 13

Now we don't have to go down that path, we can do as David said in Psalm 37:4 and we won't have to worry. He said, "**Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.**" You see, if you delight yourself in the Lord you won't have to fear, you will have peace as His desires for your life become your desires as you are in fellowship with Him!

VERSE 25

1. Now this may seem kind of strange, this whirlwind that Solomon is speaking of and that the wicked will be gone and the righteous will stand strong. What is Solomon speaking of when he says, “**whirlwind**”? Picture in your mind the devastation that takes place when a tornado sweeps through a community. Sometimes nothing is left but the foundation of a home! Thus, what Solomon is speaking of is the judgment of God and for wicked, they do not have a strong foundation, they have nothing to stand upon and in the end, they will be cast away into outer darkness. For the righteous, we have a solid foundation, we have The Rock Jesus Christ and it is upon this Rock we rest and we will not be moved, nothing can ever move the Rock of Ages and if we are resting upon Him we will not be moved!

VERSE 26

1. If you ever want to be irritated, have this sour taste in your mouth, then go and ask a lazy person to do something for you! That can be so frustrating, so annoying, so irritating. That is why I will not put anyone in ministry here at Calvary Chapel that doesn't have a servant's heart. And I will remove anyone who is in a ministry that feels some task is below him to do or that they just don't have the time to do their ministry. I will let you in on a little secret. No one does and yet, as you serve the Lord as He has called you He will give you the time you need to complete the work. If you doubt that then talk to me after study. A lazy person in the ministry is just not worth the aggravation and irritation that they will bring.

VERSE 27

1. Again, this just makes sense. If you abuse your body, if you live a lifestyle that is in constant threat of retaliation as you are doing all kinds of evil things, your life will be shortened.

Obviously God knows what we will do, and He knows the set days He has for us, but don't live a foolish life, fear the Lord, serve Him, and your days will be prolonged.

VERSES 28-29

1. As we live out our faith in Christ what we have hoped for will come to pass. We will be taken to glory because of what Christ has done for us. But for the wicked, all that they hoped for, in the end, will come to nothing! They will be eternally separated from God! And even in this life, all that they wanted, all that they worked so hard for will not bring them what they hoped for.

Listen to how G. S. Bowes illustrates this point. He says, "Alexander the Great was not satisfied, even when he had completely subdued the nations. He wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, and he died at an early age in a state of debauchery. Hannibal, who filled three bushels with the gold rings taken from the knights he had slaughtered, committed suicide by swallowing poison. Few noted his passing, and he left this earth completely unmourned. Julius Caesar, 'dyeing his garments in the blood of one million of his foes,' conquered 800 cities, only to be stabbed by his best friend at the scene of his greatest triumph. Napoleon, the feared conqueror, after being the scourge of Europe, spent his last years in banishment." Yes, the expectation of the wicked perishes! But for the righteous, our hope will be fulfilled in this life and the life to come!

VERSE 30

1. There is coming a day when God will create a New Heavens and a New Earth and it will be filled with the righteous, those who have had the righteousness of Christ imputed into their lives by faith. Those who stand before God in their own righteousness will perish; they will not be a part of the eternal state with God. And it is then that wickedness, sin will be seen no more, the curse will be removed. ***PRAISE GOD!***

VERSES 31-32

1. The world loves to manipulate others, take advantage of others, and many times they destroy lives by the things that they say! We must learn what to say and what not to say. There are things that are appropriate and those that are not. Ask God to allow things that would glorify Him to flow from your lips. Ask God to allow things that would edify, build up, correct in love flow from your lips. And as Paul said in Romans 12:2, “**And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**” Don’t be like a thermometer that just registers the temperature. Be like a thermostat that changes it!

PROVERBS 11**VERSE 1**

1. In Leviticus 19:35-36 God instructed His people to have just balances as they bought and sold things. They were not to have one set of weights to buy things and another set to sell. How does that apply to us today? Be honest, fair in all your business dealings. Some feel that they can't make it by being honest. If you feel that way then get out of the business for you are not bringing honor to God but dishonor to Him. This applies to all areas of our life, ***BE HONEST!***

2. Let me share this story with you and you will see how this is played out.

Every day, the farmer delivered a pound of butter to the baker. But the baker began to notice that the pound of butter was becoming smaller and smaller and smaller. "My goodness," he thought, "I'm being systematically cheated." So he reported it to the town constable.

The baker and the constable went to the farmer's farm, where the farmer was accused of shortchanging the baker.

"But the butter I give him weighs one pound," the farmer insisted.

"What are you using for a weight?" the constable asked.

"The baker's one-pound loaf of bread," the farmer replied.

Thus, the baker was caught in his own trap. As we saw already, your sin will find you out; God wants you to be honest.

VERSE 2

1. In our studies through Samuel, Kings and Chronicles we have seen this played out. Where kings started out humble before God and over time they just got a little too big for their britches and God had to bring them down. A good example of this is King Asa who started out trusting in God but over time trusted in the strength of man, and at the end of his life his walk was hampered, his feet were diseased and he died. We see that pride comes first, then we fall and then there is the shame that is associated with the fall. The warning is to be wise, be humble, don't think of yourself better than you should. You are a sinner saved by the grace of God and if that won't humble you, look out!

VERSE 3

1. I don't care who you are or how you think you are doing you own thing. We are all guided by someone or something. The problem comes when that which is guiding you is guiding you in the wrong direction and it can destroy you. If you want what is best for your life allow God to guide you through His Word. It is as Psalm 119:66-68 says, **“Teach me good judgment and knowledge, For I believe Your commandments. Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word. You are good, and do good; Teach me Your statutes.”**

One more point here and I find this very interesting. The Hebrew word for **“integrity”** is Tummah, (toom-maw') and it comes from the root word THUMMIM. Remember in the Old Testament, Exodus chapter 28 where it talks about the Urim and the Thummim or literally “lights and perfections.” This was worn on the breastplate of the High Priest and it was to give the people direction, the direction from God.

Look at what the Lord is saying here. That He wants to guide us with His light, the light of His Word but we need to go to Him and seek Him. We must desire the light of God and He will guide us. And please understand that we go and seek God's direction to obey. That is how we are to approach Him. Not going to seek His direction and if we like it then we obey. Can we approach Him in integrity, in the light of His Word and obey Him? He wants us to because there is wisdom and safety found in that!

VERSE 4

1. Let's face it; no one wants to be the richest person in Hell. I think most people would rather be poor and enter into heaven with the Lord! You see, you can have it all but you can't buy your way into heaven! All you can do is receive that free gift that has been given to you by Jesus.

Peter put it like this in I Peter 1:18-19, "**knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.**" You see, only those that have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ will escape the judgment of God and we are clothed in His righteousness when we ask Him to be Lord and Savior of our lives!

VERSES 5-8

1. In other words, what you sow you will reap. God has a way of turning the tables on the wicked. Remember the story of Joseph and how his brothers sold him into slavery. Years later, as God turned the tables on them, Joseph said to them, **“But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.”** Genesis 50:20. And think about this for a minute. When a fool dies, when a wicked man dies all his plans, all his ideas, all his hopes and dreams are closed shut as that coffin lid is closed upon him! Everything that he lived for is gone. But for the righteous, we are just beginning a life of eternity with the Lord. All our hopes, all our dreams, everything we have lived for will not die because He lives and so will we!

VERSES 9-11

1. There is truly a blessing when the righteous are in power. But when the wicked are in power the people suffer. That is why there is rejoicing when the wicked die. When Mussolini was hung there were tremendous celebrations in Rome! When Hitler died the world rejoiced! When Nero died there was partying for weeks in Rome! They liked to party in Rome.

And look at Herod the Great; he was a very wicked man! The people hated him so much that he feared for his life. In fact, he was so paranoid that he had many of his wives and sons killed so they would not take over his throne. It was so bad that there was a saying going around during that time that “it was safer to be one of Herod’s pigs than one of his sons!”

And listen to how sad this is. Herod, towards the end of his life, well into his seventies, was concerned that when he died no one would care, there would be no weeping or mourning over his death. So he ordered the arrest of one hundred of the leading men of Jerusalem, put them in prison and demanded that when he died those one hundred men would be killed instantly!

This was his rationale behind this decree, “If the city won’t mourn for me, let it mourn for those who die with me.” The men were arrested, and Herod eventually died, but his final order was never carried out! Thus, there was rejoicing in the death of this wicked man. When the wicked perish, there is shouting, rejoicing indeed.

VERSE 12

1. Isn’t it better to get along with your neighbor than to fight with him? Of course it is and the Lord expects us to. Paul put it like this in Romans 12:18, “**If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.**” It is not up to them but it is up to you. And it is better to get along with those around you than to be in constant conflict. But, it is not always possible so do the best you can, not everyone will receive you. Just allow the love of Christ to flow through you. Don’t be “**devoid of wisdom.**”

VERSE 13

1. This person seems to take delight in spreading scandals, informing others of things, breaking promises. He lets everyone and anyone know about other people but a faithful friend knows how to maintain confidence and refrain from talking!

2. And let me say this. Don't pour your heart out to anyone and everyone. Some people are not mature enough to handle it, they are gossipers. Find a prayer partner, a mature Christian who will bring the matter before God and no one else! If you are a woman then find another woman you can talk with. If you are a man then find another man that you can talk with. A woman is not to minister to a man and a man is not to minister to a woman. Even when I counsel women I always have my wife with me! And for you men on Sunday evenings, praise the Lord that you can share your pain, the things that you are going through and be encouraged knowing that other godly men are praying for you and you don't have to worry about the phone list coming out and it being gossiped to others or messages texted to others about an issue you are going through! That is how it should be in the body of Christ, and sadly, that is not how it always works out. Be wise and don't spread gossip!

VERSE 14

1. How important this is. We can find safety in the wisdom of others, other Christians that is. And think about it. I am not a mountain climber, primarily because I don't like heights even though I have been up on some pretty tall mountains before. But many mountain climbers will rope themselves together, why? Because if one slips, if one falls, the others can pull him back up and they can then continue on.

We, as the body of Christ need to be linked together. Take advantage of the body of Christ because there is great wisdom you can glean from them and if you fall they are there to help pull you back up so all of us can move on. Many people have fallen off the mountain of ministry because they are not linked to anyone! Fellowship is that important, there is wisdom in the multitude of counselors!

VERSE 15

1. Solomon dealt with this in Proverbs chapter 6, but once again he is warning not to guarantee loans to strangers for you will get burned many times. A man who hates guarantying a loan saves himself a lot of headaches!

VERSE 16

1. This reminds me of the story of Nabal and his wife Abigail. Nabal, whose name means fool refused to feed David's men who had assisted him in watching over his flocks. When David heard what happened he was ready to destroy Nabal and all those with him. But Abigail came to her foolish husband's aid and pleaded for mercy from David and brought provisions for his men. And David did extend mercy to her and her husband, but when Nabal found out what she did he was so mad that he had a heart attack and died several days later. And in the end David end's up marrying Abigail. (I Samuel 25). Abigail was a gracious woman!

VERSE 17

1. There is much wisdom in this. A righteous person has peace in his heart and it is life to his body. A wicked person, filled with hatred, his life is being eaten away! "The British Medical Journal once said that there is not a tissue in the human body that is wholly removed from the spirit. A *cruel* disposition takes its toll on the body. One having such a temperament *troubles his own flesh.*" (William MacDonald, Believers Bible Commentary, p. 818).

VERSES 18-19

1. I don't think I should have to say this but as Christians we need to be honest in our work for we are representatives of Christ. But as we look at this in a spiritual sense, the wages of sin is death – Romans 6:23. You have to work at sin and you will get paid accordingly. But righteousness is not the result of work but it is the reward of grace as Paul reminds us in Romans 4:4-5, **“Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.”** May we not forget that! You see, as you look at the lifestyle of the wicked, it leads to death, both physical and spiritual. On the other hand, as you look at the lifestyle of the righteous it leads to life, both physical and spiritual!

VERSE 20

1. If you want God to delight in you, listen to His voice. Yes, as Paul said in Ephesians 1:6, **“... He has made us accepted in the Beloved.”** But remember that we are to live out our faith and on the practical side we are to walk in a way that would delight our heavenly Father. We need to hate sin as He hates sin! We need to listen to His voice and walk down the path He is leading us on!

VERSE 21

1. Solomon is contrasting between sin and righteousness. You see, there is no escaping the judgment of God apart from Christ. But the unrighteous, even though they may join forces with each to fight against the righteous, in the end, they will not win. We see this climax at the end of the Tribulation Period, during the Battle of Armageddon where the people of the world join forces to fight against God. Not a wise move on their part and they will be judged! But the righteous will be delivered!

VERSE 22

1. I think we see the picture that Solomon has painted for us here. It doesn't matter how beautiful a woman is on the outside, because what is in her heart will come flowing out her lips. Many physically beautiful women have shown their ugliness by their words, by their actions!

VERSE 23

1. What does it mean to desire good? Desiring good means to hate evil or to hate what God hates. It is when we compromise our faith, when we justify evil that we are getting ourselves into trouble. For the wicked, what they sow is what they will reap!

VERSES 24-25

1. The spiritual principle is simple - you can't out give God. Now don't jump to the wrong conclusion. God is not some investment broker. We don't give to God \$100 to get \$1,000 back. If that is what you want go to Las Vegas or invest in the stock market and see what happens. You see, that is called greed, it is not the right motivation. Give out of a pure heart to assist in the work of His kingdom and I guarantee this, you will be blessed!

Think about the Sunday School teacher who prepares the lesson for the students in the class. Who is blessed? Yes the students are but because of what the teacher invested in, the study of God's Word and the desire to give it to others, the teacher would also be blessed by the lessons that God has taught them.

It is as Paul said in II Corinthians 9:6-7, "**But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.**" That is what God is looking for, a cheerful giver and if you think about it, when we give we are only giving back to Him what He has given to us!

2. Jim Elliot said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." Absolutely, that is so true. What we save, we lose and what we give, we have! That is the principle.

VERSE 26

1. The idea here is that we are not to hold onto things to drive up the price or neglect the need of another.

VERSE 27

1. When a man's motives are pure and unselfish, he wins the esteem of others. But the man who is out to cause trouble for others will get it for himself. Again the principle is sowing and reaping.

VERSE 28

1. In the New Testament we see this same thought in I Timothy 6:17-19 as Paul said, **“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”**

You see, our confidence should be in the living God who gives us richly all things to enjoy. But, as Samuel Johnson wrote, “The lust of gold, unfeeling and remorseless, is the last corruption of degenerate man.” If you put your trust in earthly things you are going to come up far short.

VERSE 29

1. I think the idea here is a man who is greedy for gain, greedy to make more and more money can destroy their own families and in the end, they will be left with nothing. Let me show you what I mean. Dr. Christian Barnard was a South African Heart surgeon who won international fame by performing the first successful heart transplant. As famous as this man was, as dedicated to his work as he was, his life seemed empty when he looked back upon it. Thus, out of that emptiness, he wrote a book entitled, “One Life.” This is what he had to say,

It was a bright April morning when I drove out of Minneapolis. It seemed like a century since I first arrived there. A time longer than all the years before it. In New York I put the car on a boat and caught a plane for Cape Town.

A Northwest wind was blowing and we came over the sea with the waves close below. My wife was there with the children. I'd not written much in the last two months, yet I was unprepared for her greeting. "Why did you come?" There was no longer a smile in her eyes. Oh God, I thought, I have made the most terrible mistake of my life.

"Don't look so surprised!" she said. "We gave you up. We decided that you were never coming back."

I replied, "It was only a little delay. I wrote you April the first."

"No, you wrote once saying you weren't coming home," she said.

"We were building valves, aortic heart valves," I answered.

"No, you were building a family. That is, you were, until you dumped it in my lap," she said bitterly. "We have ceased to exist for you."

I wanted to say I came home because I love my children and I thought I loved her. I wanted to come home, because I felt it, but what could I say? Now that sounded meaningless. It began to rain. The city was gray under a gray sky. It was winter in Cape Town, but in Minneapolis the trees were splashy bright green. How was it possible to lose a whole springtime?

- Dr. Christian Barnard, One Life

Don't play the fool and see your family destroyed before you!

VERSE 30

1. If you want to shine, then share Christ. In Daniel 12:3 we read, “**Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.**” What an unspeakable privilege it is to be used by God in doing a work in human lives that will result in eternal blessing! Every soul won to the Lord will be a worshiper of the Lamb of God forever and ever! What a blessing that is.

VERSE 31

1. This may seem a little confusing and in the Hebrew this verse can be translated in the positive or the negative sense. To help us to understand what Solomon is saying turn to I Peter 4:17-19. Peter tells us, “**For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now ‘If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?’ Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.**”

You see, God will chasten His children, not punitive but corrective. But the wicked will be punished; it will be punitive for them. Judgment does begin in our own hearts as God chastens us and makes us more like Him. But for the wicked - death and destruction will come their way for rejecting Christ and standing before God in their own filthy righteousness instead of His holy righteousness that has been imputed to us through Christ! Judgment is coming. There can be no doubt about that!

And in the end, we will be rewarded as we will spend eternity with the Lord. There is no greater treasure in all the world, in all the universe than that!