

**PROVERBS**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Proverbs chapter 12 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As you remember from last time, we are in a section of Proverbs where we see each verse focusing on a subject instead of several verses on one subject. And 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 12****VERSE 1**

1. Several weeks back I was talking to a person who denied the deity of Jesus, he believed that Jesus is just a man. I tried to show him Scriptures that proved that Jesus, in the Incarnation was fully God and fully man but his response was, "I have heard it all before!" In other words, he was not interested in learning, he was not interested in correction, he was not interested in the truth. And for those that refuse instruction, refuse to hear what God's Word has to say, notice what God says of them, they are "**stupid**" they are fools! That is what God has said!

2. We need to understand that we are always learning, we are always growing in our relationship with the Lord. That never ends until we go to be with Him. Peter gives us this warning in II Peter 2:17-18, **“You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.”** May we always be open to what God is saying to us and not only hear but obey! “Learn!” wisdom cries out. It’s an opportunity for us to save ourselves a lot of heartache.

### VERSES 2-3

1. Once again we see a comparison between a good man and a wicked man, a man who loves the Lord and a man who does not. And it is not necessarily that God is waiting for the wicked to do something wrong and He will pour out His wrath upon them. Their own devices you might say will cause them trouble.

And as much as the wicked accumulate all kinds of wealth and possessions, their kingdom will not be established on the earth for it is built upon the shifting sand. That is just the reality, you can’t take it with you and in the end, if that is what you have built your life upon, you will lose.

2. But on the other end of the spectrum are the righteous and their lives are built upon the Rock, upon Jesus and they shall not be moved! Their roots are sunk deeply into Christ from which they will be nourished. And what they do in this life will be gain for them in heaven, they, in a sense can take it with them, that is, the things that they do for the Lord.

And as a person continues to draw from the Lord, as they love His Word, as they mediated upon His Word, and as they obey what the Lord is telling them, they shall be blessed. It is as Psalm 1:3 tells us, that we “**... shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever [we do] shall prosper.**” You will not lose as you abide in the Lord!

#### VERSE 4

1. We will deal more with this when we get to Proverbs chapter 31 but the idea here is that it is so precious to have a wife that brings honor to her husband. But a wife that puts down her husband, a wife that disgraces her husband makes him feel like his bones have rotted away, and that is not a good thing. Be blessed with the woman that God has given to you and if she does not meet your expectations, are you meeting her expectations? Pour out your love upon each other. None of us deserve the love of our spouse and yet they freely give it to us, at least they should. It is not based upon how good we are, it is based on how good our God is and the forgiveness He has shown us, complete forgiveness! It is as this little short poem goes, may we follow.

To keep your marriage brimming  
 With love in the loving cup,  
 Whenever you're wrong, admit it;  
 Whenever you're right, shut up.

- Ogden Nash

VERSES 5-6

1. The righteous seek to help people, rescue them while the wicked seek an opportunity to rip them off, kick them when they are down. Now this is a principle and of course there are times when Christians don't act like this and there are times when the wicked do right. But look at our society today and you will see that the wicked, the lawless seek to take advantage of others and we as Christians should seek to deliver them, to bless them.

VERSE 7

1. The righteous will stand because they have built their life upon the Rock, Jesus Christ. The unrighteous will be overthrown and this just makes sense. When justice catches up with the wicked, that is the end of them. And that speaks of both in this life and the life to come. But, like I have said, we have placed our feet upon the Rock, Jesus Christ and we will not be moved, not because of our righteousness but because of His righteousness is imputed into our lives by faith!

VERSE 8

1. As you look at our country today, those with perverse minds, twisted in their thinking, bent on evil, are looked up to and the righteous are looked down upon. Why is that? Because people will gravitate towards the wicked so that their deeds will not be exposed by the light of the righteous. But the reality is, those who act wisely should be spoken well of but for those that have no principles, that act foolishly, they should not be looked up to!

VERSE 9

1. The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“Better is he who is lightly esteemed but works for his own support than he who assumes honor for himself and lacks bread.”** And The Living Bible states, **“It is better to get your hands dirty-and eat, than to be too proud to work-and starve.”** The idea is that it is better to be of low rank and have food on your table than to pretend to be something you are not and starve. Don’t be ashamed of the work you do, God has placed you in that position and thus, in all you do bring glory to Him. He is providing for you, work hard and be thankful!

VERSE 10

1. We have many today that are on opposite ends of the spectrum regarding animals. They feel animals are just as important as man and should have the same rights as a man. On the other end of the spectrum are those that treat animals with cruelty, they beat them or starve them or have them fight other animals and that too is wrong. There is a balance. Animals are part of God’s creation and thus we should treat them kindly and not abuse them. You can tell if a person is walking with the Lord by how they treat their animals and remember God is watching and He created them. Thus, take care of them.

VERSE 11

1. I don't know about you but I have been around people that all they do is talk about the things that they are going to do so that they can make money and that is the problem. It is all talk and no action. They never work, they only talk. And Solomon is telling us that we need to work, we need to take care of our family. It is far better to work so you will have bread to eat because dreams will not satisfy your hunger.

2. Now we can apply this spiritually. We need to dig into God's Word, plowing the soil of the Scriptures. And yes, at times it may seem dry, it may seem meaningless, it may seem like nothing is happening in your life. But make no mistake about it, the more you dig into the Scriptures the more bread you will take into your life and you will be will-nourished spiritually speaking!

VERSE 12

1. The idea here is that which is taken from others unjustly. That is what the wicked do. On the other side are the righteous and they are rooted and grounded in Christ and they will bear fruit and not only physical fruit but spiritual fruit!

VERSE 13

1. Here we see that the wicked are often trapped by the words they speak. Think about a liar, he has to keep close tabs on his story or he will be found out. And really to support his lie he has to come up with other lies to help him out. And they get trapped by what they say.

But for the righteous, the words they speak, the truth they speak will see them through; they will not get trapped by their words. Now that is not to say that we will not endure hardships as we speak the truth, but God will see us through those times!

#### VERSE 14

1. Both good speech and good behavior has its rewards.

#### VERSE 15

1. You can't tell a fool anything. Why is that? Because he knows everything and he will not listen. But a wise man will welcome advice. He understands that he does not know everything and there is wisdom in listening. But let me also say this, whatever counsel people give you always place it alongside God's Word to see if they are in agreement because if they are not, then God is not wrong but the counsel you have received is wrong.

2. When I speak of walking down the right path I am speaking of walking in the wisdom of God. On the other end of the spectrum are those that walk in the wisdom of man and that is just foolish. And yes, they may be thinking they are walking in the right direction, but as right as they may think they are, they are heading in the wrong direction. It is as Jeremiah 10:23 says, "**O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.**" So what are we to do then? Psalm 119:133 tells us, "**Direct my steps by Your word. . .**"

God's Word gives us direction in where we are to go, what we are to do. Paul reminded Timothy in II Timothy 3:16-17, "**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**"

You see, God's Word tells us what is right, doctrine. God's Word tells us what is wrong, reproof. God Word tells us how to get right when we have gone astray, correction. And God's Word tells us how to walk right, to stay in line, instruction in righteousness! And the culmination of walking in God's Word, being obedient to what God has said is, "**that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**" That is wisdom, walking with God, following Him and not the wisdom of man which is foolish!

#### VERSE 16

1. Solomon is saying that a fool does not know how to restrain his wrath, he just let's things explode. He blows up over the slightest provocation. The lesson here is that we are not to allow our flesh to overtake us and blow up; we must not be a hot-head! We need to allow God's Spirit to speak through us and to calm our emotions down so we don't blow up, but we build up!

#### VERSES 17-18

1. Our words should build up and not tear down. But how often do the words we speak act like a sword and slash away at people's character. There is no healing; there is only hurt, pain. But for the wise person, the words that they speak will bring health, they will bring healing and many times they will take care of those wounds that have been inflicted upon them by the one who speaks with cutting teeth!



Paul put it like this in Galatians 5:13-15, **“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!”**

Our liberty in Christ is to be used in love. That is the practical application. Paul’s point is this, for those legalists who were concerned about Christian liberty being used to justify sin, letting the flesh nature rise up, that we are not to use the liberty we have in Christ as a base of operations to sin. That old life or that flesh nature was crucified and yet it does try to resurrect itself in our lives. Folks, we are in Christ and that means the mind of Christ flows in us and is reflected in our actions, at least it should be. It does not mean we are perfect, but also don’t use that as an excuse for your behavior!

What can happen amongst Christians is they can allow the flesh to rise up and before you know it Christians are devouring each other, taking sides, divisions arise all because they love themselves more than they love others. All because self is being manifested instead of the Lord! They are right and everyone else is wrong and they will devour others because of the stance that they have taken.

And in the end they consume each other – and in the body of Christ, sadly to say, we can call that cannibalism! That should not be, as Paul said in Philippians 2:1-5, **“Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”** Let the liberty we have in Christ be guided by God’s love and this selfish, prideful, destructive attitude will not be seen in our lives and if it is there, it will melt away! May our words bring healing and not cut each other up!

#### VERSES 19-20

1. Truth will stand and as we speak the truth it will bring forth peace to people’s lives who receive it and what joy that brings to our own hearts. Now if you go around planning on how to bring evil into people’s lives, getting your own way, there is no rest, there is no peace for that person. But there is tremendous joy when you plan on how to bring others to the Prince of Peace Jesus Christ. There is tremendous joy when you plan to bless people instead of curse them!

VERSE 21

1. Solomon is not saying that in this life the righteous never are harmed. But this is a general principle. If you are living a righteous life chances are you are not going to have harm come upon you. Again, that is not the rule but the principle. Now in saying that I can say with 100% confidence, it is the rule that in the end the righteous will stand and the wicked will be judged. The just will be preserved from the evil consequences that follow the behavior of the wicked. We can rest in that!

VERSE 22

1. This seems pretty obvious to me and I hope to you. One of the characteristics of a Christian is that he should be truthful. I realize that there are those who feel that there are situations that we find ourselves in that it is better to lie than to tell the truth, like to protect a life. That is situational ethics and I disagree.

First of all if you are speaking lies then whose son are you? I don't want to offend anyone here but this is just the reality of who we are following if we think lying is okay. In I John 1:5 we are told, "**... that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.**" I think we would all agree with that.

But then in John 8:44 Jesus said to the Jewish religious leaders of His day, "**You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.**" You see, lying is wrong no matter how you slice it up. And if you are lying you are not manifesting the character of God but of Satan!

Lying is not of God and I understand to protect a life, like during the Holocaust, how could you give up a Jewish person to the Germans? Have you taken God out of the picture? Don't you think God would give you the words to say and don't you think He would protect that person without lying? I do because God is light, there is no darkness in Him at all and if He wants us to lie in certain situations that would be darkness!

### VERSE 23

1. Have you ever been around people that have just spewed forth all kinds of information just to show how smart they are and in the end it just shows how foolish they are? Sometimes it is better to say nothing than to speak foolishness.

### VERSE 24

1. If you want to be a sluggard you better be careful for you may end up being a slave to someone or something. People that are on welfare are a slave to the government; they are dependent upon them to care for them. And it may work fine now, but when they begin to tell you what you can and can't do, you won't have an option, you are a slave to them! And I don't know about you but I have experienced this, that the more I do the more energy that I have. But when I sit around doing nothing my energy actually diminishes! As you work, as you serve the Lord God will give you the strength to do the work. If you do nothing, then you get nothing! Solomon speaks a lot about slothfulness, laziness.

VERSE 25

1. We spend billions of dollars a year treating mental health issues. They say that 1 in 4 Americans suffer from some kind of mental health issue. That is more than any other country in the world! And yet Solomon gives us not only the problem but the cure. Notice what causes depression. It is anxiety about this, anxiety about that, worry about this, you worry about that. Then, before long you become depressed, overwhelmed.

“Thanks Pastor Joe, but how does that make me feel better?” Solomon tells us, “**But a good word makes it glad.**” In other words, don’t isolate yourself from people, which happens in situations like this. But hang around those people that will encourage you, lift you up, be involved in helping others and that anxiety, that depression will be lifted. Many people are anxious today about a variety of things. And sometimes all it takes is a kind word to lift their spirits.

VERSE 26

1. As parents we watch out for our children, who their friends are because some friends can be detrimental to our children, they can lead them down the wrong path. And what is true for our children is also true for us. Be careful who you hang around with. Paul warns us of this very thing in I Corinthians 15:33-34, “**Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits. Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.**”

VERSE 27

1. The picture here is that the slothful man lacks the inertia to get started and/or he lacks the drive to finish what he began. He may enjoy the hunt but does not like to dress his kill.

What does that mean for us today? Life is not always easy, but don't give up. Continue doing what God has called you to do. Paul said in I Corinthians 15:58 "**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**" You see, the diligent man will value what he has worked for and he will use it for the best. A great lesson for us as we serve the Lord!

VERSE 28

1. Listen to how The NIV translates this verse, "**In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality.**" There truly are only two paths to walk, one that leads to life through Jesus Christ and one that leads to death outside of Christ. There is the narrow way and the broad way, what path are you going to choose?

**PROVERBS 13**VERSE 1

1. How important it is to listen to our father, to receive his instructions as we are growing up and even later on in life. And it is even more important to listen to our heavenly Father for He has what is best for our life. We are a fool if we don't heed His instructions.

2. Solomon is going to speak a lot on discipline. The reason being is he saw what the lack of discipline by his father David accomplished. One example is when his son Amnon raped his step-sister Tamar and then threw her out. David did nothing. Yes he was angry but that is as far as it went. No action on his part. So Absalom, David's son and brother of Tamar, kills Amnon. David was a very godly man, he loved the Lord but he missed the mark in the area of discipline. (II Samuel 13).

### VERSES 2-3

1. As I have said before, what flows from our mouth is a reflection of what is in our heart. And thus, if good flows from our lips then there is blessing. What you speak will affect your own spirit. And there are times when we speak what is ungodly that we will find trouble. This is very applicable to our day. If you open your mouth to the wrong person you may get your head blown off. Thus, preserve your life by not speaking foolishly.

2. Maybe this little acrostic will help us when we consider what to say, use the word, ***THINK!***

**T** is it truthful?  
**H** is it helpful?  
**I** is it inspiring?  
**N** is it needful?  
**K** is it kind?

VERSE 4

1. You can desire many things, but unless you get up and work, you will only have empty dreams. One writer illustrates it this way. “Adam Clark is reported to have spent 40 years writing his commentary on the Scriptures. Noah Webster labored 36 years forming his dictionary; in fact, he crossed the ocean twice to gather material needed to make the book absolutely accurate. Milton rose at 4 o’clock every morning in order to have sufficient hours to compose and rewrite his poetry which stands among the best of the world’s literature. Gibbon spent 26 years on his book *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, but it towers as a monument to careful research and untiring dedication to his task. . . . These men enjoyed what they were doing, and each one threw all of his energy into his effort no matter how difficult the job. The most happy and productive people are those who are diligent in their labors for the betterment of mankind and the glory of God.” (Bosch, Daily Bread).

I can’t agree with that more. You can see the joy in people’s lives when they are serving the Lord. I do understand that there is work involved, but when you realize that God is using you, what an honor, what a privilege. And please understand that serving the Lord does not only mean in the church. It speaks of in the home, at work, in the store, wherever you go you are serving Him and you should not be a lazy man or a sluggard in what you are doing for Him. Give your best and leave the rest to Him!



VERSE 5

1. Lying is evil and God hates evil, thus we should hate lying! We have talked about this, but it is an important subject. We need to be honest. When you think about Abraham Lincoln, what comes to mind? For me, it is “Honest Abe.” And he did not get that reputation by lying. J. Allen Blair tells this story of Honest Abe. He wrote,

It is said of Abraham Lincoln that he would accept no case in which the client did not have justice on his side. One time a man came to employ him. Lincoln stared at the ceiling, yet listened intently as the facts were given. Abruptly, he swung around in his chair.

“You have a pretty good case in technical law,” he said, “but a pretty bad one in equity and justice. You will have to get someone else to win the case for you. I could not do it. All the time while pleading before the jury, I’d be thinking, Lincoln, you’re a liar! I might forget myself and say it out loud.”

Lying and all forms of guilt grieve the heart of God. No Christian should lie or deceive, regardless of consequences to himself. If he does, he will never advance in the things of God.

- J. Allen Blair

VERSES 6-7

1. Yes, in the eyes of the world he that has the most possessions is rich. But, in the eyes of God, he who has a relationship with Him, He whose sins are forgiven has the ***GREATEST RICHES!*** And thus, a righteous life is a protected life, protected by God. He saved us, He will sustain us and one day He will take us to glory to be with Him! It does not get any better than that!

VERSE 8

1. If you are poor you don't have to worry about anyone kidnapping you for ransom, only if you are rich. One of the advantages of not being rich I guess.

VERSES 9-10

1. The testimony of the righteous is like a light. And that light burns brightly in a world that is in darkness. But the wicked offer no hope, no light, just more darkness.

2. Solomon then talks about pride and contention and he says that they go hand-in-hand. Why is that? Because with pride comes the attitude of "Mr. Know-it-all" who is never wrong. Wisdom will listen and pray instead of quarreling. Listen to what C. S. Lewis had to say regarding pride.

He wrote,

It is Pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began. Other vices may sometimes bring people together; you may find good fellowship and jokes and friendliness among drunken people or unchaste people. But Pride always means enmity – it is enmity. And not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God.

- C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity, pp. 110-111

VERSE 11

1. When you work for wages you appreciate it more and you usually don't spend money foolishly. Not only that, but when you obtain things dishonestly you have to worry about the person you took advantage of because they may come to get it back.

VERSE 12

1. Without hope the heart fails. But, as that hope becomes a reality, it refreshes, it brings us joy. Where is our hope found? It is found in Jesus and His soon return. Paul put it like this in Titus 2:13, **“looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”** Where is our hope found? In Jesus and His return, don’t lose that hope but look forward it! I am amazed because there are many Christians who are not looking for His return and they have lost sight of that blessed hope!

VERSES 13-14

1. Solomon is speaking of the Word of God and that we need to fear it, we need to obey it for there is life if we do. Remember what Jesus said to the religious leaders in John 5:39-40, **“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.”** Thus, we must first come to Christ and then remain in His Word for it gives us life, nourishment as it points us back to the giver and sustainer of life, Jesus Christ.

VERSE 15

1. God has given us good understanding of what we should do through His Word. If we transgress what God has said then you are tempting God to do something about it. You will learn the lesson that God is trying to teach you the easy way or the hard way. But we need to understand that the way of the transgressor is hard, very hard. Just watch the news and you will see that every day!

VERSE 16

1. In other words, a man's conduct reveals his character. If you are wise you will think things through instead of acting on impulse and put on display your folly for everyone to see!

VERSE 17

1. Here's the thing. Paul tells us that as Christians we are ambassadors for Christ. We see this in II Corinthians 5:18-21 as Paul said, **“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”**

Because all that Christ has done for us, reconciling us back to God, we, as His ambassadors need to bring that message of reconciliation to the world. Keep in mind that an ambassador doesn't speak for himself but for the one who sent him, and for us it is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ! Thus, as we go out we implore people; we come alongside people urging them to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, to not allow the terror of the Lord to come upon them, the wrath of God for their rejection of Jesus!

We need to keep in mind that our words can bring health to people or they can bring destruction. When there is gossip, slander, and-so-on in the body of Christ that will not build-up, but it will tear people down. We are representing the Lord in all that we do and say, may we represent Him in light of who He is and not who we are!

VERSE 18

1. We can look at this two different ways. First of all we can look at this in the physical realm. There are those who don't listen to the wisdom of others and they do all kinds of foolish things to make money or whatever. And in the end they go bankrupt because of their foolishness. On the other end of the spectrum is the spiritual side. Once again if you do not listen to the wise counsel of mature Christians, if you don't listen to the counsel of the Lord from His Word, then you will end up spiritually bankrupt!

VERSE 19

1. What Solomon is saying here is that good men are pleased with they achieve their goals. And I don't know about you but it does feel good to accomplish a task through honest and hard work. One of the joys was seeing this building coming together as we built the bathrooms, the classrooms, the stage and all the other things that went into this building being accredited by the State for our occupancy. That first service was awesome, it felt so good that the goals that we had set we accomplished and we did it with the joy of the Lord!

On the other end of the spectrum are those that are fools, they are bent on evil, they are caught in its grip and they refuse to let go. They feel it is just too hard to walk with Jesus so they will just continue down this path because it is easier and it meets their fleshly needs. But their end point is death and destruction, being eternally separated from God. Not a good end point for them!

VERSE 20

1. This should just make sense to us. Your actions will reflect the people you are hanging out with. If you walk with evil people then that is the wisdom you will gain. Don't allow their habits to corrupt your ways – don't walk with them. David said in Psalm 1:1, “**Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful.**”

I don't care who you are or how strong you think you are, if you hang out with evil people then it will be reflected in what you do and what you say. Paul put it like this in I Corinthians 15:33, “**Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’**” He was not joking when he said that, it is just the reality and we would be wise to heed the warning.

2. Some of you might not believe me on this, but you can read of a group of men that banded with David. Not the best men around. We are told in I Samuel 22:2, “**All those who were in distress or in debt or discontented gathered around him, and he became their leader. About four hundred men were with him.**”

These men became David's mighty men because as they hung out with David, they became like him. Now hear me out on this. You are not going to be able to help anyone unless you hang out, in a sense, with the Son of David, Jesus Christ. You will not be able to impact anyone for the Lord unless you spend time with the Lord. As we do we will take on His characteristics and we will be able to bring that to others. And as we bring the unsaved to Jesus we also are to be hanging out with other Christians because iron sharpens iron as Solomon says in Proverbs 27:17 or we keep each other sharp in the Lord. We need to fellowship with wise people so we may gain that wisdom and walk in the path of righteousness.

VERSE 21

1. This again just makes sense. For the sinner, evil comes after them. They are always fearful of losing it all, their money, their jobs, their reputation, their possessions and-so-on because how they obtained it many times is how it is taken away from them. People will come back for what was taken from them!

On the other hand, the righteous person will be rewarded. They can enjoy a good reputation, a good life, a good reward in this life and ultimately in the life to come. That is not to say that nothing bad ever happens to a righteous person, but we don't have to fear these things because the Lord is with us and He will see us through this life. We don't have to keep looking over our shoulders to see if evil is coming after us because the Lord tells us good will be our reward. What you sow is what you reap is the idea.

VERSE 22

1. When we read this we tend to think of material things. We tend to leave them our house, our bank accounts, our insurance policy payout and-so-on, we can even leave them our debt, which is not nice, but it does happen. I don't think that is the only idea here. I see this as also being spiritual wealth that we can leave behind. This is speaking of a spiritual heritage, a good reputation, an example of how to live out your faith and fight the good fight, to finish the race. What an honor, what a privilege for parents and grandparents to leave behind for their children and their grandchildren!

Now I do realize that many do not see this as important. They think that leaving wealth, material things is more important to leave behind. Listen again to what Solomon is saying here. He tells us, **“But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.”** That is what happens to what they leave behind. Let me give you an example to show you what I mean.

Remember when the children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt. The Egyptians were very wealthy. And as Pharaoh refused to let God’s people go God sent ten plagues upon them and each time they refused, until after the tenth plague, the death of the first born of each family and of the animals. Then they wanted them to leave. And in Exodus 12:35-36 we are told, **“Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.”**

All the treasures they had amassed for themselves were given to the righteous you might say; it was all stored up for them. We see this as the children of Israel entered the Promise Land and the cities and the fields were already established for them. In Joshua 24:13 we see this spoken of, **“I have given you a land for which you did not labor, and cities which you did not build, and you dwell in them; you eat of the vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.”** The Canaanites had built these homes and planted all these fields to pass down but because of their wickedness, it was given to the Jewish people, the righteous you might say, not by works but by faith!



And yes, in this life it may be difficult, we may not see it as easy as we would like, but in the end the righteous will be rewarded. The unrighteous may have had their time for 60 or 70 years, but we will have an eternity with the Lord. You see, our full reward will be received when we go home to be with the Lord!

### VERSE 23

1. The idea here is that the poor will do whatever it takes to cultivate their land intensively so that they can get a greater yield from the land that they have. They use what they have to have the best advantage. What a great lesson this is for us to learn, spiritually speaking. We may not have a lot but what God has given to us we can use to the fullest and see a great harvest from it. We see that with our small church and what God has done through it and is doing through it. Are we willing to do the work, to use what we have, that is truly the question? It is faithfulness unto God that He is looking for and not ability, He will supply that!
2. On the other end are the rich you might say. They have much bigger farms and they come to ruin because of their injustice is the idea. What they do is not going to be fruitful no matter how much they have been given because they are using it in an unjust way!

VERSE 24

1. If you love your children you will discipline them early and quickly. Don't wait. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, "**Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.**" If you don't deal with issues when they are young, many times the issues will be dealt with by others when they are older. And we see this played out in the criminal justice system, people who are sentenced to death are on death row for 10 or 15 years, and that is no deterrent. Justice must be done "speedily!"

2. Now in terms of disciplining children, there are many ideas out there and what Solomon says here is disturbing to some, many consider spanking a form of child abuse. Please understand he is not saying to beat your child to death, he is saying to discipline him with the rod of correction and if you don't then you really don't love them!

For years Dr. Benjamin Spock encouraged parents to be permissive. After living to see a generation of bratty, pesky children, he admitted that he had been wrong. He said, "Inability to be firm is, to my mind, the commonest problem of parents in America today. . . . the child psychiatrists, psychologists, teachers, social workers, and pediatricians, like myself." he says are to be blamed, at least in part, for this mentality with its devastating results.

Please listen to this report from the Minnesota Crime Commission on what can happen if we don't raise our children according to the standards that God has set. Now they are not going to say that we have to raise them according to godly standards but the idea is discipline, training them up and that is exactly what God is saying. We are told,

The Minnesota Crime Commission reports, “Every baby starts life as a little savage. He is completely selfish and self-centered. He wants what he wants when he wants it – his bottle, his mother’s attention, his playmate’s toy, his uncle’s watch. Deny him these wants, and he seethes with rage and aggressiveness, which would be murderous, were he not helpless. He is dirty. He has no morals, no knowledge, no skills. This means that all children, not just certain children, are born delinquent. If permitted to continue in the self-centered world of his infancy, given free reign to his impulsive actions to satisfy his wants, every child would grow up a criminal, a thief a killer, a rapist.”

- Ray Stedman, From Guilty to Glory

And that is exactly what we are doing in our society today. We are losing more rights as parents to train up our children and discipline them and the results are seen across the board with all kinds of bad behavior, violent behavior, and immoral behavior. They have been trained well, but not in the things of God! It is as Solomon warns us, “**He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.**” I believe we would see a great reduction in crime if we would lovingly use the rod when our kids are growing up. That way the child knows he’s been dealt with. He can vent his emotions. He can be embraced and kissed and can understand that what he did wrong has been dealt with. May we listen and obey what the Lord has said!

VERSE 25

1. The wicked are never satisfied, always trying to feed that monster we call greed. But the righteous should be satisfied in the Lord. His soul should be satisfied. Think about this for a minute, if all you received from God was His salvation, what more do you want? The truth of the matter is that God does bless us more than we could imagine, more than we can think! May we learn to be satisfied in the Lord, rest in Him because for the wicked, there is no rest!