

PROVERBS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Proverbs chapter 14 as we continue our study through the Word of God. As we have seen in our study of Proverbs that it not only points out our weaknesses, our failures, but it also points us to the way of righteousness, how we are to live out our faith. So let's dig into our study this evening beginning in Proverbs chapter 14 starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word.

PROVERBS 14**VERSE 1**

1. Now I do realize that in the time we are living in what I have to say is not going to be popular. But Solomon is telling us that a wise woman is the one who realizes that her priority, her ministry in a sense, is to build her house. I am not speaking of wood, stone, and-so-on. I am talking about instilling the love of God within the home, building up her family, encouraging her family. And as much as the world says that this is not important, just look at what has happened in our society since the attention that is needed in the home is not given. That is what Solomon is saying. We tend to be drawn in a million different directions and that just takes us off the course that God has for us. Be wise.

VERSE 2

1. This just makes sense. If you are walking in righteousness it just shows that you fear the Lord, you are doing what He has called you to do. In I John 2:6 we see John speak of this, “**He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.**”

On the other end of the spectrum is one who transgresses the ways of the Lord and it shows that he does not fear the Lord, He does not respect what the Lord is saying but he is doing his own thing. Jesus said in John 3:19-20, “**And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**”

2. Regarding this Derek Kidner wrote, “Every departure from God’s path is a pitting of one’s will, and a backing of one’s judgment, against His; but the contempt which it spells is too irrational to acknowledge.” (Derek Kidner, The Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary, p. 106). In other words, it is a battle of the wills and if you are fighting against God, you will not win in the end!

VERSE 3

1. Solomon is speaking of the person who beats people up, strikes them with their words. And he is saying that is foolish to do because in the end what you sow is what you will reap! Instead of beating people up with words we need to build them up. In the end it will save you from much hurt!

VERSE 4

1. This should make sense to you. If there is no oxen in the barns guess what? The stables will be clean! But if there are no oxen in the stables you will not have a bountiful harvest. What in the world is Solomon talking about? He is saying that to have any type of meaningful results in your life it is going to take the investment of your time, it will take work, and it may even get messy. We need to take those steps of faith and see what the Lord will do even if it gets messy. Remember, the harvest will be bountiful! Too often people want everything in order, perfect and to do that you aren't doing anything.

Let me share this with you. When I was younger I wanted to have our house clean. But there was a problem, well, two problems, two young boys! I finally realized that it is impossible to have a clean house because there are people living in the house, it is not a showcase for people to look at, it is a place to live. If I wanted a clean house then forget the kids, but then I would miss out on the blessings they bring to my life! Don't miss out on what God wants to do, even if it gets a little messy!

VERSE 5

1. We need to be careful in the things that we say to others. We need to not only speak the truth but also don't speak the truth that misses the point and leads people to a false conclusion.

VERSE 6

1. If you come to God as a scorner, as a skeptic you are a fool and you will not gain any wisdom. We need to approach God as little children asking Him to not only speak to our hearts but that we would also obey what He is saying to us. I like what Jesus said in Matthew 11:25, **“... ‘I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.’”** If you want to be wise then come before the Lord in humility and believe what He is saying to you through His Word!

VERSE 7

1. Again, this is not earth-shattering news, it just makes sense. Don't hang around people that are going to bring you down, that are going to tell you things that will hurt you and not help you.

VERSE 8

1. A wise person will consider where he is going and the consequences of his actions. That should just make sense. A child does not understand this; he learns that there are consequences to his actions. The problem for the fool is that he has not learned that lesson and he ends up going down that path and has to endure the consequences of his actions.

VERSE 9

1. You can tell where you are at by what causes you to laugh. And before you think too highly of yourself, what do you watch on television that makes you laugh? You see, Hollywood has found a way for us to laugh at sin, and it is funny, but it also makes us comfortable with sin. This is a warning to us, what makes us laugh, sinful things?

VERSE 10

1. Solomon is saying that we are the only ones who can truly understand the pain we are going through and the joys that we go through. Yes, others who have experienced similar things can help you through these times, but again, you alone will know what it feels like.

Well, let me clarify that. There is One who knows you better than you know yourself and He searches the hearts and minds of people. He has experienced what you are going through and that person is Jesus. Paul tells us in Hebrews 4:14-16, **“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”**

We need to bring our cares to Him, our anxieties to Him because He cares for us. He alone knows exactly how we feel and thus, He can bring His comfort to our lives!

VERSE 11

1. The earth dwellers, the wicked live in houses. The righteous live in tents. I know, that does not seem fair. Why is it that they live in houses and for the righteous we live in tents? Paul made that very clear when he wrote, **“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”** Philippians 3:20-21. You see, this is not our home, our citizenship is in heaven. In the end their homes will be destroyed for they sold their soul for the things of this world. The righteous will enter into glory with the Lord.

VERSE 12

1. What sends most if not all people to Hell? “I did it my way” mentality! Cults grow because they appeal to the flesh. They work their way into heaven or so they think. It is their good character that will get them in. Again, it appeals to the flesh and if you look at all the cults today, that is the focus, man reaching up to God by his efforts, his good works. Christianity is God reaching down to sinful man and saving him. And here’s the thing. It doesn’t matter how sincere you are, if you are heading down the wrong path you are not going to get to the destination that you wanted. That should just make sense. In other words, all roads don’t lead to God, only one and that is through Jesus Christ. Jesus said in John 14:6, “**. . . ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’**” There is no other way except through Christ. If you go any other way you will find death, eternal separation from God!

VERSE 13

1. Many people who are the life of the party are broken on the inside. Think of the comedians, those who make their living making others laugh, and those that have died because of a drug overdose or suicide several years ago. And even for Christians we laugh and we cry because of what we face in this life. The key is to keep focused on the Lord. He does not want us to be stoic, without emotion, but to rest in Him, especially during those times.

VERSE 14

1. Make no mistake about it. The person who wanders from the Lord will suffer the consequences of his rebellion. Remember Naomi whose family left the land of promise to dwell with the enemy and in Ruth 1:20-21 we are told, **“But she said to them, ‘Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord has brought me home again empty. Why do you call me Naomi, since the Lord has testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?’”** Her and her family wandered from the Lord and there were consequences to her actions. Now God did restore the years the locust have eaten you might say and did bless her when she returned!

And we all know the prodigal son who left his father’s house and we are told in Luke 15:17-19, **“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’”**” You see the consequences of his wandering and yet, when he returned his father blessed him, not because he deserved it, but that is just like our heavenly Father who gives to us what we do not deserve when we return to Him.

We need to be satisfied with what God has given to us, we need to stay close to Him and not wander away thinking the world has something that is good for us. It doesn’t. We need to learn as David did, **“As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.”** Psalm 17:14.

If you can't be satisfied in the Lord there are those times that God will give you what you want but it will hurt you spiritually speaking. When the children of Israel complained about the Manna or "angles food" that God was providing for them, they wanted meat instead or dead things, God finally gave it to them. But Psalm 106:15 tells us of the result of their cravings, what it brought to them. We are told, "**And He gave them their request, But sent leanness into their soul.**" Our satisfaction needs to come from above, from the Lord because that is where true satisfaction is found!

VERSE 15

1. Why are so many Christians taken away by the winds of doctrine that blow through the church? Because they are gullible, which makes them very susceptible to every new fad, every new idea that comes down the pike. We need to take what we hear and lay it alongside the Word of God and if it is not found in the Word then we need to toss it aside. Wisdom here is considering the steps you are going to take according to the Word of God.

VERSE 16

1. Once again we see Solomon speaking of a person who considers the consequences of his actions, this is a wise person. But for the evil person, they are arrogant and careless, they don't consider the cost of what they are doing and they will suffer the consequences!

VERSE 17

1. Guess what happens when your temper boils over? You are in hot water! Here is the person that kicks the dog, slams doors, puts his fist through the wall, he yells and curses and walks out in rage. That is not a gift of the Spirit, it is a work of the flesh and thus, it is not of God. This person who is hot tempered acts and speaks foolishly.

VERSES 18-19

1. The person who refuses to listen to sound teaching is not going to be wise but they will increase their foolishness! Those that study, learn and apply sound teaching, the Word of God to their lives will increase in wisdom and knowledge.

2. As you can see in verse 19, as God comes to set up His kingdom, these things will come to pass. Good will triumph over evil you might say.

VERSES 20-21

1. Here is just the reality. If you are poor people don't really care about you. My son Tony is working with the homeless down in Madison and his eyes were opened how people treat the downcast. But, if you are rich, guess what? You will find a multitude of friends. The reason is because people are respecters of persons, and God is not. We are equal in His eyes!

In fact, verse 21 is difficult in that if you are looking down on the poor, maybe thinking they are getting what they deserve or why are they not working harder to improve themselves, Solomon says you are sinning. We are to have mercy on the poor and the byproduct of that kind of attitude in our lives is happiness!

VERSE 22

1. Several weeks back I had someone call and say that wanted to cut my ATT church phone bill in half. It sounded good so I asked her to e-mail me the details so I can look them over. Her reply, "If we did that we would not be able to offer this rate, it would cost us a lot of money." My response, "E-mails are free." End of conversation. If you plot mischief, evil, you will get repaid for it in the end, your plans will fail, you will not get what you think you should. God will reward the upright, those who do good. Again, what you sow is what you will reap!

VERSE 23

1. I can't tell you over the years the people who had all kinds of plans to work in the church, all kinds of ideas that they wanted to do and that was it. It was all talk and no action. Make no mistake about it, talk is cheap. But if you do what you say you are going to do, then it is going to cost you something, but in the end, you are blessed. In other words, don't talk about what you are going to do, go out and work!

VERSE 24

1. Money, wealth is not evil but many times it leads people to do evil things to maintain or obtain them. For the wise man, he will use the riches that God has blessed him with wisely. He will use them to bring glory to God, to minister the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost. For the foolish man, he will use what he has to glorify himself!

VERSE 25

1. Now in a court of law a true witness will deliver someone who was wrongly accused and a false witness will speak lies and bring trouble wherever he goes. I believe this goes far beyond the idea of a courtroom. I think it speaks of bringing the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world and seeing them saved. If we change the message, if we water it down, we are a false witness and people's eternal destiny lies in the balances!

VERSES 26-27

1. As we fear the Lord, as we respect who He is, then we will have great confidence in what He is saying to us, we will obey His Words! It helps us to avoid the snares of death. Not only that but what we pass on to our children is important. We need to give our children a Godly heritage, a place of refuge from the world. It will be life to them. Again, as Solomon opened up this chapter he spoke of the building up of the home life, and that also includes the father's responsibility.

VERSE 28

1. This should be obvious to us. A king who has no loyalty, he doesn't have many following him is not honored, he is not strong. But a king is strong when the people support him.

VERSE 29

1. Solomon is saying that a man who is patient when he is incited has great insight, he has great understanding. He is a man that is under the control of the Spirit of God. One who is short-fused; one who is hot-tempered, one who just blows up all the time is obviously not. It is as James 1:19 tells us, “**So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.**” In other words, don’t be foolish in what you say, be in prayer!

VERSE 30

1. A person that is coveting what others have will never be satisfied and it will eat away at their life. Dr. Paul Adolph put it like this, “Some of the most important causes of so-called nervous disease which psychiatrists recognize are guilt, resentment (an unforgiving spirit), fear, anxiety, frustration, indecision, doubt, jealousy, selfishness, and boredom. Unfortunately, many psychiatrists, while definitely effective in tracing the causes of emotional disturbances which cause disease, have significantly failed in their methods of dealing with these disturbances because they omit faith in God as their approach.” In other words, peace of mind is health to the body. And our peace is found in Jesus Christ, fill your life with Him, dwell upon Him and His peace will calm your spirit and you will find satisfaction. Envy will not only rob you of your joy and fellowship with the Lord, but it will affect you physically.

VERSE 31

1. If you take advantage of the poor you are insulting your Creator, you are insulting God. If you are truly honoring God then you will reach out to the poor, you will reach out to the needy, not only those who are physically poor, but spiritually also!

VERSE 32

1. In death the wicked are banished from entering into eternity with the Lord, but the righteous can take refuge in the Lord and enter into eternity with Him.

VERSE 33

1. Wisdom is at home in the heart of a wise person and he does not have to prove himself. For the fool, he can't stop talking about himself and what he has done, showing he is just a fool.

VERSE 34

1. We don't have to look very far to see this played out today. Just look at the corruption, the scandals, all kinds of evil that permeates our society and it begins with the leaders of a nation. When the leaders move away from the true and living God their actions will reflect that! As you look at the history of mighty nations, such as Rome, you will discover that prior to its fall blatant homosexuality was running rampant through the land. Moral decay caused the nation to crumble and fall from the inside, and I wonder how much longer God's mercy and grace will continue on this nation? If you want to see where our nation stands, just look at what evil we promote as being good. Just look at the laws that are passed and you will see that we are a nation that is rotting in sin.

Listen to what French writer Alexis de Tocqueville said after he visited America in 1831. It will shed light to what we need to return to in our nation. He said, “I sought for the greatness of the United States in her commodious harbors, her ample rivers, her fertile fields, and boundless forests – and it was not there. I sought for it in her rich mines, her vast world commerce, her public school system, and in her institutions of higher learning – and it was not there. I looked for it in her democratic Congress and her matchless Constitution – and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great!”

We are no longer great because we are no longer good and we are no longer good because we are no longer following the Lord as a nation. **“Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people.”** Solomon said it in his day and it still rings true today! The pathway of history is strewn with the wrecks, the debris, and the ruins of nations that didn’t follow this principle.

VERSE 35

1. The King of Kings and Lord of lords will honor those who faithfully serve Him. It is as Jesus said in Matthew 25:21, **“... ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’”** It is as Moffatt wrote, “The king favors an able minister; his anger is for the incompetent.”

PROVERBS 15**VERSE 1**

1. Do I even need to add to this? I don't think so because we have seen this played out before in our own lives. We know the buttons to push to stir up others and not in a good way. What I have noticed over the years that if someone is really mad, by speaking a kind word, a soft answer, it many times causes them to retreat from their hostility. Not always, but if you feed into their anger it will continue to grow. This principle is especially important in the marriage relationship. If your spouse is angry, say a kind word to them, listen to what they are saying, instead of fanning the flames because in the end, you will get burned!

VERSE 2

1. This follows with what verse 1 was saying. You see, we know what is right and what is wrong, we have that knowledge. We must then take what we know and apply it to our life, let it be seen in our actions towards others and the words we speak towards them. A fool, on the other hand, doesn't care what he says; he lets anything and everything flow from his lips. And isn't it easy to just vomit all kinds of words out of our mouth? You bet it is and it is a lot harder to speak wisely!

VERSE 3

1. One of the attributes of God is that He is omniscient, He knows everything. Now this can be comforting or convicting, depending on what you are doing. God not only knows all that we do and sees all that we do but He also knows the motivation behind what we do! Of this the Psalmist said, “**Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it.**” David was blown away by this and so should we.

Paul reminds us in Hebrews 4:13, “**And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.**” No one will get away with anything because God sees all, more than Big Brother will ever be able to do! And I think more Christians are worried today about what our government is listening in on, our phones, our television, our internet and-so-on. They are more worried about the government watching them wherever they are going. And yet they are not concerned about walking in the ways of the Lord knowing He sees all! We need to wake-up and walk accordingly, in the fear of the Lord!

VERSE 4

1. The words that we speak can either build a person up or they can tear them down. You can build up their spirit or you can break their spirit. May our words be wholesome words, may they bless people and encourage them.

VERSE 5

1. Did you ever wonder why we have two ears and just one mouth? Because we should listen twice as much as we speak and the reality is that we tend to speak more than we listen. Here we see Solomon speaking of a person who hates correction, who hates instruction and he says that this person is a fool. I remember trying to put together birthday and Christmas presents for my children when they were younger. And I was the type of person that did not need to read the instructions; or so I thought. I could put it together myself. After a while of having extra pieces, things not fitting together correctly, being tired of being a fool, I became wise and followed the instructions! May we be wise and listen to the counsel of others, not only our earthly father but our heavenly Father!

VERSE 6

1. I realize that many try to obtain more and more for their children thinking that with all these things they are blessing their children. Hear me out on this. A house that is filled with the love of God is so rich, it is such a treasure, it is more valuable than all the possessions in the world. It is a place of refuge from the storms of life. You see, trouble comes when we deviate from God's Word and heed our own counsel. And please understand that a home that moves away from God, moves away from God's Word, is out of order, our actions, the things that we are doing will affect the entire family.

VERSE 7

1. The idea here is that you can't give out what you don't have. And as Christians we are to dispense or spread the truths of God. It is as Jesus said in John 8:31-32, "**... 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'**" Let us share that freedom we have in Christ, those truths, with others.

VERSE 8

1. This makes people angry, that they can't do anything for the Lord apart from Christ. You see, God does not need anything from us and as we are told in I Samuel 15:22, "**To obey is better than sacrifice.**" Even those that are Christians, if you are walking in disobedience to the Lord He will not accept what you are doing for Him. Get right, repent and walk accordingly and then He will accept what you do for Him!

In Isaiah chapter 1 God tells Judah that He is tired of their empty sacrifices and tells them He does not delight in them. If God doesn't want our sacrifices, what does He want? In Isaiah 1:16-18 we are told, "**Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. 'Come now, and let us reason together,' Says the LORD, 'Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.'**" Get right with God, come to Jesus and then what you do for the Lord, not for salvation but out of love, will be accepted by Him.

You see, when our heart is right with God then our actions, our sacrifice will naturally follow. Many today try to buy God off with their good works, try to win favor with God by what they do. And David tells us what God is interested in when he says in Psalm 51:17, “**The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise.**” Solomon expounds on this more in the next verse.

VERSE 9

1. Not only are the sacrifices of the wicked an abomination to the Lord, but the way he walks is also an abomination. He does not hate them, He loves them and died for them, but their sin has separated them from God apart from Christ. You see, the path they are traveling on is in rebellion to God’s path, the path of righteousness, and God cannot accept that. But the Lord loves those who have come to Him and are walking in righteousness.

VERSE 10

1. Many people are living in rebellion against God and yet they believe they are serving Him. Remember Saul, who thought he was serving God by persecuting the Christians. And Saul has an encounter with Jesus on his journey to Damascus and Jesus says to him, “**... ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’**” Acts 9:4. And Saul, not sure who was speaking, said, “**... ‘Who are You, Lord?’**” And Jesus spoke and told Saul, “**... ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’**” Acts 9:5.

Now this must have just pierced Saul's heart. He was very sincere in what he was doing, but he was sincerely wrong and not serving God but fighting against the work of God. When you fight against God you are not following His way no matter how sincere you are. And like Saul, who is Paul the apostle, it sometimes takes a harsh correction to get us back on track. If you refuse to turn to Him, then you will die, you will be spiritually separated from God for eternity.

VERSE 11

1. As I said before, everything is open and naked before God, even our hearts. May people understand the reality of Hell and turn to the Lord, He knows their hearts and they will not escape His judgment apart from Christ.

VERSE 12

1. How true this is. When people are living in sin they won't go to their Christian friends because they don't want to be reproved. May we learn to be wise and patient, listening to what godly people are saying and receive their counsel! It is as Proverbs 11:14 says, "**Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.**"

VERSE 13

1. It has been said that our face is the projection screen of our soul. If your heart is filled with the joy of the Lord, then that will be reflected in your face, your appearance will shine forth. If it is not, then you will be sister solemn or brother broody!

VERSE 14

1. A wise person will continue to seek understanding, will continue to grow. But a fool feeds on foolishness, not godly wisdom. As Christians we should never stop learning, drawing near to God because as soon as we do we are backsliding!

VERSE 15

1. Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Are you fearful, worried, negative towards things or are you always wondering what God is going to do in the various situations that you face? One of the reasons John wrote I John is so that our joy may be full. When we are filled with the joy of the Lord it is like a continual feast, there is contentment, satisfaction, fulfillment, and-so-on. That is where we need to be!

VERSES 16-17

1. Think about this for a minute. You can have all the wealth in the world and still be empty outside of Christ. But you can have very little in material possessions, wealth, and yet be tremendously rich *IN* Christ. As Paul said in Ephesians 1:3, “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.**” If you can’t rejoice and be satisfied in that you will never be satisfied.

2. Solomon goes on and speaks of other blessings. He tells us that a home where there is love and a meal, which may only be vegetables, is more valuable, more precious than being in a home where you have all the fancy foods, and yet there is nothing but strife. Moffatt put it like this, “Better is a dish of vegetables, than the best beef served with hatred.” Another person wrote, “Love makes one’s difficult circumstances endurable, whereas hatred undoes all the enjoyments that good food might otherwise bring.” How true that is.

VERSE 18

1. Some people just feed on causing contentions. May we be slow to anger, speaking a kind word instead of a condemning word!

VERSE 19

1. With all the talk of the slothful person Solomon must have had a lot of dealings with lazy people. In this case a slothful man moves like he is going through a hedge of thorns, very slowly. On the other hand, we see the righteous forging ahead in their work, they are on a highway! It is great to work with people that are on fire for the Lord and they are pushing on in the work!

VERSE 20

1. A wise son brings joy to his father. But the wayward son, the son who does not listen to the counsel of his parents will disregard the tears of his mother, the feelings of his mother and do his own thing to his shame and destruction.

VERSE 21

1. I don't know how else to put this except like this. I stupid man enjoys his stupidity! A wise man will walk accordingly!

VERSE 22

1. It is safer to get a broad range of information before you start something, wise counsel is important. You can learn from the experiences of others. The important part here is that we are not to seek just any counsel, but wise counsel, that which is according to the Word of God. It is as Proverbs 12:23 says, “**. . . But the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.**”

VERSE 23

1. How important it is to know not only what to say but when to say it. In Isaiah 50:4-5 we read the words of Jesus spoken in the first person. He said, “**The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned. The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away.**” The pattern of Jesus' life was to get up early in the morning so that His day could be directed by His Father, and that should be the pattern of our life. May we have sensitive ears to hear so that the words that flow from our lips would be directed by God! May we be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit wants to do in our lives so that we may be guided by Him! May we give words that bring comfort to those around us, the comfort of God!

VERSE 24

1. God is preparing us for heaven, making us more like Him, and because of Christ, we are kept from the pit of hell. Praise the Lord for the work He not only started in us, but He will finish! And once again we are reminded of the two roads, the two destinies of the human race. One is upward, heaven. The other is downward, hell!

VERSE 25

1. Pride is one of those things that God hates, and He will bring those that are filled with pride down.

VERSE 26

1. We have seen that the sacrifice, the way and now the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord. What is God saying? He is saying that outside of Christ, outside of His righteousness being imputed into our lives by faith, we are an abomination to the Lord. We are only accepted in the beloved!

VERSE 27

1. Some people will do anything for gain, but as you do you impress upon your children the same attitude, the same sin. Work honestly and you and your household will be better for it.

VERSE 28

1. It is very important that we don't develop diarrhea of the mouth and just spew out of our mouth all kinds of foolishness. Allow God to speak through you, study to show yourself approved. As Peter said in I Peter 3:15-16, "**But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.**" Think before you speak! Don't just open your mouth and spew forth things because they will tend to be evil, vile, wicked things that flow forth! Only God can tame the tongue.

VERSE 29

1. Yes God hears every prayer but He is under no obligation to respond to those who are not His children. We are told in Isaiah 59:1-2, "**Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.**" The only prayer the Father will always answer for the unsaved is a prayer of repentance, asking God to forgive them of their sins and allowing the blood of Christ to cleanse them from their sins. And then you are adopted into the family of God!

VERSE 30

1. Here is a little experiment you can do. When you walk by people smile at them and see how they respond. For the most part they will smile back at you. Why is that? Because a cheerful smile, a cheerful countenance is contagious! It just feels good to be around people who have a cheerful smile than people that are always murmuring and complaining!

VERSES 31-32

1. Throughout the book of Proverbs Solomon warns against not heeding wise instruction, being a “Mr. Know-it-all!” Why? Because you won’t learn anything and in your foolishness, you will be led astray. The life giving counsel that we give to people is the Word of God, that is what they need, that is what will help them grow, mature in the Lord and come to the Lord in the first place!

VERSE 33

1. You first must come to God; establish a relationship with Christ, and to do that you must humble yourself. A proud person doesn’t see a need for God; a humble person can’t see any hope for their condition without Him. It is when we humble ourselves before Him that He will lift us up far higher than we could ever do on our own. As James 4:10 says, “**Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**” We all need to learn that lesson!