

PROVERBS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Proverbs chapter 16 as we continue our study through the Word of God. We are continuing in a section that has these one verse proverbs and they are packed with information for us to learn and apply to our lives. This section covers Proverbs chapter 10 through Proverbs 22:16. Regarding what we will be looking at this evening in Proverbs chapter 16, J. Vernon McGee wrote,

This is a very rich and important section - short sentences drawn from long experience, tested in the crucible of time and of suffering. They are made rich and real to us by the power of the Holy Spirit. The proverbs are for all time, although they were written specifically to the young man who was an Israelite under the Mosaic Law. However, they widen out and speak to all of our hearts in a very definite way: to rich and poor, male and female, black and white. This is a book that can reach down and touch us all.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible Vol. III, p. 55

I think that nails it for us, this book can reach down and touch us all if we allow it to, if we are open to what the Lord is showing us. With that said, let's begin reading in Proverbs chapter 16 starting in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word!

PROVERBS 16**VERSE 1**

1. Have you ever thought things through, had a plan and then in the end God overruled that plan and His purposes are completed and not ours? I have many times. God is sovereign, He rules over man and that is a good thing! And He will do this with the saved and He also does this with the unsaved. Let me show you what I mean.

Remember the story of Balaam who was hired by Balak to curse Israel. And each time he tried to curse Israel a blessing came out. And Balak is of course very angry and we are told in Numbers 22:28, **“And Balaam said to Balak, ‘Look, I have come to you! Now, have I any power at all to say anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that I must speak.’”**

And in the New Testament we see this with Caiaphas who spoke far beyond his own wisdom. In John 11:49-52 we are told, **“And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, ‘You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.’ Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.”**

God is in control, He is sovereign like I have said and His purposes, His plans will be accomplished. In fact, the word **“LORD”** all in capitals is the covenant name of the Lord, YAHWEH and it is found some nine times in the first eleven verses of chapter 16! That tells me He has to be the focus, He is the one in charge! I would not want to have it any other way!

2. This may also be speaking of the words that God puts in our mouth when we are confronted by others, when we are witnessing and-so-on. But let me also say this. God is not going to bring to remembrance those things we have not learned. It is our responsibility to study the Word, to learn the Scriptures, and then, as we are speaking to people He will put upon our lips those things we need to speak. Remember when Jesus was warning His disciples of what would come upon them and He said, **“But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.”** Matthew 10:19-20. I think that is also the idea here.

VERSE 2

1. It is as Proverbs 14:12 says, **“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.”** Isn't it amazing how we can justify our sin! “Hey God made the human body so why shouldn't I enjoy looking at it? There is nothing wrong with these web sites, those “R” rated movies. The human body is beautiful!” That is just one example and the list goes on as you well know. Man will judge himself and see himself as being pure!

But God puts our actions, our motives, the things that we do in His balances and He weighs them out and if we are living apart from His Word, His will, we will come up far short, we will be found guilty before Him!

VERSE 3

1. In all we do we need to give it to the Lord. We need to let Him work not only in us but through us. I think we become anxious over things when we commit our works to the strength of our own ability. In the Hebrew this verse can be translated that we are, “To roll unto the Lord your burdens and your decisions.” I like that. J. Allen Blair gives us this advice regarding what Solomon is telling us here. He wrote,

Occasionally we find ourselves disturbed and depressed, even in trying to do the Lord’s work. Could anything be further from what God desires? God cannot work through anxious hearts. Whenever a Christian reaches this state, he should stop at once and ask himself, “Whose work is it?” If it’s God’s work, never forget the burden of it is His, too. You are not the important person. Christ is! He is at work through us. What should we do then when things do not go well? Go to Him! Anything less than this is disobedience.

- J. Allen Blair

VERSE 4

1. Life has to start somewhere and Solomon tells us that God has created all things. We also see this spoken of in Colossians 1:16-17, **“For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”**

He not only created all things but He created them for His good pleasure. We see this spoken of in Revelation 4:11 and this is from the King James Bible, **“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”**

Why are people so dissatisfied with life today? Because they are not doing what they were created for, to bring the Lord pleasure! Think of trying to use a hammer to cut a piece of wood. You can do it but you will be frustrated, there will be a lot of splintering and broken pieces because a hammer is not created you might say to cut wood, it is created to hammer nails into wood! Thus, those that are frustrated, those that are not satisfied are those that are not doing what they were created for, and no matter what they do, they will never be completely satisfied until they do what they were created for, worshipping God. That means those that are completely satisfied are those that are doing what they were created for, worshipping God.

2. Now here is a tough one, God creating the wicked, how can that be? Some take this to mean that God has created some people for heaven and others for hell and you can't do anything about it. Wrong! Listen to how Today's English Version of the Bible puts this verse and I think it will help clear things up. I don't recommend this version, but like I said, it does clear this verse up for us as it says, **“Everything the Lord has made has its destiny; and the destiny of the wicked is destruction.”**

You see, we all have a free will and we can either accept what God has said for eternal life, or reject it. It is as Ezekiel 18:23, 32 says, “**Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?’ says the Lord GOD, ‘and not that he should turn from his ways and live?’ . . . ‘For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,’ says the Lord GOD. ‘Therefore turn and live!’**” God does not send people to Hell; they go there by their own choice. They are damned by their own deliberate choice and not by the decree of God!

Yes God has created all things but man has chosen to rebel against Him. And God will use the wicked to fulfill His purposes, but one day that will all come to an end as righteousness fills this land. But never forget that “**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. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**” John 3:16-17. God’s desire is for man to turn to Him, but He will never force man to do that! And if you don’t, you will be judged for your sins!

VERSE 5

1. Why is pride so distasteful to the Lord? Why does He hate pride? Yes it is what brought Lucifer down but that is not the reason. The reason is that it puts everything in the wrong order. In other words it takes credit away from God and places it on the person. And when people reject God and stand in their own pride, they are fighting against God. Now here’s the thing. You can’t fight against God and win and we will see the ultimate rebellion during the Tribulation Period where the nations of the world join forces to fight against God, and Psalm 2 says that God laughs at their futile effort, their foolishness. The creation fighting against their Creator and they will not win! That is ***PRIDE!***

VERSE 6

1. How is atonement for our sins provided? In reading this some might say it is by works, all you have to do is be merciful and truthful and you are saved. That is not what this is saying and you must bring this in line with the rest of Scripture.

First of all man is not very merciful and how much mercy do we need to show to be saved? As you look at the Scriptures you will see that this must be speaking of God's mercy that He extends to us. You see, we deserve death. We see this spoken of in Ezekiel 18:20 which says, **"The soul who sins shall die. . . ."**

But instead of death God gave us life, but that atonement is also in truth. That means a holy and righteous God can't overlook sin and God provided Himself as a perfect sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins. It is when we accept Christ into our lives, when our sins are forgiven, that we should walk in the fear of the Lord, travel down that path that pleases Him.

VERSE 7

1. Keep in mind that this is a general rule and there are the exceptions to that. Jesus was righteous and perfect and they hated Him and crucified Him. The idea here is that "A righteous life disarms opposition." Barnes put it like this, "Goodness has power to charm and win even enemies to itself."

Let me show you what I mean, that this does play out. One of Abraham Lincoln's earliest political enemies was Edwin M. Stanton. He treated Lincoln with utter contempt! In fact, he called Lincoln a "low cunning clown" and "the original gorilla." Not only that but he said that "It was ridiculous for people to go to Africa to see a gorilla when they could find one easily in Springfield, Illinois." Of course he was speaking of Lincoln.

Interestingly enough Lincoln never responded to the slander, but when, as President, he needed a secretary of war, he chose Stanton. When his incredulous friends asked why, Lincoln replied, “Because he is the best man.”

Years later, as the slain President’s body lay in State; Stanton looked into the coffin and said through his tears, “There lies the greatest ruler of men the world has ever seen.” His animosity, his hatred towards Lincoln was finally broken by Lincoln’s long-suffering, non-retaliatory spirit. In other words, patient love won out! What an example for us and one the Lord is showing us here in Proverbs!

VERSE 8

1. You can do all kinds of immoral things to gain, to defraud people, but in the end you lose. Think of it like this. It doesn’t do you much good to be the richest man in Hell!

VERSE 9

1. I think this is important for us to understand. That as we are serving the Lord, as we are walking in faith God will direct our steps. We see that throughout the Scriptures. And thus, the picture here is that of man’s responsibilities joining hands with the sovereignty of God to accomplish the work of God!

VERSE 10

1. This is interesting to me. Kings, leaders, be they godly or wicked are accountable to God for what they do! How can that be? Because God has placed in their heart what is right and what is wrong and thus, they need to judge rightly!

VERSE 11

1. Here is something I am so thankful for. As much as man is unfair in the way he deals with things, God is not. His standards are just, they are right. And because God is fair in all His dealings we, as His representatives should also be!

VERSES 12-13

1. Kings or leaders need to lead the people in a right manner, they are accountable. And when the leaders are righteous, when they are living under the authority of God, the people will follow along. But if the leaders are wicked, look out, so too will be the people!

VERSES 14-15

1. Keep in mind that the Kings had the power of life and death in their hands. Thus, if you crossed them, if you did something that would go against them, they could put you to death. Thus, only a fool would cross him or tempt him.

2. Now as you read verse 15 you might think of it like this, “If momma ain’t happy ain’t nobody happy!” In other words, when the King is happy, when the King is full of joy that will spread throughout the kingdom.

3. Here is the good news. Our God does not have a bad day! We don’t have to worry that He woke up on the wrong side of the bed and is asking for our heads! No, only goodness pours out from our Lord and because of that we should see that flow from our lives as well!

VERSE 16

1. Many would disagree with this today, but it is true! Riches, earthly treasures will fade away, they lose their value, they are stolen and they can be gone in a night. But godly wisdom will give you everything you need to live a life that will be pleasing to God. You can't buy wisdom.

VERSE 17

1. This should just make sense. If you are walking with God, if you are traveling down the highway of holiness you might say, you are not going to be distracted or turn away, go down that path of sin. You see, God hates evil and thus, as we go through life, traveling down the road, we too must hate evil and depart from it.

Listen to what Peter tells us in I Peter 2:11-12, **“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.”** If you want to avoid danger, misfortune, don't go down the road of sin, travel on the highway of holiness, follow the Lord!

VERSES 18-19

1. During a lightning storm, which trees tend to get hit first, which trees attract the lightning? The tall ones and that is the idea here. Pride has and will continue to destroy people's lives, even Christians as we stand tall, proud and God will deal with that! You will be struck down!

2. And verse 19 is saying that it is better to be poor and humble than rich and proud!

VERSE 20

1. How simple this is. “Read your Bible, apply the Word of God to your life, trust what God has said because He is the One who wrote it!” You see, when we read and apply the Word of God to our life, trusting in what God has said, there is great joy that fills our hearts. Why is that?

Because our focus is taken off of us, it is taken off the situation and it is placed upon the Lord, the One who can truly help! It is as the Lord told Joshua, “**This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.**” Joshua 1:8.

VERSE 21

1. It is much easier to listen to instruction when it is done from a calm spirit, then from someone who is yelling or is using harsh words. And isn't that how the Lord speaks to us? Of course it is. Psalm 119:103-104 tells us, “**How sweet are Your words to my taste, Sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way.**”

VERSES 22-23

1. How true this is. For those that have understanding it is a fountain of life to them. A wise person will grow in his relationship with the Lord and he will take what he has learned and apply that to his life. But for the fool, they will be corrected over and over again because they refuse to learn the lesson. It is as Psalm 36:8-9 says, **“They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, And You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures. For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.”** Here’s the thing, the wise know that they are ignorant and thus, they keep on learning, they keep on reading and applying God’s Word to their lives. Fools don’t learn!

VERSE 24

1. There is power in the words we speak. It can build up and be health to people, or it can cut them to pieces as Proverbs 12:18 says, **“There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health.”** It is as Kidner put it, “To say nice things when we can is a simple benefit we may bring a person, in mind and thence in body.” Let’s build people up not tear them down!

VERSE 25

1. We had this back in Proverbs 14:12, why does God repeat it? The reason is simple, because it is so important for us to understand. Man thinks that by doing good, by being good it will get him into heaven, it seems right to him. But make no mistake about it, we are sinners saved by the grace of God by faith in Jesus and any other way is the way of death!

VERSE 26

1. I guess that this just makes sense. If you are hungry it can motivate you to work, and that goes for even lazy people! And as much as this applies to our physical life there is also a spiritual application. We should have that deep spiritual hunger that drives us to know God more intimately; it should drive us to the Word of God and prayer!

VERSE 27

1. I guess the mentality here is that an evil person not only loves to dig up dirt on people, but he loves to gossip and spread it and in the end he is burning people's reputations by what he is saying!

VERSE 28

1. This is speaking of the person who distorts the truth and he does this by lying, by hiding some of the truth, by withholding the facts and then he goes around and spreads these things to others. Make no mistake about it, gossip can and has destroyed many relationships, many friendships. And in the end this kind of behavior is not pleasing to God!

VERSE 29

1. I guess that old saying, "Misery loves company" fits these people.

VERSE 30

1. There are people out there that love to deceive others; it is their way of life. And these people are so bent on evil that you can watch their facial expressions and get a good idea of what they are up to. They squint their eyes as they consider doing perverse things. They purse their lips as they contemplate doing wickedness! Be wise; don't be taken in by them!

VERSE 31

1. It is not just having gray hair that makes you wise, but walking in righteousness, allowing God's Word to flow in you and through you, that does. The word "**If**" should not be in this verse, it is in italics and it should read, "**The silver-head is a crown of glory, It is found in the way of righteousness.**" The reason being is that it is seen as a reward for living a righteous life.

VERSE 32

1. This is an interesting one. Solomon is saying that it is easier to conquer a city than it is to control your own spirit, the words and actions that flow from your heart. If you can control your temper you are a greater hero than a military conqueror, and thus, that is why it is more difficult to control than in conquering a city! "Peter the Great, although one of the mightiest of the Czars of Russia, failed here. In a fit of temper he struck his gardener, and a few days afterwards the gardener died. 'Alas,' said Peter, sadly, 'I have conquered other nations, but I have not been able to conquer myself.'" The only way to win this battle is through surrender. I know, that sounds strange, but until you surrender your will to God you will never be able to control your anger!

VERSE 33

1. Back in the Old Testament they use to cast lots to determine the will of God. We don't do that any longer because we have the Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God to direct our lives. That is how we find “**... every decision is from the Lord.**” God is in control, He is sovereign and thus, may we walk accordingly!

PROVERBS 17VERSE 1

1. This goes along with Proverbs 15:17, which says, “**Better is a dinner of herbs [vegetables] where love is, Than a fatted calf with hatred.**” In other words, a home filled with love, peace, is more valuable than any earthly treasure, be it food, money or any material possessions.

2. There is also a spiritual aspect to this. In Leviticus 7:11-36 it speaks of the peace offering. In this offering some of the meat was given to the Lord and some of the meat the people were to partake of. Thus, we can have all kinds of meat but if we are not right with the Lord it will not be satisfying, there will not be that peace that can come as we walk with the Lord, as we fellowship with Him!

VERSE 2

1. A servant was given the responsibility of caring for the children, and a servant who trains up a child, even a rebellious child, in the way he should go, will be blessed when they mature and are out on their own doing those things they are supposed to. They, in a sense, are a reflection of the person raising them.

VERSE 3

1. The refining pot or the furnace was used to remove any impurities from the silver or gold but it could not do anything with the person's heart, only God can do that. So God also uses a refining-like fire upon our hearts causing any impurities to be exposed and purged out, removed. He is purifying us, making us more like Him. It is as Job said in Job 23:10, "**But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.**"

And Peter reminds us in I Peter 1:6-7, "**In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**" God removes the dross you might say from our lives, those impurities and He will continue to work in us until He sees His own reflection, which is a life-long process for us! But He does not give up!

VERSE 4

1. If you love gossip God says that you are an evildoer and a liar. Why is God so harsh with gossip? Because these characteristics are only destructive and do not reflect the character of God. In Psalm 119:104 David says, “**Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way.**” The bottom line is this. The kind of talk that a person feeds on is a barometer of where his heart is at!

VERSE 5

1. We saw this back in Proverbs 14:31, “**He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, But he who honors Him has mercy on the needy.**” That tells me that this is important and God wants us to take heed to it, to pay attention to what He is saying. I don't know why, but some people love to mock, make fun of the poor. Maybe it makes them feel better than the poor. The reality is we have all been created in the image of God and God is not a respecter of persons. Why some go through harder times than others I have to leave in God's hands, for He not only made us all, but has placed us in various situations for His purpose. But the bottom line is this; if we make fun of the poor then we are speaking against God Himself. Be careful of what comes out of your mouth!

VERSE 6

1. Solomon is saying how precious grandchildren are and for those of you who have grandchildren, you know how true that is. My grandchildren are very precious to me, I love them very much. My wife jokes that grandchildren are the reward for raising teenagers and she may have a point. And not only grandchildren are a crown for men but turn that around and Solomon is telling us that children are a reflection of their father. So men, take that to heart and understand your children watch you more than you think. They are a reflection of you, what are you showing them?

My grandson Liam just got glasses and Kara said that she showed him hundreds of frames and he was not satisfied until he found a frame that looked like his daddy's. Why was that important? Because he wants to be like his dad!

VERSE 7

1. It doesn't matter how good your speech is, it doesn't matter how important of a person you are, for if you are a fool, then your speech will be foolishness. People will not respect what you have to say if you are not living your life accordingly. This is so true of Christians. The world looks at us and they do have a higher standard for our speech, for our behavior. Now we like to say things like, "I am still a work in progress!" As true as that is, that is a cop-out for your sin. How about, "Do as I say and not as I do!" Hey, if you can't do it why do you want me to do it! We should live according to the high calling by which we have been called so that our speech and our actions show that we are children of God!

VERSE 8

1. This is a little clearer in the Amplified Bible. It says, “**A bribe is like a bright, precious stone that dazzles the eyes and affects the mind of him who gives it, [as if by magic] he prospers, whichever way he turns.**” Solomon is not saying that taking bribes or giving out bribes is okay, he is just saying that they open doors, allow favors to come forth, they can get you out of trouble but in the end, how does God look upon what you are doing?

VERSE 9

1. This is not saying to ignore sin but to forgive the person who may have done you wrong. What happens when we don't forgive is we allow bitterness and anger to build up inside of us, and that will eventually cause the breakup of relationships. One person put it this way, “When we learn to love we also learn to cover, to forget, and to overlook many faults in others.”

It is as Peter said back in I Peter 4:8, “**And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins.**” That word “**fervent**” speaks of a muscle that has been stretched to its limit. That is the kind of love we are to have towards others. We need to have a forgiving spirit.

George Washington Carver was refused admission to a college not because he did not meet the requirements, but because he was black. Many years later someone asked him the name of the school that shunned him because of the color of his skin and he said, “It doesn't matter.” Love won out! Lord, help us to have that kind of love, a love that is willing to forgive and forget!

VERSE 10

1. A wise person will receive instruction, he will receive correction. But the fool refuses to learn, you can beat him 100 times and it will do no good. May we be humble, sensitive to the things of God, what He is showing us so we don't need that sledgehammer of correction to get us back on track!

VERSE 11

1. Here's the thing, if you are unwilling to submit to lawful authorities, and that includes the Lord, there are consequences. If you break the law you will be required to pay what is due. And if you break the Law of God, He will not be mocked. If you chose to fight against Him, He will deal with your actions. It is as Hebrews says, "**It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**" Hebrews 10:31. Also, in Galatians 6:7-8 Paul tells us, "**Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.**" That is just the way it is!

VERSE 12

1. Why does Solomon say that it is better to meet a bear robbed of her cubs than it is to listen to foolish ideas of fools? Because you stand a better chance with the bear than you do with a fool!

Remember what we are told in Isaiah 32:6, “**For the foolish person will speak foolishness,**

And his heart will work iniquity: To practice ungodliness, To utter error against the

LORD, To keep the hungry unsatisfied, And he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.”

The bottom line is this. A fool is in rebellion against God and his words are not satisfying to our lives, they don't quench the thirst we have for their words are empty and dry, at least they should be. On the other end of the spectrum is the Word of God which is living and powerful, it is refreshing and satisfying.

VERSE 13

1. In other words, what you sow is what you will reap. David saw that as he sinned with Bathsheba and murdered her husband Uriah. The result was misery, sexual immorality, murder within his house. What you sow is what you will reap, it is biblical!

VERSE 14

1. Let's think this one through. When a person spills some water on the floor it is very hard to pick it back up. Also, when a crack in a dam begins to open and water begins to trickle through, soon that trickle will be a gusher and before long the water will be flowing so quickly that it is destroying everything in its path. You can't stop it! The same is true for contentions; stop them before they cause destruction!

VERSE 15

1. The idea here is that God hates miscarriages of justice and Solomon gives to us two examples. The first is that of someone who is guilty and they are let go. The other is someone who is innocent and they are found guilty.

VERSE 16

1. In other words, why spend the money to purchase something you are not going to use! It is not only that they are not going to use it but they have no desire to learn. When I was in college Arizona State University was known as one of the top party schools in the country, and many kids went there not for an education, but to party, and their parents ended up paying for a very expensive party for them. Why pay all that tuition when you aren't going to learn anything or you are not going to apply it to your life in the first place is the idea.

VERSE 17

1. D. L. Moody put it this way regarding this verse. He said, "A true friend is like ivy - the greater the ruin, the closer he clings." You see, a true friend will always be there for you, in the good times and in the hard times. A true friend will love you in spite of what they know of you. And you will be able to tell your friends because when times get tough they will be by your side through the thick and thin times. I true friend is priceless!

VERSE 18

1. Here we see Solomon give to us another warning about not co-signing for another person's debt. And as I said before it is not wrong to co-sign a loan for someone but if you do make sure if they default on it you can make the payments and that you will not need that money back!

VERSE 19

1. Make no mistake about it, there are those that are power hungry and will do anything and everything to gain as much of it as they can. The "**gate**" was a term or word used to speak of authority and this person wants to exalt his authority above those around him. But God says if you exalt yourself He will bring you down. It is as Proverbs 16:18 says, "**Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.**" I would rather follow what James said in James 4:10, "**Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**" The correct perspective is everything!

VERSE 20

1. Why don't they find any good? The reason is simple; they find no good because they are not looking for good. And what flows from their lips comes from their heart. How much better it is to find good in people, good in life instead of everything being bad. It is hard to be around people that are negative like that! And if you are deceitful, crooked in your ways, you will not find good!

VERSE 21

1. There is no joy in a child that is a fool. It is truly sad to see the destructive path some people are on and refusing to get off. On the other hand, a child that is walking in wisdom, following after God, there is great joy. It is as John said, **“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”** III John 4.

VERSE 22

1. There is something about laughter that changes our whole countenance. In fact, many times it is like a medicine to the body. On the other end of the spectrum, a person who is not full of joy, not full of laughter, one who is of a broken spirit will they dry up; there is no life in them.

Laughter is a great medicine. I still remember the song from Mary Poppins, “I Love to Laugh.”

That song made me laugh, it was like a contagious disease but this was good. Let me share a few lines with you of this song,

I love to laugh
Loud and long and clear
I love to laugh
It's getting worse ev'ry year

The more I laugh
The more I fill with glee
And the more the glee
The more I'm a merrier me
It's embarrassing!
The more I'm a merrier me!

Some people laugh through their noses
Sounding something like this “Mmm . . .”
Some people laugh through their teeth goodness sake
Hissing and fizzing like snakes

Some laugh too fast
 Some only blast - ha!
 Others, they twitter like birds
 Then there's the kind
 What can't make up their mind

When things strike me as funny
 I can't hide it inside
 And squeak - as the squeakelers do
 I've got to let go with a ho-ho-ho . . .
 And a ha-ha-ha . . . too!

We love to laugh
 Loud and long and clear
 We love to laugh
 So ev'rybody can hear
 The more you laugh
 The more you fill with glee
 And the more the glee
 The more we're a merrier we!

2. Now let me also say this. Not all laughter is healthy! Let me explain. When laughter and smiling are used in an aggressive way as when you sneer at someone, ridicule them, embarrass them you can do more harm to yourself than the one you are laughing at. It is not healthy to laugh and put people down, is the idea!

VERSE 23

1. We see this happening not only in Solomon's day but even today people try to buy their way out of situations. Money talks, fame talks and people sometimes get away with murder but in the end they will have to stand before the Righteous Judge and they will not get away with anything! God cannot be bought off!

VERSE 24

1. A fool can't find wisdom because he really is not searching for it. He has no definite ambition, there is no discipline in his life and thus, he wanders all over the place seeking something to satisfy and he does not find it. But a person with understanding, he knows where to look; he goes to the Word of God and is sensitive to the Spirit of God to guide him.

VERSE 25

1. This is one of the great sorrows of life, of being a parent. A child who causes nothing be grief! That is heartbreaking and until they grow up, until they reach the end of themselves and turn to the Lord, there is great sorrow!

VERSE 26

1. What we see here is a perversion of justice and yet it continues on today!

VERSE 27

1. I don't know about you, but to me it is such a comfort to know the truth and because of that it doesn't matter what others might say or think. Now don't think I am being self-righteous, or that I am so intelligent, because I am not. What I am saying is that I know the wisdom of God through His Word and I believe what He has said, and that makes me very smart. And thus, there are times when we are to be silent, not argue or try to win the battle and lose the war. Use your words wisely to draw the person to Jesus because that is the ultimate victory!

VERSE 28

1. We have a proverb that is very similar to this one, one we have gone over before, and it goes like this. “It is better to keep your mouth closed and have people think you are a fool, than to open it and remove any doubts!” J. Vernon McGee put it like this with the following story,

An Arkansas farmer had a son who was simple. Folks would say he was “not all there.” They drove into town with a load of apples, and the father left the son to sit and hold the reins of the horses while he went off on an errand. “Now, son,” said the father, “don’t you say anything to anybody because if you do, they will find out you are a fool.” The boy promised he wouldn’t open his mouth. A man came up to the wagon and asked, “How much are your apples, son?” The boy never said a word. The man asked two or three times, but the boy just sat there and looked at him. Finally the man said, “What in the world is wrong? You act like a fool.” Then he walked away. When the father returned, he asked the boy, “How did things go?” The boy answered, “I kept my mouth shut, but they found out I was a fool anyway.”

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Vol. III, p. 61

I guess sometimes they just find out. The key for us is that wisdom comes from the Lord and it is not just information it is application. If we want to grow in the Lord then we need to apply the things that we have learned to our lives. It is as Paul said in Ephesians 4:1-3, and I will close with these words, **“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”** Remember, this is a book that can reach down and touch us all if we are willing to surrender!