

PROVERBS

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Proverbs chapter 18 as we continue our study through the Bible. We are continuing to study in the school of wisdom and hopefully we are learning, we are growing in the Lord as He guides us. Derek Kidner put it like this regarding the book of Proverbs, “It is not a portrait-album or a book of manners: it offers a key to life. The samples of behavior which it holds up to view are all assessed by one criterion, which could be summed up in the question, ‘Is this wisdom or folly?’” So let’s begin reading in Proverbs chapter 18 starting in verse 1 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

PROVERBS 18

VERSE 1

1. Before I expound on this listen to how The Amplified Bible puts this verse, “**HE WHO willfully separates and estranges himself [from God and man] seeks his own desire and pretext to break out against all wise and sound judgment.**” In other words this person wants to do his own thing and he doesn’t care what God says and thus he isolates himself so he can do what he wants. We can understand the unsaved behaving like this but Christians also do this in that they don’t want to be around Christians because they don’t want their sin exposed, they don’t want to hear words of correction. That is foolishness!

VERSE 2

1. A fool does not want to gain knowledge, only to share his own ideas, his own views on things. Now here is what happens many times. People reject the facts and they go by feelings and we all know how dangerous that can be. And for us as Christians, the facts are found in the Word of God and not apart from them. The Bible will not mislead us. But by rejecting the facts we are showing that we have no delight in understanding what God desires and we tell others why we are doing what we are doing and we are justifying our actions.

VERSE 3

1. The wicked don't want to hear the truth and if someone is speaking the truth they will come against it, they will try to bring dishonor to it. What happens many times as they speak against the truth of God is they expose their own foolishness. The Amplified Bible puts it like this, **“When the wicked comes in [to the depth of evil], he becomes a contemptuous despiser [of all that is pure and good], and with inner baseness comes outer shame and reproach.”** In other words this outward wickedness is born from an inward wickedness!

VERSE 4

1. Again, listen to how The Amplified Bible puts this verse, **“The words of a [discreet and wise] man’s mouth are like deep waters [plenteous and difficult to fathom], and the fountain of skillful and godly Wisdom is like a gushing stream [sparkling, fresh, pure, and life-giving].”** Our words, the words of the righteous should be refreshing to people’s lives. Our words should build up, restore people, help people and not tear them down, destroy them!

VERSE 5

1. We are not to be respecters of people but to judge fairly. You see, when you reverse the judgment of the wicked you are condoning their wickedness. And to deprive the righteous of justice is just as wrong. The problem today is we have ungodly people seated in many courts and we expect them to judge fairly, righteously, and that is difficult if not impossible outside of God and His Word.

VERSES 6-8

1. These three verses all fit together and they speak of a fool who doesn't control his mouth and what happens because of that. Solomon speaks of the person who uses his words to get into fights and that is a fool. I worked with an anesthesiologist in Chicago who was like this. He was the kind of guy who would start a war in Chicago with the things that he said and then go home and watch it on television.

Solomon says that it is his mouth that brings destruction, which is the opposite of our mouth, what our words should do! Our tongue is such a small member of our body and yet it gets us into so much trouble!

And lastly Solomon speaks of someone who loves gossip, that it ends up devouring them just as a person who is eating food and both are assimilated into the body - food to build up and gossip to tear down. And the thing is with this gossip is you just can't eat one you might say, you keep going after them! The National Enquirer advertises its paper by saying, "Inquiring minds want to know!" What they want to know is gossip, not even truths many times, information that destroys people's lives. That is not an inquiring mind but a foolish one! Be careful not to go down that path!

VERSE 9

1. That seems a little strange. Solomon is saying that a lazy person goes hand-in-hand with those that destroy. What does he mean by that? I like the way that Griffiths put it. He explains it like this, “We know today that it is shoddy workmanship in cars, airplanes, buildings, and the like which is the cause of fatal accidents. This is also true in some offices and leadership in the church, where negligence of responsibility may lead to a breakdown of fellowship. A church may be disintegrated through foolish negligence and laziness as well as by Satanic attack.”

Exactly, that is what Solomon is saying here, they do go hand-in-hand, laziness and destruction!

2. As Christians we serve the Lord and we see this throughout the Scriptures, that whatever we do we need to honor Him. Thus, laziness is not something that should be seen in our lives. Paul tells us in I Corinthians 10:31, “**Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.**” In Colossians 3:17, “**And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.**” And again in Colossians 3:23-24 we see this played out as Paul tells us, “**And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.**” A faithful person will build up, restore and not bring destruction!

VERSE 10

1. For the righteous the Lord is our place of refuge, He is like a strong tower that we can run to for safety, comfort. And notice where we find that refuge, it is in the ***NAME OF THE LORD!*** Remember the story in Genesis chapter 22 when Abraham went up to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice and we see God provide that sacrifice for Abraham. And there is a lot in this story but I want to focus on Genesis 22:14 which says, **“And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, ‘In the Mount of the Lord it shall be provided.’”**

Abraham was willing to go through with what God told him to do because he trusted in the Lord and His promises to Him. He knew that God would have to raise Isaac from the dead if he was sacrificed as I have said. And the Angel of the LORD now steps in and I believe this is the pre-incarnate Jesus. And He speaks to Abraham and tells him to stop, not to go through with it. You see, he has passed the test! This was the ultimate demonstration of love that we see here, love and obedience to the Lord or faith in action we might say! This is how much the faith of Abraham has grown over the years!

What I want you to notice that Abraham did not call the place, “Hey, I passed the test!” Or even “Agony hill!” Not even, “I did it!” But he called the place Jehovah Jireh or Yahweh Jireh, The LORD will provide. You see, Jehovah or Yahweh is speaking of the all-sufficient One. He is the great “I AM” not “I was” or “I will be” but He is to us what we need Him to be in our life – He is our all sufficient One, he is Jehovah Elohim!

Thus, in the mountain of the Lord He provided a sacrifice for Abraham and He will provide Himself as a sacrifice some 2,000 years down the road. In fact, Moses tells us here that this Mount Moriah is still called Jehovah Jireh in his day and as I have said, it is here that the Lord has provided atonement for our sins, on this very mountain and Abraham and Isaac are acting this out for us.

Just listen to some of the Old Testament names of God and how He meets us where we are, these are so wonderful. They are,

- El Shaddai (Lord God Almighty)
- El Elyon (The Most High God)
- Yahweh Nissi (The Lord My Banner)
- Yahweh Raah (The Lord My Shepherd)
- Yahweh Rapha (The Lord That Heals)
- Yahweh Shammah (The Lord is There)
- Yahweh Tsidkenu (The Lord Our Righteousness)
- Yahweh Mekoddishkem (The Lord Who Sanctifies You)
- Yahweh Jireh (The Lord Will Provide)
- Yahweh Shalom (The Lord is Peace)
- Yahweh Sabaoth (The Lord of Hosts)

He is our All-Becoming One, He is our refuge, the name of the Lord is our strong tower and we can run to Him and find safety! Don't run to man for refuge, run into the arms of our loving God!

VERSE 11

1. On the opposite end of the spectrum are the unrighteous and they don't seek refuge in the Lord but in their wealth, what they own and they think it will protect them, save them and it won't! No one can save except the Lord; it is the Lord where we find our refuge! And think of it like this. In verse 10 we see the facts spoken and now, here in verse 11 we see fiction spoken, the folly of trusting in something other than the Lord to save you!

VERSE 12

1. Pride is very dangerous because the person who is prideful has one foot in the grave and the other foot on a banana peel and look out! And yet, when you look at this world it seems that the wicked are having a grand old time even though judgment is close at hand.

As strange as that sounds we can see this truth played out in history. Just before the flood people were living normal lives even though wickedness permeated the land. The only sign of judgment was this big boat that this man Noah was building, but it didn't stop their evilness one bit. Just before Sodom and Gomorrah fell in judgment people were still eating, drinking and marrying even though judgment was close at hand. And look at where we are at today, we see the same foolish mentality as people flaunt their sin and they have one foot in the grave and one foot on a banana peel and they are about to slip!

VERSE 13

1. I hate to admit this but I have done this before. Someone is telling me something and before they finish I give him an answer that has nothing to do with what they were saying. Not only that, but before we do make a judgment we need to get all the facts or we may give a foolish answer. Don't agree with a person until you hear the other side, they can be very convincing and yet not be telling you the whole truth. In other words, we must be slow to speak; we need to listen to what a person is saying before we respond.

VERSE 14

1. The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, "**The strong spirit of a man sustains him in bodily pain or trouble, but a weak and broken spirit who can raise up or bear?**" In other words, you can be so pumped up about something and then someone comes along and they throw a wet blanket on the fire and we lose all our ambition, the fire goes out.

This verse was played out during the 1997 NBA finals with the Chicago Bulls against the Utah Jazz. The series was tied 2 to 2 with Utah winning the last two games and having the momentum. Michael Jordan, a day before the next game came down with the flu so bad that he could not get up. He missed practice and the team doctors said that he would not play.

But it was a critical game and Michael dragged himself out of bed, got dressed and went to the game not knowing if he would even be able to play.

He was essentially useless in the first quarter, but in the second quarter, after Utah took a 16-point lead, something happened to Jordan physically, emotionally and mentally. He begins running harder, running faster and making shots. Somehow, miraculously, he begins looking like the typically dominant Michael Jordan. He scores 17 points in the quarter. “It was all about desire,” he would tell the media. “Somehow I found the energy to stay strong.”

At halftime, Jordan is fed fluids and given cold towels. In the third quarter, fatigue and nausea return, dragging him down again, rendering him virtually useless. But early in the fourth quarter, when the Jazz went up 77-69, Jordan somehow turns it on again; leading a 10-0 run that puts Chicago back on top with five minutes left. And the Bulls went on to win that game, an amazing game to say the least. I get a cold and I can’t do anything!

Jordan played 23 of 24 minutes in the first half and 21 of 24 minutes in the second, doubled over, collapsing from emotion and exhaustion. He had to be helped or I should say carried off the court!

“That was probably the most difficult thing I’ve ever done,” he would say after the game. “I almost played myself into passing out just to win a basketball game. If we had lost, I would have been devastated.”

Phil Jackson, their coach, was almost at a loss for words, but finally told the media, “Because of the circumstances, with this being a critical game in the Finals, I’d have to say this is the greatest game I’ve seen Michael play. Just standing up was nauseating for him and caused him dizzy spells. This was a heroic effort, one to add to the collection of efforts that make up his legend.”

After Michael Jordan's epic performance, Pippen would say, "He's the greatest, and everyone saw why tonight." How did he do it? His spirit was not broken, he was determined to not only play but win the game and they did! When we give up, lose the fight, there is not much we can do.

2. Let me share two other stories regarding a broken spirit and what can happen. These are from Dr. Paul Adolph, and he says there was "... an elderly patient who was recovering satisfactorily in the hospital from a broken hip. At her release, she was transferred to an old people's home. Within a few hours, the patient showed general physical deterioration and she died in less than a day – 'not of a broken hip but of a broken heart.'"

Also, "A man who had faced the horrors of concentration camp with gallantry discovered after his release that it was his own son who had informed on him. 'The discovery beat him to his knees and he died. He could bear the attack of an enemy, but the attack of one whom he loved killed him.'"

3. How can we stand strong? By keeping our eyes on the Lord because He is our hope. If we look to man for our salvation in whatever situation we are in, we will be disappointed and many times our spirit is broken and we just give up. When we listen to what others are telling us why we can't do something instead of trusting in the Lord, our spirit can be broken and we can give up. Stand strong in the Lord and the power of His might and forge ahead in the work that God has called you to do. He is looking for faithfulness and He will take care of the rest. As the saying goes, "Joy is the flag flown high in the heart where the King is in residence there!" It is hard to have a broken spirit when you are focused on Him.

VERSE 15

1. We need to understand that the wise man never ceases to learn and the greatest knowledge we can gain is what God has spoken to us. We need to be open to Him!

VERSE 16

1. Some feel that this is speaking of a bribe, how that opens doors. It could be but I lean more towards the idea of the gifts that God has given to each of us and how He has opened doors of opportunity for us to minister to people, even influential people. It is as Paul reminded Timothy, **“Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”** II Timothy 1:6-7.

VERSE 17

1. I don't know about you but I have been taken in by this before. Someone will share with me about something someone did to them and I would like, “That dirty dog, how could they do such a thing to this nice person.” And I am mad, I am upset *UNTIL* I heard the other side of the story and found out there was more to it than the first person had said. Be very careful; get all the information before you speak.

VERSE 18

1. In the Old Testament they would cast lots to discern what to do and it was not like flipping a coin, they were seeking the will of God in a situation. We don't cast lots today because we have the Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God.

VERSE 19

1. Solomon is saying that contentions between family and friends are often hardest to mend. It is very hard to break down those walls after they have been built. Be careful how you treat people. In fact, he says that it is easier to take a strong city than to win back an offended brother. Be careful!

VERSE 20

1. Maybe you have heard the saying, "He had to eat his own words!" Well, if what you said was good, then that is not a problem. But if what you said was bad, if it was done out of the flesh then it will not be satisfying, it will be bitter, you will not want to eat it! Remember what Paul said in Colossians 4:6, "**Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.**"

VERSE 21

1. Solomon has a lot to say about the tongue, what comes out of our mouth. The words we speak have great potential for good or for evil depending on what comes out. And Solomon is making the point that the words we speak could bring death or it can bring life. As one person said, "Keep your words warm and sweet for you might have to eat them!" We need to be prepared for the consequences of what we say so be careful what comes from your mouth!

VERSE 22

1. The word “good” is implied before wife and Solomon is saying that a man who finds a good wife finds a treasure! Now let me say this. Your wife is the daughter of the King, she is a treasure of the Lord and if you don’t see that then you need to repent and get right with God. Sorry, that is just the way it is. We are so blessed and how often we don’t see it or we take it for granted. Also, a husband and a wife should complement each other - they are complete when they are together.

VERSE 23

1. Have you ever noticed that poor people have to talk kind to others because they are dependent upon them? It is true! On the other end of the spectrum the rich don’t have to talk nice to people because they don’t have to influence them, their money does the talking for them. It is not the way it should be, but it is the way it is for now.

VERSE 24

1. There are two ways to look at this and maybe both do apply, although I think one fits the text better and you will see why. The first way is that if you want friends you need to be friendly. That just makes sense. I have had people say to me that when they come to church no one talks to them. My question to them is, “Do you talk to anyone?” I think we need to understand that and I realize it is hard for some to make friends, to be outgoing, but you might just say “Hi” and you will be surprised as people begin to talk with you!

2. The other way to look at this is as follows, and this is from The Amplified Bible, **“The man of many friends [a friend of all the world] will prove himself a bad friend, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”** This is saying that a person who is always looking for friends is going to do so to his destruction. They will seek friends at any cost. But there is that one who will stick by us through thick and thin, that is a true friend and to have one friend like that is better than having a hundred so-called friends that will flee from you when difficulty arises! Fair-weather friends are really not friends at all!

3. Let me also say this. We have a friend who will stick close by us at all times. We don't have to do anything but receive Him, and that friend is Jesus. In John 15:15 we are told, **“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”**

Also, in Hebrews 13:5 we read, **“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”** That is a true friend! We also see this in Matthew 28:20 where we read, **“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”**

And in John 14:3 we read, **“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”** *WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS!*

PROVERBS 19**VERSE 1**

1. When I was growing up my parents use to say to me, “Honesty is the best policy!” That is what Solomon is saying here. You would be better off being poor and honest than rich and dishonest. Don’t compromise your convictions; don’t negate your faith to gain riches, that is just plain foolishness. It is as Proverbs 20:17 says, **“Bread gained by deceit is sweet to a man, But afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.”**

VERSE 2

1. The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, **“Desire without knowledge is not good, and to be overhasty is to sin and miss the mark.”** One of the big problems in our society is that we are in a hurry. We don’t take the time to check things out, to wait upon the Lord. It is like many today, they refuse to ask for directions because they are in a hurry but it takes them longer to get where they are going because of that! Don’t be in a hurry, wait upon the Lord, seek His direction before you walk!

Remember that saying, “Haste makes waste.” That is the idea here, impatient people are prone to sin, make foolish decisions. Make your decisions according to the knowledge that God has given you and allow it to be accomplished in His time. In Isaiah 28:16 we are told, **“Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Whoever believes will not act hastily.’”** Don’t act hastily, wait upon the Lord!

VERSE 3

1. Man, who is living in rebellion against God, doing whatever he wants, when he finds himself in a mess, who is the first person he blames? Many times he blames God! Even Adam, when confronted with his sin told God. “**. . . ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’**” Genesis 3:12. We are so prone to point the finger and blame anyone and everyone, even God, and not be responsible for our own actions. W. E. Adeney said, “It is monstrous to charge the providence of God with the consequences of actions that He has forbidden.” How true that is and yet we still do it!

VERSE 4

1. This is a very sad but true statement. If you want to have more friends than you know what to do with, win the lottery. You will find relatives that you didn’t even know you had! But also understand this, it is a false friendship, it is not a real friendship. It is based on what you have that they want and not who you are. And once the money is gone so are they!

VERSE 5

1. Today we see people get away with all kinds of lies and how unfair is that! Yes, some people are good at committing perjury and they do seem to get away with it often. But please understand that they may get away with it for a time but ultimately they must come before the Righteous Judge and they will not get away with anything. True justice will prevail.

VERSE 6

1. We have seen this in America play out right before our eyes. We have become a nation that is dependent upon the government to give them things and thus, the President that they elect will be the one who will follow through with that. Make no mistake about it, people will befriend those whom they hope to benefit from but keep in mind that is not true friendship and in the end, they will turn once you are not giving them what they want!

VERSE 7

1. Again, you will find out who your true friends are if you become poor. Many are just opportunists who will take what they can get from you, but they are not true friends as Solomon said in Proverbs 17:17, for a true “**... friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.**” And yet look at who Jesus had time for, reached out to, those in need and so should we!

VERSE 8

1. James reminds us, “**If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.**” James 1:5. Make no mistake about it, we are so blessed. When you walk according to the Word of God, doing the will of God, surrendered to the Holy Spirit, you will be blessed. But, when you walk after your own lusts, doing your own thing, hardening your heart to the leading of the Holy Spirit in your life, you will reap the consequences of your actions. It is up to you!

VERSE 9

1. We just read basically the same thing in Proverbs 19:5, why is this verse repeated? Because God wants us to understand that liars will not go unpunished. Sometimes we need to hear things over and over again before it sinks in and we get it!

VERSE 10

1. We see two points here. The first one deals with the fool who comes into money, the good life you might say. The problem is that they don't know how to handle it. It would be like me going before the queen and saying, "What's up!" Not appropriate.

Also, a slave does not know how to act in a position of authority. Look at the life of Jeroboam, who became King of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, rising out of the common people, he was a servant. And he then led the nation into idolatry, allowing anyone and everyone to become a priest in *HIS* kingdom. From humble beginnings, power has a way of corrupting people.

VERSE 11

1. We see this in the life of David who was slow to anger towards King Saul who wanted to kill David. Yes, it is very easy to allow anger to control our actions but nothing good comes out of that. We need to have compassion towards people and extend forgiveness to them. We need to allow God to control our speech and our actions instead of our flesh doing the controlling.

It is as James 1:19-20 tells us, **“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”** What is the natural response when we face difficult times? We don’t listen, we lash out at people, we pour out our wrath on them giving them what we think they deserve. God tells us to slow down, to listen to His voice, to His direction because as you do the words that flow from your mouth will be words that bring forth life and not destruction!

I like the way that J. A. Motyer put it as he wrote, “We might wonder why the ever-practical James does not proceed to outline schemes of daily Bible reading or the like, for surely these are the ways in which we offer a willing ear to the voice of God. But he does not help us in this way. Rather, he goes deeper, for there is little point in schemes and times if we have not got an attentive spirit. It is possible to be unflinching regular in Bible reading, but to achieve no more than to have moved the book-mark forward: this is reading unrelated to an attentive spirit. The word is read but not heard. On the other hand, if we can develop an attentive spirit, this will spur us to create those conditions – a proper method in Bible-reading, a discipline of time, and so on – by which the spirit will find itself satisfied in hearing the Word of God.” May we listen and obey!

VERSE 12

1. In other words, don’t get people in leadership positions, people in authority mad at you because they have the power of life and death you might say. That is what Paul tells us in Romans 13:1-7. We are to be the best citizens around because of what Christ has done in our lives!

VERSE 13

1. Solomon lists two things that can make domestic life miserable. There is the wayward son or a son who behaves foolishly; he brings agony to his father. There is the nagging wife and she is irritating. Kind of like a Chinese water torture upon your life. You know, drip, drip, drip! I guess Solomon knew what he was talking about, he had 700 wives and 300 concubines, and I am sure not all were pleasant.

VERSE 14

1. You can give your children all kinds of possessions, wealth, but you can't leave them a prudent, a wise, an understanding wife. That comes from the Lord. Thus, you can't buy a woman like this, but you can surely pray for one for your sons and a godly husband for your daughters. It is kind of like the story of Isaac and Rebekah; they had what we might call a marriage made in heaven for in Genesis 24:50 we are told, "**... The thing comes from the Lord ...**"

VERSE 15

1. Solomon deals a lot with this and you wonder if some of the people who were his servants were slothful. And here's the thing, slothfulness or laziness feeds on itself. What seems to happen is the more you lie around and do nothing, the more tired you get. And like Paul said in II Thessalonians Solomon is also stating here. That if you don't work, you don't eat!

2. Now let's apply that to our prayer time and our Bible study time. Are we slothful with that? Are we lazy when it comes to prayer and reading the Bible? If you are you will starve spiritual speaking. As someone once said, "Seven days without reading the Bible makes one weak!" Think about that one!

VERSE 16

1. In other words, there is a way that seems right to a man but in the end it brings death! Remember what 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.**" You see, God's Word gives us life, it points us to the giver of life and it feeds our soul. If you reject His truth, then there is only death for you.

VERSE 17

1. So many today look down upon those who are poor, who have nothing and yet the Bible tells us that when you give to those in need we are giving to the Lord. It is as Jesus said as He was commending the righteous for their actions towards the poor, the needy. He said in Matthew 25:40, "**... 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'**" Also, in Matthew 10:42 we read, "**And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.**"

2. There is this cute little story that Henry Bosch tells that helps illustrate this point. He wrote, “A father once gave his boy a half dollar, telling him he could do with it as he pleased. Later when he asked about it, the little fellow said he had lent it to someone. ‘Did you get good security?’ inquired his father. ‘Yes, I gave it to a poor beggar who looked hungry!’ ‘O how foolish you are. You’ll never get it back!’ ‘But Dad, I have the best security; for the Bible says, he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord!’ Thinking this over, the Christian father was so pleased that he gave his son another half dollar! ‘See!’ said the boy. ‘I told you I’d get it again, only I didn’t think it would come so soon!’” May we learn that lesson!

VERSE 18

1. Solomon is saying that we are not to be passive in raising our children but deal with their behavior while they are young and their behavior can still be changed. But that does not give a person the right to abuse their children, we are to discipline them! Don’t be so angry that it is reflected in your actions. But also if you don’t discipline them it shows you truly don’t love them. In fact that second part of this verse is saying that very thing. That if you don’t discipline your child you will ruin their life, they will be on a path of destruction!

VERSE 19

1. What a sad statement this is. Solomon is saying that people who can’t control their temper, no matter how many times you bail them out of trouble; they will continue down that same foolish path, never learning to control their anger, their temper. They don’t learn the lesson!

VERSE 20

1. Make no mistake about it; wisdom is a long term investment! And here's the thing. We are to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is a building process and we should continue to grow throughout our life. As the proverb goes, "A young fool is bad, but there is nothing worse than an old fool!"

VERSE 21

1. God has a plan for each of our lives and as we come before Him in prayer, He takes the many plans we have and conforms them to His plan. He directs us down the right path. Not only that but we can have all kinds of ideas, all kinds of council but it is only God's truth that will stand that test of time. Paul put it like this in II Corinthians 13:8, "**For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.**" And I am thankful for that or we would be in a mess!

VERSE 22

1. The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, "**That which is desired in a man is loyalty and kindness [and his glory and delight are his giving], but a poor man is better than a liar.**" How true that is. Today we see women looking for their sugar-daddy, they want to marry into money because they think it will bring happiness when in reality, Solomon is saying that it is better to have a kind person than someone who has it all and is a liar, someone who is unkind!

VERSE 23

1. The fear of the Lord is not only the beginning of wisdom but it is the source of true and lasting satisfaction. You see, having a relationship with Christ leads to eternal life, and as you continue to see all that He has done and all we have in Him, there is contentment in that. It is as Paul told Timothy, **“For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.”** I Timothy 4:8.

VERSE 24

1. Here is the lazy person again. Here he reaches into a bowl of potato chips with his hands and he is too lazy to lift his hands up out of the bowl to his mouth so he could eat them! That is lazy! Now, how can we apply that to our lives? Many people will carry around their Bible but they are so lazy that they won't open it and read it, and thus, they are spiritually starving themselves to death even though the food they need is within their grasp. Remember what the Lord said to Joshua in Joshua 1:8 as he was preparing to take the children of Israel into the Promise Land, **“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.”** May we not forget that!

VERSE 25

1. You can strike a scoffer a hundred times and it will do you no good. The only good may come from an onlooker who may learn the lesson. Think about that for a minute, this is very true. Here you are driving down the Interstate at 70 mph and up ahead is a car pulled over by a police officer, what do you do? You slow down. You are learning the lesson as you look at what has happened to another, you don't want a ticket for speeding.

2. Now a wise person will receive correction and learn from their mistakes. It is as Paul said in I Timothy 5:20, **“Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.”**

VERSE 26

1. If your child behaved in this manner, struck you, cursed you, under the Law you could bring them to the city leaders. They would hear the case and if that child was found to be guilty they would be taken outside the city and stoned to death. (Exodus 21:17, Leviticus 20:9).

Now that seems harsh and I don't think it was carried out that often, but it was surely a deterrent to children that were rebellious and abusive. And I think God made this provision because He saw that a rebellious, abusive child will grow-up to be a rebellious and abusive adult, and it would be destructive to any society. Now I am not talking about little kids here, but young adults that at this point in their life should know better and they are acting like this. In our society we have gone in the opposite direction, we are afraid we will hurt their fragile self-esteem and thus, we let them get away with murder. Because of that we are reaping what we have sown.

VERSE 27

1. I like the way The Living Bible puts this verse, “**Stop listening to teaching that contradicts what you know is right.**” Stick to the Word of God and don’t listen to those that are putting it down or negating it because it will affect your life. You see, we as Christians do not live in a static state but are constantly growing in the Lord and if we are not then we are spiritually dead! You see, only when a body is dead does it not grow!

VERSE 28

1. The Living Bible says, “**A worthless witness cares nothing for truth-he enjoys his sinning too much.**” We see that today as people today mock the justice system. But make no mistake about it; in the end they will be accountable for their actions.

VERSE 29

1. Judgment will come to the wicked. Solomon said that, “**. . . the way of transgressors is hard.**” Proverbs 13:15. It most certainly is. If you refuse to heed God’s Word you will endure hardship, and if you continue down that path, it will lead to death being eternally separated from God. Today is the day of salvation, don’t pass it up!