

Proverbs



CHAPTER 1

THE proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

2 To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

4 To give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

5 A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

6 To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8 My son, hear the instruction of your father, and forsake not the law of your mother:

9 For they shall be an ornament of grace unto your head, and chains about your neck.

10 My son, if sinners entice you, consent not.

11 If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the

innocent without cause:

12 Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:

13 We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14 Cast in your lot among us; let us all have one purse:

15 My son, walk not in the way with them; refrain your foot from their path:

16 For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

17 Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.

18 And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives.

19 So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which takes away the life of the owners thereof.

20 Wisdom cries without; she utters her voice in the streets:

21 She cries in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she utters her words, saying,

22 How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

1:2 It is wise to read a proverb for each day of the month. They were written that we might have wisdom, instruction, and understanding.

1:22,23 One just has to observe the gospel being preached in the open air to know the truth of these words. When presented with the knowledge of how to be saved from death and hell, the world delights in scorn. Yet despite their contempt, our Creator offers salvation to a God-hating humanity. He will make His words known to all who turn to His proof.

23 Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

24 Because I have called, and you refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But you have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:

26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear comes;

27 When your fear comes as desolation, and your destruction comes as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish comes upon you.

28 Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:

30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

33 But whoso hearkens unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

CHAPTER 2

MY son, if you will receive my words, and hide my commandments with you;

2 So that you incline your ear unto wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding;

3 Yes, if you cry after knowledge, and lift up your voice for understanding;

4 If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures;

5 Then shall you understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

6 For the LORD gives wisdom: out of his mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

7 He lays up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

8 He keeps the paths of judgment, and preserves the way of his saints.

9 Then shall you understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yes, every good path.

10 When wisdom enters into your heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto your soul;

11 Discretion shall preserve you, understanding shall keep you:

12 To deliver you from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaks froward things;

13 Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;

14 Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

15 Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths:

16 To deliver you from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flatters with her words;

17 Who forsakes the guide of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God.

18 For her house inclines unto death, and her paths unto the dead.

19 None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.

20 That you may walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.

21 For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

22 But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

2:1-5 The fear of the Lord. This is how to obtain the fear of the Lord, the most necessary virtue: 1) receive the Word of God; 2) hide His commandments within you; 3) incline your ear to wisdom; 4) apply your heart to understanding; 5) cry out for knowledge and discernment; 6) seek it as you would for silver or hidden treasures.

2:12 Wisdom, knowledge, discretion, and understanding will keep you from perversity and sexual sin. They give the blind light as to the end result of sin: see verse 18.

CHAPTER 3

MY son, forget not my law; but let your heart keep my commandments:

2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to you.

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you: bind them about your neck; write them upon the table of your heart:

4 So shall you find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding.

6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths.

7 Be not wise in your own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It shall be health to your navel, and marrow to your bones.

9 Honor the LORD with your substance, and with the firstfruits of all your increase:

10 So shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the LORD loves he corrects; even as a father the son in whom he delights.

13 Happy is the man that finds wisdom,

and the man that gets understanding.

14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She is more precious than rubies: and all the things you canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor.

17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retains her.

19 The LORD by wisdom has founded the earth; by understanding has he established the heavens.

20 By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

21 My son, let not them depart from your eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:

22 So shall they be life unto your soul, and grace to your neck.

23 Then shall you walk in your way safely, and your foot shall not stumble.

24 When you lie down, you shall not be afraid: yes, you shall lie down, and your sleep shall be sweet.

25 Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it

3:1-3 The Law leads to mercy and truth. See John 1:17 and Galatians 3:24.

3:5 The world says the opposite—doubt the Word of God and have faith in yourself.

3:6 "It was the Lord who put it into my mind... I could feel His hand upon me... There is no question the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit because He comforted me with rays of marvelous illumination from the Holy Scriptures... No one should fear to undertake any task in the name of our Savior if it is just and if the intention is purely for His holy service. The gospel must still be preached to so many lands in such a short time. This is what convinces me." *Christopher Columbus* (from his diary, in reference to his discovery of "the New World")

3:19 "Slight variations in physical laws such as gravity or electromagnetism would make life impossible... The necessity to produce life lies at the center of the universe's whole machinery and design." *John Wheeler*, Princeton University professor of physics (*Reader's Digest*, Sept. 1986)

Even evolutionist *Stephen Hawking*, considered the best-known scientist since Albert Einstein, acknowledges "the universe and the laws of physics seem to have been specifically designed for us. If any one of about 40 physical qualities had more than slightly different values, life as we know it could not exist: Either atoms would not be stable, or they wouldn't combine into molecules, or the stars wouldn't form the heavier elements, or the universe would collapse before life could develop, and so on..." (*Austin American-Statesman*, October 19, 1997)

3:19

Questions for Evolutionists

by Dr. Kent Hovind

The test of any theory is whether or not it provides answers to basic questions. Some well-meaning but misguided people think evolution is a reasonable theory to explain man's questions about the universe. Evolution is not a good theory—it is just a pagan religion masquerading as science.

1. Where did the space for the universe come from?
2. Where did matter come from?
3. Where did the laws of the universe come from (gravity, inertia, etc.)?
4. How did matter get so perfectly organized?
5. Where did the energy come from to do all the organizing?
6. When, where, why, and how did life come from dead matter?
7. When, where, why, and how did life learn to reproduce itself?
8. With what did the first cell capable of sexual reproduction reproduce?
9. Why would any plant or animal want to reproduce more of its kind since this would only make more mouths to feed and decrease the chances of survival? (Does the individual have a drive to survive, or the species? How do you explain this?)
10. How can mutations (recombining of the genetic code) create any new, improved varieties? (Recombining English letters will never produce Chinese books.)
11. Is it possible that similarities in design between different animals prove a common Creator instead of a common ancestor?
12. Natural selection only works with the genetic information available and tends only to keep a species stable. How would you explain the increasing complexity in the genetic code that must have occurred if evolution were true?
13. When, where, why, and how did:
 - a) Single-celled plants become multi-celled? (Where are the two- and three-celled intermediates?)
 - b) Single-celled animals evolve?
 - c) Fish change to amphibians?
 - d) Amphibians change to reptiles?
 - e) Reptiles change to birds? (The lungs, bones, eyes, reproductive organs, heart, method of locomotion, body covering, etc., are all very different!) How did the intermediate forms live?
14. When, where, why, how, and from what did:
 - a) Whales evolve?
 - b) Sea horses evolve?
 - c) Bats evolve?
 - d) Eyes evolve?
 - e) Ears evolve?
 - f) Hair, skin, feathers, scales, nails, claws, etc., evolve?
15. Which evolved first (how, and how long, did it work without the others)?
 - a) The digestive system, the food to be digested, the appetite, the ability to find and eat the food, the digestive juices, or the body's resistance to its own digestive juice (stomach, intestines, etc.)?
 - b) The drive to reproduce or the ability to reproduce?
 - c) The lungs, the mucus lining to protect them, the throat, or the perfect mixture of gases to be breathed into the lungs?
 - d) DNA or RNA to carry the DNA message to cell parts?
 - e) The termite or the flagella in its intestines that actually digest the cellulose?
 - f) The plants or the insects that live on and pollinate the plants?
 - g) The bones, ligaments, tendons, blood supply, or muscles to move the bones?
 - h) The nervous system, repair system, or hormone system?
 - i) The immune system or the need for it?

comes.

26 For the LORD shall be your confidence, and shall keep your foot from being taken.

27 Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do it.

28 Say not unto your neighbor, Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give; when you have it by you.

29 Devise not evil against your neighbor, seeing he dwells securely by you.

30 Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done you no harm.

31 Envy not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.

32 For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous.

33 The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesses the habitation of the just.

34 Surely he scorns the scornors: but he gives grace unto the lowly.

35 The wise shall inherit glory: but shame

shall be the promotion of fools.

CHAPTER 4

HEAR, you children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake not my law.

3 For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

4 He taught me also, and said unto me, Let your heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

5 Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve you: love her, and she shall keep you.

7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all your getting get understanding.

8 Exalt her, and she shall promote you: she shall bring you to honor, when you do embrace her.

3:27,28 We must never lose sight of love for our neighbor. A good deed can be a stronger evangelistic witness than a thousand words. See Proverbs 27:10 footnote.

3:34 It has been said that the Italian dictator Mussolini, in his youth, stood on a high pinnacle and cried, "God, if you are there, strike me dead!" When God did not bow to his dictates, Mussolini concluded that there is no God. God did, however, answer his prayer some time later.

4:1-5 Training our children. We are responsible to God to train our children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6), and must constantly be on guard against humanism, atheism, relativism, evolution, and any other teaching that opposes the Christian worldview. (See also Ephesians 6:4 footnote.)

"I think that the most important factor moving us toward a secular society has been the educational factor. Our schools may not teach Johnny how to read properly, but the fact that Johnny is in school until he is sixteen tends toward the elimination of religious superstition. The average American child now acquires a high school education, and this militates against Adam and Eve and all other myths of alleged history." *P. Blanchard, "Three Cheers for Our Secular State," The Humanist*

"Education is thus a most powerful ally of humanism. What can a theistic Sunday school's meeting for an hour once a week and teaching only a fraction of the children, do to stem the tide of the five-day program of humanistic teaching?" *Humanism: A New Religion*, 1930

"Fundamental parents have no right to indoctrinate their children in their beliefs. We are preparing their children for the year 2000 and life in a global one-world society, and those children will not fit in." *Senator Paul Hoagland*, 1984

"Give me your four year olds, and in a generation I will build a socialist state." *Vladimir Lenin*

4:7 How do we get this "principal thing" that preserves and promotes? Primarily through prayer and Proverbs. Seek God and feed on this wealth of wisdom daily.



"I do not believe that any man can preach the gospel who does not preach the Law."

Charles Spurgeon

9 She shall give to your head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to you.

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of your life shall be many.

11 I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths.

12 When you go, your steps shall not be straitened; and when you run, you shall not stumble.

13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is your life.

14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.

17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

18 **But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.**

19 **The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.**

20 My son, attend to my words; incline your ear unto my sayings.

21 Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart.

22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

23 Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

24 Put away from you a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from you.

25 Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you.

26 Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established.

27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove your foot from evil.

CHAPTER 5

MY son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow your ear to my understanding:

2 That you may regard discretion, and that your lips may keep knowledge.

3 For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil:

4 But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

5 Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

6 Lest you should ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that you can not know them.

7 Hear me now therefore, O you children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

8 Remove your way far from her, and come not near the door of her house:

9 Lest you give your honor unto others, and your years unto the cruel:

10 Lest strangers be filled with your wealth; and your labors be in the house of a stranger;

11 And you mourn at the last, when your flesh and your body are consumed,

12 And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;

13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to them that instructed me!

14 I was almost in all evil in the midst

of the congregation and assembly.

15 Drink waters out of your own cistern, and running waters out of your own well.

16 Let your fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.

17 Let them be only your own, and not strangers' with you.

18 Let your fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of your youth.

19 Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and be ravished always with her love.

20 And why will you, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he ponders all his goings.

22 His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be held with the cords of his sins.

23 He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

CHAPTER 6

MY son, if you be surety for your friend, if you have stricken your hand with a stranger,

2 You are snared with the words of your mouth, you are taken with the words of your mouth.

3 Do this now, my son, and deliver yourself, when you are come into the hand of your friend; go, humble yourself, and make sure your friend.

4 Give not sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids.

5 Deliver yourself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

6 Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,

8 Provides her meat in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest.

9 How long will you sleep, O sluggard? when will you arise out of your sleep?

10 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

11 So shall your poverty come as one that travels, and your want as an armed man.

12 A naughty person, a wicked man, walks with a froward mouth.

13 He winks with his eyes, he speaks with his feet, he teaches with his fingers;

14 Frowardness is in his heart, he devises mischief continually; he sows discord.

15 Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.

16 These six things does the LORD hate: yes, seven are an abomination unto him:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 An heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A false witness that speaks lies, and he that sows discord among brethren.

20 My son, keep your father's command-

5:19 Biblical sexuality. It comes as a shock to the world that God's Word speaks so openly about sex. It is a gift of God given for both procreation and pleasure, within the bounds of marriage. Those who refuse to keep sexual intimacy within the bounds of the marriage bed will suffer the consequences of their actions (vv. 20–23). It is interesting to note that a man and a woman can have sexual relations thousands of times within their marriage with no fear of AIDS or any sexually transmitted diseases. See verse 11.

6:6–8 The ant is an example of the Christian who knows the will of God—to seek and save that which is lost. He understands that God isn't willing that any should perish, so he sets about the task of reaching the lost with the gospel. The ant doesn't need anyone telling him what to do. He just does it. See 1 Corinthians 15:58.

THE FUNCTION OF THE LAW



"The absence of God's holy Law from modern preaching is perhaps as responsible as any other factor for the evangelistic impotence of our churches and missions. Only by the light of the Law can the vermin of sin in the heart be exposed. Satan has effectively used a very clever device to silence the Law, which is needed as an instrument to bring perishing men to Christ.

"It is imperative that preachers of today learn how to declare the spiritual Law of God; for, until we learn how to wound consciences, we shall have no wounds to bind with gospel bandages." *Walter Chantry, Today's Gospel: Authentic or Synthetic?*

"The Law is the God-given light to illuminate the dark soul of man." *Mark A. Spence*

"Unless we see our shortcomings in the light of the Law and holiness of God, we do not see them as sin at all." *J. I. Packer*

ment, and forsake not the law of your mother:

21 Bind them continually upon your heart, and tie them about your neck.

22 When you go, it shall lead you; when you sleep, it shall keep you; and when you awake, it shall talk with you.

23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

24 To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.

25 Lust not after her beauty in your heart; neither let her take you with her eyelids.

26 For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.

27 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?

29 So he that goes in to his neighbor's wife; whosoever touches her shall not be innocent.

30 Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;

31 But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.

32 But whoso commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding: he that does it destroys his own soul.

33 A wound and dishonor shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

34 For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

35 He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though you give many gifts.

CHAPTER 7

MY son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with you.

2 Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of your eye.

3 Bind them upon your fingers, write them upon the table of your heart.

4 Say unto wisdom, You are my sister; and call understanding your kinswoman:

5 That they may keep you from the strange woman, from the stranger which flatters with her words.

6 For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

7 And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,

8 Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,

9 In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:

6:23-30 Never fall into the trap of thinking that God's Law has no relevance for the Christian. Not only is it a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ (Galatians 3:24), but it leaves him with knowledge that will guide him for the rest of his life. We shouldn't disregard instruction of the schoolmaster after we graduate. The Ten Commandments will keep the Christian from fornication (v. 24), lust (v. 25), adultery (v. 29), and theft (v. 30).

10 And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart.

11 (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:

12 Now is she without, now in the streets, and lies in wait at every corner.)

13 So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him,

14 I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows.

15 Therefore came I forth to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you.

If you will not have death unto sin, you shall have sin unto death. There is no alternative. If you do not die to sin, you shall die for sin. If you do not slay sin, sin will slay you.

CHARLES SPURGEON

16 I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt.

17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning; let us solace ourselves with loves.

19 For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey:

20 He has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed.

21 With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

22 He goes after her straightway, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;

23 Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hastens to the snare, and knows not that it is for his life.

24 Hearken unto me now therefore, O you children, and attend to the words of my mouth.

25 Let not your heart decline to her ways,

go not astray in her paths.

26 For she has cast down many wounded: yes, many strong men have been slain by her.

27 Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

CHAPTER 8

DOES not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?

2 She stands in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

3 She cries at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

4 Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man.

5 O you simple, understand wisdom: and, you fools, be you of an understanding heart.

6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.

7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

8 All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them.

9 They are all plain to him that understands, and right to them that find knowledge.

10 Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

11 For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

12 I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

14 Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength.

15 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

18 Riches and honor are with me; yes, durable riches and righteousness.

19 My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

20 I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

21 That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O

you children: for blessed are they that keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

34 Blessed is the man that hears me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For whoso finds me finds life, and shall obtain favor of the LORD.

36 But he that sins against me wrongs his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

CHAPTER 9

WISDOM has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars:

2 She has killed her beasts; she has mingled her wine; she has also furnished her table.

3 She has sent forth her maidens: she cries upon the highest places of the city,

4 Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wants understanding, she says to him,

5 Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

6 Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

7 He that reproves a scorner gets to himself shame: and he that rebukes a wicked man gets himself a blot.

8 Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate you: rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

8:22 Jehovah's Witnesses. When Jehovah's Witnesses maintain that Jesus was "made" of the seed of David (that Jesus was a god "created" by Jehovah to die for our sins), they may point to Proverbs 8:22–35 for justification. However, the Bible is speaking here of "wisdom" (v. 12).

They also may refer to John 14:28 in which Jesus said, "I go to the Father: for my Father is greater than I," but they fail to show why Jesus said the Father was greater: "But we see Jesus, *who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death*, . . . that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Hebrews 2:9, emphasis added).

In Romans 1:3, the word used to refer to the incarnation ("made") is *ginomai*, which means "assembled." A body was prepared for God to manifest Himself in the flesh—"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Timothy 3:16).

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

11 For by me your days shall be multiplied, and the years of your life shall be increased.

12 If you be wise, you shall be wise for yourself: but if you scorn, you alone shall bear it.

13 A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knows nothing.

14 For she sits at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city,

15 To call passengers who go right on their ways:

16 Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wants understanding, she says to him,

17 Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

18 But he knows not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.

.....

*Will a sinner go to hell because
he doesn't trust in Jesus?
See John 16:9 footnote.*

.....

CHAPTER 10

THE proverbs of Solomon. A wise son makes a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

2 Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivers from death.

3 The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casts away the substance of the wicked.

4 He becomes poor that deals with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

5 He that gathers in summer is a wise son: but he that sleeps in harvest is a son that causes shame.

6 Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

7 The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.

8 The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall.

9 He that walks uprightly walks surely: but he that perverts his ways shall be known.

10 He that winks with the eye causes sorrow: but a prating fool shall fall.

11 The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life: but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

12 Hatred stirs up strifes: but love covers all sins.

13 In the lips of him that has understanding wisdom is found: but a rod is for the back of him that is void of understanding.

14 Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.

15 The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty.

16 The labor of the righteous tends to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.

17 He is in the way of life that keeps instruction: but he that refuses reproof errs.

18 He that hides hatred with lying lips, and he that utters a slander, is a fool.

19 In the multitude of words there wants not sin: but he that refrains his lips is wise.

20 The tongue of the just is as choice sil-

9:17 Our sinful hearts are so perverse that sin promises excitement. Despite the claim of modern evangelism that we can't find happiness until we come to Jesus, sin is indeed enticing and pleasurable, and can make a man or woman happy. See Jeremiah 12:1 and Hebrews 11:25.

10:2 All the money in the world will not turn the head of the Judge of the Universe. Money may buy a pardon from a civil court, but only righteousness will deliver the guilty from the wrath of Eternal Justice. See Proverbs 11:4.

10:7 Perhaps this is why not too many people name their children Adolf, Judas, or Jezebel.

ver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.
 21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.

22 The blessing of the LORD, it makes rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.

23 It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding has wisdom.

24 The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

25 As the whirlwind passes, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.

26 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.

27 The fear of the LORD prolongs days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

28 The hope of the righteous shall be gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.

29 The way of the LORD is strength to the upright: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.

30 The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

31 The mouth of the just brings forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked speaks frowardness.

CHAPTER 11

A FALSE balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.

2 When pride comes, then comes shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

3 The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

4 Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivers from death.

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.

7 When a wicked man dies, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perishes.

8 The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked comes in his stead.

9 An hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices: and when the wicked

10:32 Knowing what's acceptable. There is no record of David seeking God for His will before he confronted Goliath. How could this be? The Scriptures say, "In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:6). Shouldn't David have acknowledged the Lord in some way? No doubt, he did pray as he faced his enemy, but there is no proof that David asked God whether he should attack the giant Philistine. The reason for this is clear. The Bible tells us, "The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable." There are certain things that we know are not acceptable. If you saw an elderly woman fall to the ground, would you ask God whether or not you should help her up? Some things should be obvious to the godly. David took one look at the situation and saw that such a thing was completely unacceptable—that this "uncircumcised Philistine" was defying the armies of the Living God.

David could draw that conclusion because he had a relationship with God. His senses were "exercised to discern both good and evil" (Hebrews 5:14). He knew the Lord, and those who "know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Daniel 11:32).

11:1 We must never forget that God loves honesty in our dealings with others. See verse 3.

11:4 Riches in this life may buy a clever defense lawyer or turn a corrupt judge's head, but on the Day of Wrath the righteousness of Jesus Christ will be the only thing that will deliver the sinner from eternal death. See Revelation 6:15 footnote.

11:5-7 Notice the surety of these verses. They *shall* come to pass.

11:9 If we wouldn't say it in prayer, we shouldn't say it at all.

perish, there is shouting.

11 By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

12 He that is void of wisdom despises his neighbor: but a man of understanding holds his peace.

13 A talebearer reveals secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit conceals the matter.

14 Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

15 He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hates suretiship is sure.

16 A gracious woman retains honor: and strong men retain riches.

17 The merciful man does good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubles his own flesh.

18 The wicked works a deceitful work: but to him that sows righteousness shall be a sure reward.

19 As righteousness tends to life: so he that pursues evil pursues it to his own death.

20 They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way are his delight.

21 Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

22 As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.

23 The desire of the righteous is only good: but the expectation of the wicked is wrath.

24 *There is that scatters, and yet increases; and there is that withholds more than is meet, but it tends to poverty.*

25 *The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that waters shall be watered also himself.*

26 He that withholds corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that sells it.

27 He that diligently seeks good procures favor: but he that seeks mischief, it shall come unto him.

28 He that trusts in his riches shall fall; but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

29 He that troubles his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.

30 *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that wins souls is wise.*

31 Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked

11:13 The damage of gossip. A woman once spread some hot gossip about a local pastor. What he had supposedly done became common knowledge around town. Then she found that what she had heard wasn't true. She gallantly went to the pastor and asked for his forgiveness. The pastor forgave her, but then told her to take a pillow full of tiny feathers to a corner of the town, and in high winds, shake the feathers out. Then he told her to try to pick up every feather. He explained that the damage had already been done. She had destroyed his good reputation, and trying to repair the damage was like trying to pick up feathers in high winds.

The Bible says that there is life and death in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21). Pray with the psalmist, "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Psalm 141:3). Remember the old saying, "He that gossips to you will gossip about you."

11:21 Though the entire world joins hands in a unity of spirit and says that there is no hell, it is still a reality. There *will* be a Judgment Day and justice will be done.

11:24 The wallet is the final frontier. There is nothing wrong with riches. However, those who have wealth must not trust in money (v. 28) and must be willing to share their prosperity with others. See 1 Timothy 6:17–19.

11:30 "Even if I were utterly selfish and had no care for anything but my own happiness, I would choose, if God allowed, to be a soul winner, for never did I know perfect, overflowing, unutterable happiness of the purest and most ennobling order till I first heard of one who had sought and found a Savior through my means." *Charles Spurgeon*

ed and the sinner.

CHAPTER 12

WHOSO loves instruction loves knowledge: but he that hates reproof is brutish.

2 A good man obtains favor of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.

3 A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.

4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that makes ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.

5 The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.

6 The words of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

7 The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.

8 A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.

9 He that is despised, and has a servant, is better than he that honors himself, and lacks bread.

10 A righteous man regards the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

11 He that tills his land shall be satis-

fied with bread: but he that follows vain persons is void of understanding.

12 The wicked desires the net of evil men: but the root of the righteous yields fruit.

13 The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.

14 A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkens unto counsel is wise.

16 A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covers shame.

17 He that speaks truth shows forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

18 There is that speaks like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.

19 The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

20 Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counselors of peace is joy.

21 There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.

22 Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his

11:30 Lifestyle evangelism. Here's how to cultivate true lifestyle evangelism: 1) Pray that God uses you to reach the lost. 2) Ask for wisdom to use the time you have effectively for evangelism. Treat every day as though it were your last opportunity to share Christ. One day you will be right. 3) Study how to answer every man who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you (1 Peter 3:15; see Proverbs 16:23). 4) Find a "fishing hole" and go there regularly. Don't wait for sinners to approach you; go to them (Mark 16:15). 5) Use any anxiety as a catalyst to drive you to prayer and trust in God. Don't let the fear of man paralyze you (Philippians 1:28). You will realize the spiritual nature of fear after you conquer it. Confront it with the Word of God—"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). 6) Encourage others (by example and exhortation) into the task of evangelism.

12:15 This verse sums up the philosophy of a world that professes to be wise yet ignores the counsel of God's Word.

12:17 We are to follow the example of Jesus, who "preached righteousness in the great congregation" (see Psalm 40:6-10).

12:22 The ungodly try to justify themselves by saying that a "fib" or "white lie" never hurts anybody. Sin offends a holy God who demands retribution. See Proverbs 13:5.

delight.

23 A prudent man conceals knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.

24 The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

25 Heaviness in the heart of man makes it stoop: but a good word makes it glad.

26 The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor: but the way of the wicked seduces them.

27 The slothful man roasts not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man is precious.

28 In the way of righteousness is life: and in the pathway thereof there is no death.

CHAPTER 13

A WISE son hears his father's instruction: but a scorner hears not rebuke.

2 A man shall eat good by the fruit of his mouth: but the soul of the transgressors shall eat violence.

3 He that keeps his mouth keeps his life: but he that opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

4 The soul of the sluggard desires, and has nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

5 A righteous man hates lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and comes to shame.

6 Righteousness keeps him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthrows the sinner.

7 There is that makes himself rich, yet has nothing: there is that makes himself poor, yet has great riches.

8 The ransom of a man's life are his riches: but the poor hears not rebuke.

9 The light of the righteous rejoices: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

10 Only by pride comes contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.

11 Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathers by labor shall increase.

12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick: but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.

13 Whoso despises the word shall be destroyed: but he that fears the commandment shall be rewarded.

14 The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

15 Good understanding gives favor: but the way of transgressors is hard.

16 Every prudent man deals with knowledge: but a fool lays open his folly.

17 A wicked messenger falls into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health.

18 Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuses instruction: but he that regards reproof shall be honored.

19 The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but it is abomination to fools to depart from evil.

20 He that walks with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

21 Evil pursues sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repaid.

22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

23 Much food is in the tillage of the poor: but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment.

24 He that spares his rod hates his son: but he that loves him chastens him sometimes.

12:25 Are you worried and depressed about the future? Then read and believe the "good word" of God's Word. Nothing banishes fear like faith. Trusting in God's promises is like switching on a bright light in a dark room of gloom.

13:13 The Word will judge and condemn the guilty on the Last Day. Those who fear when they realize that they have sinned against God by transgressing His Law will be rewarded in the gospel. See Galatians 3:24.

13:19 Sinners love darkness; it is their security. See Proverbs 14:9; John 3:19,20.

SPRINGBOARDS FOR PREACHING AND WITNESSING



The Key

Back in the Old West, a number of men were upstairs in a boarding house amusing themselves with a game of cards when there was a cry from the street below of "Fire! Fire!" The men looked at one another in disbelief. One of the windows grew orange with the flames. "Wait!" said the dealer. "Let's just finish this hand; we've got plenty of time—I have a key to the back door." The men nodded in approval, then quickly picked up the dealt cards.

Precious minutes passed. One of the men became nervous as the flames licked through the now broken window. With darting eyes and a sweat-filled brow, he asked for the key. "Coward!" muttered the dealer as he tossed across the key. Each of them then rushed to the door and waited with bated breath as the key was placed into the lock. "It won't turn!" was the cry. "Let me have it!" said the dealer. As he tried in vain to turn the key, he whispered in horror, "It's the wrong key!"

25 The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.

CHAPTER 14

EVERY wise woman builds her house: but the foolish plucks it down with her hands.

2 He that walks in his uprightness fears the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despises him.

3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

4 Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.

5 A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

6 A scorner seeks wisdom, and finds it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understands.

7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, when you perceive not in him the lips of knowledge.

8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.

9 **Fools make a mock at sin: but among**

the righteous there is favor.

10 The heart knows his own bitterness; and a stranger does not intermeddle with his joy.

11 The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

12 There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

13 Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

14 The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

15 The simple believes every word: but the prudent man looks well to his going.

16 A wise man fears, and departs from evil: but the fool rages, and is confident.

17 He that is soon angry deals foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

18 The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

19 The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

20 The poor is hated even of his own neighbor: but the rich has many friends.

21 He that despises his neighbor sins: but he that has mercy on the poor, happy

14:5 See verse 25.

14:14 False converts have no concern for God's will to reach the lost. Those who manage to find themselves in a pulpit will build their own kingdom rather than God's. See also Acts 20:30.

is he.

22 Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

23 In all labor there is profit: but the talk of the lips tends only to penury.

24 The crown of the wise is their riches: but the foolishness of fools is folly.

25 A true witness delivers souls: but a deceitful witness speaks lies.

26 In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

28 In the multitude of people is the king's honor: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.

29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalts folly.

30 A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

31 He that oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker: but he that honors him has mercy on the poor.

32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous has hope in his death.

33 Wisdom rests in the heart of him

that has understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known.

34 Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

35 The king's favor is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causes shame.

CHAPTER 15

A SOFT answer turns away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools pours out foolishness.

3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

4 A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.

5 A fool despises his father's instruction: but he that regards reproof is prudent.

6 In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish does not so.

8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

14:25 A "witness" is not called upon to give an eloquent speech, but to merely testify to what he has seen and heard.

14:27 Here is a fountain from which most men refuse to drink. Their prejudicial minds think that its waters are bitter, when in truth they are incredibly sweet. The fear of the Lord helps men shake off that beast called "sin"—which is sucking from them their very life's blood.

14:34 "The moral principles and precepts contained in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evils which men suffer from—vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war—proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible." *Noah Webster*

15:1 Speak softly. This verse needs to be written on the hearts of all who preach the gospel, whether they share their faith with sinners one-on-one or preach open-air. If sinners become angry when you witness to them, speak softly. If you think you are about to be hit, ask the person his name to help diffuse the situation. Don't be afraid to gently change the subject, and don't wait to be a martyr. Jesus said to flee from a city that persecutes you (Matthew 10:23). Paul left one city in a basket (2 Corinthians 11:33). For other verses on the spirit in which we should share our faith, see Proverbs 16:32.

15:7 God's Law is what gives knowledge (see Romans 3:20,21). Those who are wise will tell sinners of its righteous requirements.

9 The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loves him that follows after righteousness.

10 Correction is grievous unto him that forsakes the way: and he that hates reproof shall die.

11 Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

12 A scorner loves not one that reproves him: neither will he go unto the wise.

13 A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

14 The heart of him that has understanding seeks knowledge: but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.

Never be afraid to try something new. Remember, amateurs built the ark; professionals built the Titanic.

UNKNOWN

15 All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart has a continual feast.

16 Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

17 Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

18 A wrathful man stirs up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeases strife.

19 The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the right-

eous is made plain.

20 A wise son makes a glad father: but a foolish man despises his mother.

21 Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walks uprightly.

22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counselors they are established.

23 A man has joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

24 The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.

26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.

27 He that is greedy of gain troubles his own house; but he that hates gifts shall live.

28 The heart of the righteous studies to answer: but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

29 The LORD is far from the wicked: but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

30 The light of the eyes rejoices the heart: and a good report makes the bones fat.

31 The ear that hears the reproof of life abides among the wise.

32 He that refuses instruction despises his own soul: but he that hears reproof gets understanding.

33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction

15:8 When sinners think they are righteous because they give money, attend church, or live what they consider to be a virtuous life, it is an "abomination to the Lord." Even their thoughts are an abomination to Him (v. 26). This is because they stand guilty before Him. Their good works are provoked by a guilty conscience. Like a despicable criminal trying to pervert justice by offering the judge a bribe, they think their good deeds will outweigh their sins (see Hebrews 9:14).

"Good works, as they are called, in sinners are nothing but splendid sins." *Augustine*

15:15 Laughter is the enemy of legalism. Liberty and joy go hand in hand.

15:21 Use your time to further the gospel (see Ephesians 5:15,16). So much of today's entertainment is folly. If shallow entertainment gives us joy, it reveals our shallow understanding of the precious nature of time.

15:23 What a joy it is to direct a lost sinner to the Savior. The gospel is always in season. See 2 Timothy 4:2.

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

16:10

“I have broken the Ten Commandments, but I do good things for people.”

Many people do similar things. They may steal from their employer or cheat on their taxes, then give to a charity or spend Thanksgiving helping at a soup kitchen. They think they are balancing the scales: they have done bad, and now they are doing good. However, the Bible reveals that the *motive* of guilty sinners is one of guilt (see Hebrews 9:14). They are attempting to bribe the Judge of the Universe. However, the Judge in this case will not be corrupted. He must punish all sinners. Good works cannot earn mercy; it comes purely by the grace of God. He will dismiss our iniquity only on the grounds of our faith in Jesus.



of wisdom; and before honor is humility.

CHAPTER 16

THE preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weighs the spirits.

3 Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established.

4 The LORD has made all things for himself: yes, even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.

6 By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.

7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

9 A man's heart devises his way: but the LORD directs his steps.

10 A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresses not in judgment.

11 A just weight and balance are the LORD's: all the weights of the bag are his work.

12 It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaks right.

14 The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.

15 In the light of the king's countenance

16:2 This is never so evident as when you ask a guilty sinner if he thinks he is a good person (see Proverbs 21:2; Luke 16:15). When the Law is used properly, it strips a man of self-righteousness. See Luke 18:18–23.

16:5 God resists those who are proud. Grace is only for the humble. Biblical evangelism is “Law to the proud; grace to the humble.” With the Law, we break the hard heart. With the gospel, we heal the broken heart.

16:6 Men will not let go of their beloved sins unless the fear of the Lord grips their sin-loving hearts. Sinners are like a child whose eyes sparkle with delight as he holds a stick of lighted dynamite. He will not let go of it unless he is convinced that he is in terrible danger. The Law of God coupled with future punishment is the convincing agent that God has chosen to awaken the sinner. He must be told that God (who has the power to cast his soul into hell) will judge the world (on Judgment Day) in righteousness (by the perfect and righteous standard of His Law).



"Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?"

Abraham Lincoln

is life; and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.

16 How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

17 The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keeps his way preserves his soul.

18 Pride goes before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

19 Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20 He that handles a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusts in the LORD, happy is he.

21 The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increases learning.

22 Understanding is a wellspring of life

unto him that has it: but the instruction of fools is folly.

23 *The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips.*

24 Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.

25 There is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

26 He that labors labors for himself; for his mouth craves it of him.

27 An ungodly man digs up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire.

28 A froward man sows strife: and a whisperer separates chief friends.

29 A violent man entices his neighbor, and leads him into the way that is not good.

30 He shuts his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he brings evil to pass.

31 The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.

32 *He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit than he that takes a city.*

33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.

CHAPTER 17

BETTER is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.

2 A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causes shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

3 The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD tries the hearts.

4 A wicked doer gives heed to false lips; and a liar gives ear to a naughty tongue.

5 Whoso mocks the poor reproaches his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities

16:25 See Proverbs 12:15. The way of self-righteousness seems right to men. (See Proverbs 15:8 footnote.)

16:32 This is the spirit in which we should share our faith. See Luke 6:28.

"He who masters his passions is a king even while in chains. He who is ruled by his passions is a slave even while sitting on a throne." *Richard Wurmbrand*

shall not be unpunished.

6 Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.

7 Excellent speech becomes not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.

8 A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that has it: whithersoever it turns, it prospers.

9 He that covers a transgression seeks love; but he that repeats a matter separates very friends.

10 A reproof enters more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.

11 An evil man seeks only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

12 Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.

13 Whoso rewards evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

14 The beginning of strife is as when one lets out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

15 He that justifies the wicked, and he that condemns the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD.

16 Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he has no heart to it?

17 A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

18 A man void of understanding strikes hands, and becomes surety in the presence of his friend.

19 He loves transgression that loves strife: and he that exalts his gate seeks destruction.

20 He that has a froward heart finds no good: and he that has a perverse tongue falls into mischief.

21 He that begets a fool does it to his sorrow: and the father of a fool has no joy.

22 A merry heart does good like a medicine: but a broken spirit dries the bones.

23 A wicked man takes a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

24 Wisdom is before him that has understanding; but the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.

25 A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

26 Also to punish the just is not good, nor to strike princes for equity.

27 He that has knowledge spares his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

28 Even a fool, when he holds his peace, is counted wise: and he that shuts his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

CHAPTER 18

THROUGH desire a man, having separated himself, seeks and intermeddles with all wisdom.

2 A fool has no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.

3 When the wicked comes, then comes also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

4 The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook.

5 It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

17:11 A rebellious heart is an open door to the demonic realm. This was the case with King Saul.

17:14 See Matthew 12:36 footnote.

17:22 Let the joy of the Lord be your strength. See Proverbs 15:15 footnote.

17:24 True riches are laid before us in the Word of God. Those who ignore these "exceedingly great and precious promises" (2 Peter 1:4) will never be content.

18:1 Never isolate yourself from other Christians. Those who are not in regular fellowship with other believers make themselves an easier target for the enemy. Satan is a roaring lion, seeking to devour us (1 Peter 5:8). The first thing a lion does in stalking its prey is to isolate individual members from the herd. See Hebrews 10:25.

6 A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calls for strokes.

7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

8 The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

9 He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runs into it, and is safe.

11 The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

12 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honor is humility.

13 *He that answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame unto him.*

14 The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

15 The heart of the prudent gets knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

16 A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men.

17 He that is first in his own cause seems just; but his neighbor comes and searches him.

18 The lot causes contentions to cease, and parts between the mighty.

19 A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.

20 A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

21 Death and life are in the power of

the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

22 Whoso finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor of the LORD.

23 The poor uses entreaties; but the rich answers roughly.

24 A man that has friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.

CHAPTER 19

BETTER is the poor that walks in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

2 Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good; and he that hastens with his feet sins.

3 The foolishness of man perverts his way: and his heart frets against the LORD.

4 Wealth makes many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbor.

5 A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaks lies shall not escape.

6 Many will entreat the favor of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that gives gifts.

7 All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he pursues them with words, yet they are wanting to him.

8 He that gets wisdom loves his own soul: he that keeps understanding shall find good.

9 A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaks lies shall perish.

10 Delight is not seemly for a fool; much less for a servant to have rule over princes.

18:13 Be patient when sinners ramble. It is a discredit to our Christian witness to interrupt someone who is trying to tell us something, even though we have heard the empty argument many times before. Love will listen.

18:16 If you are wanting God to use you, He will open the doors in His time.

18:19 Make it a rule of life not to argue over petty doctrinal or prophetic interpretations. Strive to keep the unity of the Spirit. See Philipians 1:27.

19:3 See Romans 8:7.

19:5 Those who transgress the Ninth Commandment have a fearful fate. See Revelation 21:8.

11 *The discretion of a man defers his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*

12 The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but his favor is as dew upon the grass.

13 A foolish son is the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

14 House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD.

15 Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

16 He that keeps the commandment keeps his own soul; but he that despises his ways shall die.

17 He that has pity upon the poor lends unto the LORD; and that which he has given will he pay him again.

18 Chasten your son while there is hope, and let not your soul spare for his crying.

19 A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if you deliver him, yet you must do it again.

20 Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter end.

21 There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

22 The desire of a man is his kindness:

and a poor man is better than a liar.

23 The fear of the LORD tends to life: and he that has it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

24 A slothful man hides his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

25 Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware: and reprove one that has understanding, and he will understand knowledge.

26 He that wastes his father, and chases away his mother, is a son that causes shame, and brings reproach.

27 Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causes to err from the words of knowledge.

28 An ungodly witness scorns judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

29 Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.

CHAPTER 20

WINE is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

2 The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provokes him to anger sins against his own soul.

3 It is an honor for a man to cease from

19:17 "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." *Winston Churchill*

20:1 Alcohol is a poison. When someone is in-toxic-ated, he is "poisoned." The body protests with confused thinking, slurred speech, and impaired vision, memory, and judgment. The victim vomits. The next day his head throbs with pain, yet he still drinks the poison. Hundreds of thousands of innocent people have been maimed on the roads by drunk drivers, yet the world cannot bring itself to say, "Don't drink." It can only say, "Don't drink and drive." This is because alcohol is the only enemy man has succeeded in loving. It destroys his liver, heart, and kidneys. It gives him high blood pressure and causes blood vessels to burst in his skin. It leads him to beat his wife and abuse his kids. It will eventually destroy his ability to enjoy the intimacies of the marriage bed. Yet he still drinks.

He thinks alcohol is a "stimulant." In truth, it is a suppressant that reduces his inhibitions. It dulls the naggings of his conscience so that he can commit sexual and other sins that he couldn't indulge in while sober. A man who gives himself to the demon of alcohol becomes a slave to its addictive properties. It mocks him. It steals his dignity. It takes control of his will. Whoever is deceived by it (and there are millions) is not wise. See Proverbs 23:29–35.

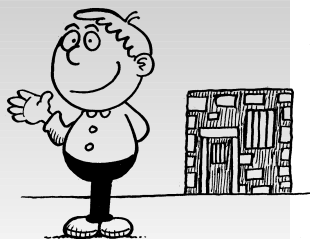
20:3 It takes no skill to "argue" with sinners. We are called to reason—to plead with love and gentleness.

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

20:9

“I used to be a liar and a thief, but that was years ago. Now I try to be a good person.”

Time doesn't forgive sin. If a man commits murder on Monday, but on Tuesday he is kind to others, he is still a murderer. If a man lies and steals, unless he comes to the Savior, his sins remain with him until he stands before God in judgment.



strife: but every fool will be meddling.

4 The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

5 Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

6 Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

7 The just man walks in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.

8 A king that sits in the throne of judgment scatters away all evil with his eyes.

9 Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

10 Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD.

11 Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.

12 The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD has made even both of them.

13 Love not sleep, lest you come to poverty; open your eyes, and you shall be satisfied with bread.

14 It is naught, it is naught, says the buy-

er: but when he is gone his way, then he boasts.

15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

16 Take his garment that is surety for a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

17 Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

18 Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.

19 He that goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flatters with his lips.

20 Whoso curses his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

21 An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

22 Say not, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save you.

23 Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good.

24 Man's goings are of the LORD; how

20:6 If you ask a man if he thinks he is a good person, he usually will say that he is. That's why we need to use the Law (which the Bible says in "good") to give him understanding about what "good" is (Romans 7:12). See Proverbs 21:2.

20:9 No man can do this. Only God can cleanse man's heart of sin and make him pure. See 1 John 1:9.

20:11 Those who deny the reality of the sinful nature haven't had children. See Proverbs 29:15 footnote.

20:12 See Psalm 94:7-11.

can a man then understand his own way?

25 It is a snare to the man who devours that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry.

26 A wise king scatters the wicked, and brings the wheel over them.

27 The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

28 Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upheld by mercy.

29 The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the grey head.

30 The blueness of a wound cleanses away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.

CHAPTER 21

THE king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turns it whithersoever he will.

2 Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD ponders the hearts.

3 To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

4 An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.

5 The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.

6 The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.

7 The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.

8 The way of man is froward and strange: but as for the pure, his work is right.

9 It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

10 The soul of the wicked desires evil: his neighbor finds no favor in his eyes.

11 When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge.

12 The righteous man wisely considers the house of the wicked: but God overthrows the wicked for their wickedness.

13 Whoso stops his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

14 A gift in secret pacifies anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

15 It is joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction shall be to the workers of iniquity.

16 The man that wanders out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.

17 He that loves pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loves wine and oil shall not

21:1 This is our great confidence when preaching to sinners. God has control of the hearts of men and women.

21:2 Right in his own eyes. Consider the way dogs cross the road. A dog will wander onto a freeway oblivious to the danger. His tail wags as he steps between cars without a second thought. Cars swerve. Tires squeal. The noise is deafening as vehicles smash into each other. The sleepy dog stops wagging his tail for a moment and looks at the pile of smoldering, broken cars on the freeway. His expression betrays his thoughts. His bone-burying brain doesn't realize for one moment that he is responsible for the disaster.

When man wanders onto the freeway of sin, his tail wags with delight. He thinks that this is what he was made for. His thoughts of any repercussions for his actions are shallow. His mind wanders into lust, then predictably he wanders onto the path of adultery. Suddenly a disaster sits before him. His marriage is shattered, his name is slurred, his children are twisted and scarred. But like the dumb dog, he doesn't realize for one moment that he is solely responsible for his sin.

This is why the perfect Law of God needs to be arrayed before his darkened eyes—to show him that his way is not right in the eyes of a perfect God.

21:6 It has been rightly said that taking the easy path is what makes men and rivers crooked.

21:10 Sinful men have no trouble seeing other people's sins.

be rich.

18 The wicked shall be a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.

19 It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

20 There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spends it up.

21 He that follows after righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness, and honor.

22 A wise man scales the city of the mighty, and casts down the strength of the confidence thereof.

23 Whoso keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles.

24 Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who deals in proud wrath.

25 The desire of the slothful kills him; for his hands refuse to labor.

26 He covets greedily all the day long; but the righteous gives and spares not.

27 The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he brings it with a wicked mind?

28 A false witness shall perish: but the man that hears speaks constantly.

29 A wicked man hardens his face: but as for the upright, he directs his way.

30 There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.

31 The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the LORD.

CHAPTER 22

A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.

2 The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.

3 A prudent man foresees the evil, and hides himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

4 By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life.

5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that does keep his soul shall be far from them.

6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

7 The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

8 He that sows iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.

9 He that has a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he gives of his bread to the poor.

10 Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yes, strife and reproach shall

21:23 Be slow to speak your personal opinions, and save yourself a great deal of trouble.

21:24 The proud, arrogant, and angry scorner gravitates to open-air preaching. These will be prevalent in the last days (2 Peter 3:3). The Scriptures reveal that the reason for their contention is that they are given to lust.

21:27 Mankind can never atone for his own sins and buy immortality by giving to charitable causes. Eternal life is a gift of God. See Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9.

22:1 We must guard our name, character, and reputation for the sake of the gospel. If men think evil of us, let it be only for the cause of righteousness.

22:4 Those who refuse to humble themselves will eventually lose their possessions, their dignity, and their very life. However, those who walk in humility of heart and obey God store up an eternal treasure in heaven. They will preserve their life and be honored by God Himself. See John 12:25.

22:6 Training our children. "Let the children...be carefully instructed in the principles and obligations of the Christian religion. This is the most essential part of education. The great enemy of the salvation of man, in my opinion, never invented a more effectual means of extirpating [removing] Christianity from the world than by persuading mankind that it was improper to read the Bible at schools." *Benjamin Rush* (See also Proverbs 4:1–5 and Ephesians 6:4 footnotes.)

cease.

11 He that loves pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.

12 The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and he overthrows the words of the transgressor.

13 The slothful man says, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

14 The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

15 Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

16 He that oppresses the poor to increase his riches, and he that gives to the rich, shall surely come to want.

17 Bow down your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart unto my knowledge.

18 For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; they shall withal be fitted in your lips.

19 That your trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to you this day, even to you.

20 Have not I written to you excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

21 That I might make you know the certainty of the words of truth; that you might answer the words of truth to them that send unto you?

22 Rob not the poor, because he is poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:

23 For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man you shall not go:

25 Lest you learn his ways, and get a snare to your soul.

26 Be not one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.

27 If you have nothing to pay, why should he take away your bed from under you?

28 Remove not the ancient landmark, which your fathers have set.

29 See a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.

CHAPTER 23

WHEN you sit to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before you:

2 And put a knife to your throat, if you be a man given to appetite.

3 Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat.

4 Labor not to be rich: cease from your own wisdom.

5 Will you set your eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

6 Eat not the bread of him that has an evil eye, neither desire his dainty meats:

7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, says he to you; but his heart is not with you.

8 The morsel which you have eaten shall you vomit up, and lose your sweet words.

9 Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

10 Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:

11 For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with you.

12 Apply your heart unto instruction, and your ears to the words of knowledge.

13 Withhold not correction from the child: for if you beat him with the rod, he shall not die.

14 You shall beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell.

15 My son, if your heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.

16 Yes, my reins shall rejoice, when your

23:12 There is no greater way to do this than to read and meditate on God's Word every day. Say to yourself, "No Bible, no breakfast. No read, no feed." Put your Bible before your belly. See Psalm 1, and mediate on the promises for those who do this.

lips speak right things.

17 Let not your heart envy sinners; but be you in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

18 For surely there is an end; and your expectation shall not be cut off.

19 Hear, my son, and be wise, and guide your heart in the way.

20 Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh:

21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.

22 Hearken unto your father that begat you, and despise not your mother when she is old.

23 Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

24 The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begets a wise child shall have joy of him.

25 Your father and your mother shall be glad, and she that bare you shall rejoice.

26 My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways.

27 For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit.

28 She also lies in wait as for a prey, and increases the transgressors among men.

29 Who has woe? who has sorrow? who has contentions? who has babbling? who has wounds without cause? who has redness of eyes?

30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

31 Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it gives his color in the cup, when it moves itself aright.

32 At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like an adder.

33 Your eyes shall behold strange women, and your heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yes, you shall be as he that lies down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lies upon the top of a mast.

35 They have stricken me, shall you say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

CHAPTER 24

BE not envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.

2 For their heart studies destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

3 Through wisdom is an house built; and by understanding it is established:

4 And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

5 A wise man is strong; yes, a man of knowledge increases strength.

6 For by wise counsel you shall make your war: and in multitude of counselors there is safety.

7 Wisdom is too high for a fool: he opens not his mouth in the gate.

8 He that devises to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.

9 The thought of foolishness is sin: and

23:17 See Psalm 73.

23:23 It is sad that so many Christian ministries demand money from their audience, often with the promise that God will bless them if they give. God knows the motives of the preacher, but the unsaved don't, and are therefore easily deceived by the practice. We should be careful never to give the impression that our motivation is the love of money.

23:24,25 This is the fruit of obedience to the Fifth Commandment.

23:29-35 See Proverbs 20:1 footnote.

24:3,4 Jesus Christ and His teachings are the only sure foundation. See Colossians 1:9; Matthew 7:24.

24:9 Never be discouraged when a man mocks you when you are preaching the gospel. Your love, gentleness, and reasonableness will be seen to contrast his foolishness.

the scorner is an abomination to men.

10 If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.

11 If you forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain;

12 If you say, Behold, we knew it not; does not he that ponders the heart consider it? and he that keeps your soul, does not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?

Nothing can damn a man but his own righteousness; nothing can save him but the righteousness of Christ.

CHARLES SPURGEON

13 My son, eat honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to your taste:

14 So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto your soul: when you have found it, then there shall be a reward, and your expectation shall not be cut off.

15 Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:

16 For a just man falls seven times, and rises up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

17 Rejoice not when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles:

18 Lest the LORD see it, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.

19 Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be envious at the wicked:

20 For there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.

21 My son, fear the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change:

22 For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knows the ruin of them both?

23 These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.

24 He that says unto the wicked, You are righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

25 But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come up-on them.

26 Every man shall kiss his lips that gives a right answer.

27 Prepare your work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build your house.

28 Be not a witness against your neighbor without cause; and deceive not with your lips.

29 Say not, I will do so to him as he has done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

30 I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

31 And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

32 Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction.

33 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

34 So shall your poverty come as one that travels; and your want as an armed man.

CHAPTER 25

THESE are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of

24:11,12 Surely these verses were written for those slothful servants who shun the task of evangelism. See Matthew 25:14–30.

24:25 We are to “preach the word; be instant in season, [and] out of season,” and to “reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2). Do this, and you will have the promise of the blessing of God.

Judah copied out.

2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings is to search out a matter.

3 The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

5 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

6 Put not forth yourself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men:

7 For better it is that it be said unto you, Come up hither; than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince whom your eyes have seen.

8 Go not forth hastily to strive, lest you know not what to do in the end thereof, when your neighbor has put you to shame.

9 Debate your cause with your neighbor himself; and discover not a secret to another:

10 Lest he that hears it put you to shame, and your infamy turn not away.

11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

12 As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprovener upon an obedient ear.

13 As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refreshes the soul of his masters.

14 Whoso boasts himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.

15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaks the bone.

16 Have you found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for you, lest you be filled therewith, and vomit it.

17 Withdraw your foot from your neighbor's house; lest he be weary of you, and so hate you.

18 A man that bears false witness against his neighbor is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.

19 *Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*

20 As he that takes away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that sings songs to an heavy heart.

21 If your enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

22 For you shall heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward you.

23 The north wind drives away rain: so does an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

24 It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

25 As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

26 A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

27 It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory.

28 He that has no rule over his own spirit it is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

CHAPTER 26

AS snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honor is not seemly for a fool.

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

25:19 A broken tooth or a foot out of joint cause the most pain when they are put under pressure. How do we react when we are put under pressure to share our faith?

25:28 We allow the enemy entrance when we give the flesh free reign, having no self-control over our spirit.

4 Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like unto him.

5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

6 He that sends a message by the hand of a fool cuts off the feet, and drinks damage.

7 The legs of the lame are not equal: so is a parable in the mouth of fools.

8 As he that binds a stone in a sling, so is he that gives honor to a fool.

9 As a thorn goes up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouths of fools.

10 The great God that formed all things both rewards the fool, and rewards transgressors.

11 As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool returns to his folly.

12 See a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

13 The slothful man says, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets.

14 As the door turns upon his hinges, so does the slothful upon his bed.

15 The slothful hides his hand in his bosom; it grieves him to bring it again to his mouth.

16 The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

17 He that passes by, and meddles with strife belonging not to him, is like one that takes a dog by the ears.

18 As a mad man who casts firebrands, arrows, and death,

19 So is the man that deceives his neigh-

bor, and says, Am not I in sport?

20 Where no wood is, there the fire goes out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceases.

21 As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

22 The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

23 Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 He that hates dissembles with his lips, and lays up deceit within him;

25 When he speaks fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart.

26 Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be showed before the whole congregation.

27 Whoso digs a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolls a stone, it will return upon him.

28 A lying tongue hates those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth works ruin.

CHAPTER 27

BOAST not yourself of tomorrow; for you know not what a day may bring forth.

2 *Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.*

3 A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.

26:10 The word "great" cannot describe how great God is. Worship takes over where words fail. Our God formed *all* things. They didn't evolve after a big bang.

26:12 **New Age blasphemy.** The inevitable result of man's darkened understanding is that he will think that he is God. His pride takes over his brain.

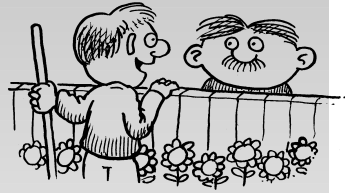
"We no longer feel ourselves to be guests in someone else's home and therefore obliged to make our behavior conform with a set of preexisting cosmic rules. It is our creation now. We make the rules. We establish the parameters of reality. We create the world, and because we do, we no longer feel beholden to outside forces. We no longer have to justify our behavior, for we are now the architects of the universe. We are responsible to nothing outside ourselves, for we are the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever." *Jeremy Rifkin, Algeny*

26:17 This is wonderful guidance for the sincere Christian on what not to do. He who meddles will get hurt.

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

27:10

“How do I reach my neighbors with the gospel?”



Neighbors are like family. We don't want to offend them unnecessarily, because we have to live with them. We need to be rich in good works toward all men, but especially our neighbors. The Bible reveals that this is a legitimate means of evangelism. Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). It is God's will that "with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Peter 2:15). Sinners may disagree with what you believe, but seeing your good works makes them think, "I don't believe what he believes, but *he* sure does. He certainly is sincere in his faith."

A friendly wave, a gift for no reason, fresh-baked goods, etc., can pave the way for evangelism. Offer to mow your neighbors' lawn or help do some painting. Volunteer to pick up their mail and newspapers while they're on vacation. Compliment them on their landscaping and ask for gardening tips. Invite them over for a barbecue or dessert. Pray for an opportunity to share the gospel, and be prepared for it when it comes.

4 Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

5 *Open rebuke is better than secret love.*

6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

7 The full soul loathes an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

8 As a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man that wanders from his place.

9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so does the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

10 Your own friend, and your father's friend, forsake not; neither go into your brother's house in the day of your calamity: for better is a neighbor that is near than a brother far off.

11 My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproaches me.

12 A prudent man foresees the evil, and hides himself; but the simple pass on,

and are punished.

13 Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

14 He that blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

15 A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

16 Whosoever hides her hides the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, which bewrays itself.

17 Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

18 Whoso keeps the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waits on his master shall be honored.

19 As in water face answers to face, so the heart of man to man.

20 Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

21 As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.

27:1 The only thing we can be sure of is the breath going into our lungs at this moment. We can't be sure of the next breath. That comes only by the permission of God. See James 4:13–16 and Luke 12:20 footnote.

27:5 We openly rebuke those in the world for their sin because we love them and are concerned for their eternal welfare.

22 Though you should bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

23 Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and look well to your herds.

24 For riches are not for ever: and does the crown endure to every generation?

25 The hay appears, and the tender grass show itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

26 The lambs are for your clothing, and the goats are the price of the field.

27 And you shall have goats' milk enough for your food, for the food of your household, and for the maintenance for your maidens.

CHAPTER 28

THE wicked flee when no man pursues: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

2 For the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.

3 A poor man that oppresses the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaves no food.

4 They that forsake the law praise the

wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.

5 Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all things.

6 Better is the poor that walks in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

7 Whoso keeps the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shames his father.

8 He that by usury and unjust gain increases his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.

9 He that turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

10 Whoso causes the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession.

11 The rich man is wise in his own conceit; but the poor that has understanding searches him out.

12 When righteous men do rejoice, there is great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.

27:20 Men can never satisfy lust. It is an unquenchable inferno. The more it is given fuel, the more it continues to burn. Desire will make him crave sexual pleasure, money, fame, and power. He will continue to "want" until the Lord becomes his shepherd. See Psalm 23:1.

27:25 Marijuana advocates often point to Genesis 1:11 ("Let the earth bring forth grass") and other verses (Genesis 1:29; 3:18) to justify the smoking of what they refer to as "grass." They claim that God declared marijuana "good." However, He also made sand (which is good), but if we eat it by the spoonful we shouldn't complain if we get sick. Those who inhale the burning fumes of a weed shouldn't complain when it mentally impairs them. It is called "dope" for a reason.

28:4 When the Church forsakes the proclamation of God's Law, iniquity floods the land. *Daniel Webster* stated: "If truth is not diffused, error will be. If God and His Word are not known and received, the devil and his works will gain the ascendancy. If the evangelical volume does not reach every hamlet, the pages of a corrupt and licentious literature will.

"If the power of the gospel is not felt throughout the length and breadth of this land, anarchy and misrule, degradation and misery, corruption and darkness will reign without mitigation or end."

28:5 "God's justice stands forever against the sinner in utter severity. The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions. It hushes their fears and allows them to practice all pleasant forms of iniquity while death draws every day nearer and the command to repent goes unregarded. As responsible moral beings, we dare not so trifle with our eternal future." *A. W. Tozer, The Knowledge of the Holy*

28:9 If a professing Christian thinks that he can willfully serve sin by transgressing the Moral Law and still have peace with God, he is deceived.

13 He that covers his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy.

14 Happy is the man that fears always: but he that hardens his heart shall fall into mischief.

15 As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.

16 The prince that wants understanding is also a great oppressor: but he that hates covetousness shall prolong his days.

17 A man that does violence to the blood of any person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

18 Whoso walks uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

19 He that tills his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that follows after vain persons shall have poverty enough.

20 A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that makes haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

21 To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress.

22 He that hastens to be rich has an evil eye, and considers not that poverty shall

come upon him.

23 He that rebukes a man afterwards shall find more favor than he that flatters with the tongue.

24 Whoso robs his father or his mother, and says, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.

25 He that is of a proud heart stirs up strife: but he that puts his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.

26 He that trusts in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walks wisely, he shall be delivered.

27 He that gives unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse.

28 When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.

CHAPTER 29

HE, that being often reproved hardens his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

2 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked bears rule, the people mourn.

3 Whoso loves wisdom rejoices his fa-

28:13 Sin cannot be covered from the eyes of a holy Creator. Biblical conversion not only comes from confessing sin to God, but also from forsaking sin. Those who do that and trust the Savior partake in the mercy of God.

Confessing our sins. "Whereas, it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history: that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord..."

"We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious Hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

"Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

"It behooves us then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins and to pray for clemency and forgiveness." *Abraham Lincoln*, 1863, in declaring a day of national fasting, prayer, and humiliation

28:26 Never give in to the temptation to trust your feelings over God's promises. See Proverbs 3:5,6.

ther: but he that keeps company with harlots spends his substance.

4 The king by judgment establishes the land: but he that receives gifts overthrows it.

5 A man that flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.

6 In the transgression of an evil man there is a snare: but the righteous does sing and rejoice.

7 The righteous considers the cause of the poor: but the wicked regards not to know it.

8 Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise men turn away wrath.

9 If a wise man contends with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest.

10 The bloodthirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.

11 A fool utters all his mind: but a wise man keeps it in till afterwards.

12 If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants are wicked.

13 The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lightens both their eyes.

14 The king that faithfully judges the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.

15 The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself brings his mother to shame.

16 When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases: but the righteous shall see their fall.

17 Correct your son, and he shall give you rest; yes, he shall give delight unto your soul.

18 Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keeps the law, happy is he.

19 A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.

20 See a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

21 He that delicately brings up his servant from a child shall have him become his son at the length.

22 An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression.

23 A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.

24 Whoso is partner with a thief hates his own soul: he hears cursing, and bewrays it not.

25 The fear of man brings a snare: but whoso puts his trust in the LORD shall be

29:1 It is a fearful thought that God would lose patience with those who harden their hearts against Him. Jesus spoke of a man to whom God said, "This night your soul shall be required of you" (Luke 12:20). It is prudent to warn sinners that God may lose patience with them and let death seize them, as He did with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10).

29:2 Righteous authority. When believers fulfill their responsibility to elect righteous leaders, the entire country benefits.

"In selecting men for office, let principle be your guide. Regard not the particular sect or denomination of the candidate—look to his character. . . . It is alleged by men of loose principles, or defective views of the subject, that religion and morality are not necessary or important qualifications for political stations. But the Scriptures teach a different doctrine. They direct that rulers should be men who rule in the fear of God, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness. . . .

"When a citizen gives his vote to a man of known immorality, he abuses his civic responsibility; he sacrifices not only his own interest, but that of his neighbor; he betrays the interest of his country." *Noah Webster*

29:9 It has been well said that a wise man will learn more from a fool's question than a fool will learn from a wise man's answer.

29:15 A child doesn't learn to do evil; he naturally knows how to be selfish and lie. However, he must be taught to share and truthful. See Proverbs 20:11.

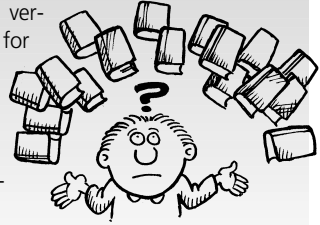
29:25 See Psalm 56:11 footnote.

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

30:5

“The fact that there are so many versions proves that the Bible has mistakes. Which one is right?”

True, there are many different versions of the Bible. There are versions in Chinese for the Chinese. There are versions in Russian for the Russian people. There are actually thousands of versions of the Bible—some are in modern languages, some in foreign languages, and some are in old English. Few, in the printing age, can claim that they don’t have access to the Scriptures in their own language. However, each translation is based on the original biblical texts. See Psalm 119:105 footnote.



safe.

26 Many seek the ruler’s favor; but every man’s judgment comes from the LORD.

27 *An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.*

CHAPTER 30

THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spoke unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

2 Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.

3 I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.

4 Who has ascended up into heaven, or descended? who has gathered the wind in his fists? who has bound the waters in a garment? who has established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if you can tell?

5 **Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in**

him.

6 Add not unto his words, lest he reprove you, and you be found a liar.

7 Two things have I required of you; deny me them not before I die:

8 Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

9 Lest I be full, and deny you, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

10 Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse you, and you be found guilty.

11 There is a generation that curses their father, and does not bless their mother.

12 There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

13 There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

14 There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

29:27 This is why the world hates the Christian. See John 15:18,19.

30:1,2 This is the foundational key to learning. See 1 Corinthians 1:21; 3:18.

30:4 His name is “I AM” and His Son’s name is Jesus Christ. See Psalm 2:12.

30:5 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16), and is His complete revelation to mankind. Many religions accept the words of Scripture, but consider them to be only part of the truth. Those who have added anything to God’s Holy Word are in great error.

30:11,12 What better description do we have of this lawless generation? By transgressing the Fifth Commandment, it reaps the fearful consequences of disobedience and fails to receive the promise given in Ephesians 6:1–3. Because they have been left without the light of the Moral Law, they consider themselves pure and have therefore become a law unto themselves.

15 The horseleach has two daughters, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yes, four things say not, It is enough:

16 The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that says not, It is enough.

17 The eye that mocks at his father, and despises to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

18 There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yes, four which I know not:

19 The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.

20 Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eats and wipes her mouth, and says, I have done no wickedness.

21 For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it cannot bear:

22 For a servant when he reigns; and a fool when he is filled with meat;

23 For an odious woman when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

24 There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise:

25 The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

26 The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;

28 The spider takes hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

29 There be three things which go well, yes, four are comely in going:

30 A lion which is strongest among beasts, and turns not away for any;

31 A greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.

32 If you have done foolishly in lifting up yourself, or if you have thought evil, lay your hand upon your mouth.

33 Surely the churning of milk brings forth butter, and the wringing of the nose brings forth blood: so the forcing of wrath brings forth strife.

CHAPTER 31

THE words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.

2 What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

3 Give not your strength unto women, nor your ways to that which destroys kings.

4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

5 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

6 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.

7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

8 Open your mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.

9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

30:15,16 Perhaps one more can be added to this list of those who never say "It is enough"—the money-hungry television preacher. See 2 Peter 2:1–3.

30:20 Some people seem to have no conscience. In truth, they have a *seared* conscience (see 1 Timothy 4:2)—one that has become so hardened that it has lost its ability to function. A correct use of the Law will resurrect it. When you speak directly to the conscience of a hardened sinner by saying, "You *know* that it's wrong to steal, to lie, to commit adultery, etc.," the conscience affirms the truth of the Commandment. See Romans 2:15.

30:25–28 Here are four virtues needed to be an effective witness: initiative (1 Corinthians 15:58); wisdom (Matthew 7:24); unity (Philippians 1:27); and persistence (Acts 4:18–20).

QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

31:10

“Christianity oppresses women by making them submit to their husbands!”

The Bible does say, “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord,” but it also instructs, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:22,25). A man who understands that Jesus Christ sacrificed His life’s blood for the Church will likewise love his wife sacrificially and passionately. He will honor her, respect her, protect, love, and cherish her as much as he does his own body, as he is instructed to do (Ephesians 5:28). He will never say or do anything to harm or demean her. It is in this atmosphere of love and security that a godly wife willingly submits herself to the protective arms of her husband. She does this not because he is better than she is, but simply because this is God’s order for His creation.



A godless world rejects the God-given formula to make marriage work. It thinks it knows best, and suffers the heartbreaking consequences of destroyed marriages and ruined lives. The Christian ideal of marriage is not one of an authoritarian and chauvinistic male holding his cringing wife in submission like an obedient dog. It’s the very opposite. While most of the great religions treat women as inferior to men, the Bible gives them a place of dignity, honor, and unspeakable worth, expressed so evidently in Proverbs 31.

11 The heart of her husband does safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

13 She seeks wool, and flax, and works willingly with her hands.

14 She is like the merchants’ ships; she brings her food from afar.

15 She rises also while it is yet night, and gives meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

16 She considers a field, and buys it: with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.

17 She girds her loins with strength, and strengthens her arms.

18 She perceives that her merchandise is good: her candle goes not out by night.

19 She lays her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

20 She stretches out her hand to the poor; yes, she reaches forth her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her

household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.

22 She makes herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.

24 She makes fine linen, and sells it; and delivers girdles unto the merchant.

25 Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She opens her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

27 She looks well to the ways of her household, and eats not the bread of idleness.

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.

29 Many daughters have done virtuously, but you excel them all.

30 Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.