

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 scorners 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 scorers: 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

6:23

"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 it 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 be-times.

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).