

Proverbs 20:1-30

“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* provoketh him to anger sinneth *against* his own soul. 3 *It is* an honour for a man to cease from 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* walketh in his integrity: his children *are* blessed after him. 8 A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth 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 hath made even both of them. 13 Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be satisfied with bread. 14 *It is* naught, *it is* naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth. 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 [she] that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him [her] that flattereth with his lips. 20 Whoso curseth 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 [i.e. the parable of the prodigal son Jesus told]. 22 Say not thou, I will recompense evil; *but* wait on the LORD; and he shall save thee. 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 can a man then understand his own way? 25 *It is* a snare to the man *who* devoureth *that which is* holy, and afterward vows to make enquiry. 26 A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth 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 upholden by mercy. 29 The glory of young men *is* their strength: and the beauty of old men *is* the

gray head. 30 The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.”

Introduction: A Warning About Alcohol

“Proverbs chapter 20 begins **“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” (verse 1)** which is the whole point of Proverbs, it begins by telling you someone who is under the influence of alcohol is someone who lacks wisdom. I would usually recommend, if you have somebody whose pickled, don’t try to reason with them, don’t try to counsel with them, they’re under the influence of some other thing. [Comment: the Bible does not condemn the consumption of alcohol, per se, as long as it is in extreme moderation. It is the over-consumption of alcohol which is condemned. Continued over-use of alcohol, building up one’s tolerance, leads directly into and is the major cause of alcoholism. Verse 1 shows here, that alcohol has a deceptive nature. I know, years worth of building up my tolerance led to my becoming a functional alcoholic, all the while I thought everything was ok. Thankfully the Lord healed me of it, so that I was able to walk away from it totally. If I had practiced extreme moderation, as the Bible calls for, I would never have become alcoholic, and would still be able to drink in extreme moderation. We should be teaching our kids this, the wise and proper use of alcohol, the occasional small glass of wine at dinner, always best at meals in moderation, is the proper use of alcohol.] Look, you know as Christians, we wrestle with this, we’re not Pharisees, we don’t want to be Pharisees. It is ok to have a glass of wine at dinner, ok, that’s not sin, we’re ok with that, you can do that. [We don’t drink] for different reasons. Ah, drunkenness we know is sin. Anything that would alter, put you under the influence of something else. Again, Paul says in ***Ephesians chapter 5, verse 18, ‘Do not be drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be ye being filled with the Holy Spirit...’*** that’s a present perfect tense, it’s passive, you don’t do it, but you’re constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit. Now if you’re constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit, there’s not a whole lot of room for alcohol, if you’re constantly being filled with something else that’s holy, separate from this world. So, no new problem, Egypt in the ancient dynasties, was famous for beer. All the Pharaohs had their own brew-masters. They never had a cold one, sadly, but they drank warm beer [so do the British]. In the hieroglyphics in Egypt they had found records that say, of the professors in the schools there in Egypt, *“My students are good for nothing, all they do is carouse and drink beer.”* So nothing’s

changed in the last 5,000 years. If you look at the statistics on alcohol, everybody here is way more techy than I am, you can just google those things and look at the statistics, look at the damage it does in America, look at the damage it does globally. 50,000 people a year are killed by drunk drivers, 50,000, think of those numbers [that's close to the number of U.S. soldiers killed during the whole Vietnam War]. You think of the Vietnam War, you have the wall down there in Washington, 58,000 names on it in a ten year period, ten times the amount of people are killed every single by drunk drivers than Vietnam. We have to keep our context when we think of these things. So, you and I, last days, days we're living in, I would just suggest, because what you do effects those around you, how you live, look at the whole Book of Proverbs, you want to live wisely, it effects the generation after you and the generation after them, grandchildren, how you carry yourself, the dignity that you live with, the Jesus that you know and follow, is infectious to those around you. [He's saying the children of alcoholics, not all of them, but many of them become alcoholics as well, continuing the cycle of abuse.] Here it says **"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (verse 1)**

About Kings & Monarchy

"The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul." (verse 2) and this is Solomon writing through the Holy Spirit, certainly one of the greatest kings, two out of three in Israel at that point, certainly at the pinnacle in many ways of his power. Ah, **"The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion:"** Solomon realizing the authority he had, was by divine decree, **"whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul."** it's a monarchy, Solomon, and wisdom says this.

Don't Put The Gloves On, Just Walk Away

"It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling." (verse 3) "every fool" male or female. So it's an honour for a man [or a woman] to cease from strife. Sometimes the wisest thing you can do is walk away, because you ain't gonna win. [Jeremiah was told about the people he was prophesying about to **'let them come to you, don't go to them.'** i.e. don't meddle with them, don't put the gloves on. *'Give your message and walk away.'*] Once you're personally involved you're in trouble, don't put on the gloves, and don't get in the ring. Because

if you do that, you've gotten personally involved. When you're involved in a situation like that, say *'Lord, let me be a spectator instead of a participant,'* because if they bait you, and they get you personally involved, and you get in there, it's strife, it doesn't add up to anything. So it's an honour, not in this world, as God views our lives, **"It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling."** some people, it's their favorite indoor sport, they can't pass up a good argument.

A Sluggard Always Has An Excuse, Effort Equals Benefit

Um, **"The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing."** (verse 4) "cold" literally "winter." We meet the sluggard throughout the Book of Proverbs, the sluggard is the lazy person, and you read about them, *'the sluggard says I'm not going to go out, there's a lion in the streets,'* the sluggard says here ***'I'm not going to plow because it's cold outside,'*** a sluggard always has an excuse. When I say sluggard, somebody's picture may be coming to your mind. And if that's true, you know, beside a sluggard leaving that little silver trail everywhere they go, a sluggard always has an excuse, *'it's cold, it's winter, there's a lion outside, I'm not going out,'* they always have an excuse. This Scripture is telling us that effort equals benefit. If you're going to harvest, there is a time to plow, and in Israel, that was after the winter and the former rains, getting into the Spring, you want to plow, you would plant, and the harvest would begin to come in the Spring and Summer and so forth. It's telling us there is activity that is appropriate to every season. It's true in human life, there is activity that is appropriate, for every season in life, sometimes it's plowing up the fallow ground, sometimes that's what's happening, sometimes it's gathering in the harvest, sometimes that's the appropriate activity for us to be involved in. But it says ***'The sluggard, the lazy man, the lazy woman, they're not going to plow because they're going to say it's cold outside.'*** The problem is, it says ***'When harvest comes, they're begging, because they don't have anything.'***

Wise Counsel Must Be Drawn Out

Verse 5, "Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out." so the idea is, usually somebody who is wise, somebody who has personal depth, usually those are not people that are blabbing all the time, about how much they know. But it says if you are a person of understanding,

you understand that that's like deep water, it needs to be drawn out. In ancient Near East, I've been there, in the fields of Bethany, there is a well there, and it's 2,000 years old, and all you see is the outcropping, you see the mouth of the well, but by observation, you can't tell by the mouth how deep or what quality the water is that's there. It's only when you draw it out. And observing a human being, by their mouth, usually you can't tell just by looking at it, how deep or what the quality of the depths of that person is. But somebody wise will take the time to draw it out. And if you need counsel, you need somebody to come alongside, and you need wisdom, it says ***'If you're wise, you see a person, and you know that's the person I want to know, I want to draw, they're not going to spout it off, so I'm going to go there and I'm going to draw it out, just wisdom.'*** It says ***"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" (verse 6)*** "women," girls you can include yourself if I don't include you in every verse here. So most men, easy to find, because they're proclaiming their own goodness. A faithful man, who can find? he's not going to be spouting off about his own wisdom, his own goodness and so forth. ***"The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him." (verse 7)*** we need more people like that, don't we, especially when we look at the news, when we look at government, and when we look at leaders around the world, ah, ***"The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him."*** because no doubt that's by observation, because the man doesn't just talk, he walks, it says here, then his life becomes a template. Sometimes we need to remember, when you walk in your integrity, it doesn't fit real well in this world sometimes, sometimes you take heat for it, sometimes people, the people who matter in your life, the people who care will watch. And they know it's not just something you blab, it's not just talk, it's walk, and it says ***'your children and your grandchildren,'*** every time you teach your children, whether you know it or not, you're already teaching your grandchildren too. It says ***'this just man, who walks in his integrity, his life becomes a template for them, by observation, his children are blessed after him.'*** [By the way, one of the most honest men of our times, in our recent past, was District Attorney Jim Garrison. His five children must be straight shooters, just like their dad, a totally uncorruptible man.]

*The King Winnows The Wheat From The Chaff, The Old
Testament Legal System*

“A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.” (verse 8) So, the king, Solomon writing this, sitting on the throne of judgment, “scattereth,” the Hebrew word **“he winnows”** that’s how you separate the wheat from the chaff. We might say *‘The guy looks right through you,’* here Solomon says **“A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment, he winnows away all evil with his eyes.”** [Comment: most judges in our courts have this ability to look right through you, they can tell whether or not you’re lying or telling the truth. They probably develop this skill of the trade by having to watch first hand and deal with so many liars, where the truth is ground out of them by the prosecuting attorneys.] By the way, this is a Biblical mandate for the king, going back in Deuteronomy 17, that he is supposed to rule this way, he’s supposed to write himself a copy of the Law, he’s supposed to read it every day, it’s supposed to be the Commandments, the Statutes of God, which determine government. And it says **‘a king that sits on the throne of judgment, he winnows, he separates the wheat from the chaff,’** that’s his divine responsibility [and now that is the job of our court system of judges, prosecuting attorneys and juries, but back in Solomon’s time, the Law of the Land was the Torah Law found in Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus and Deuteronomy and legal judgment fell to the king, high priest and Levitical priesthood].

Who Can Say ‘I Have Made My Heart Clean’?

Verse 9, “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” Anybody? Anyone here want to say that tonight? “I have made my own heart clean” can anybody do that? If you’re still in the process of that frustration we’d love to talk to you after the service [chuckles]. **“I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin”** not just who can say that, I have here “who would say that?” You know, you come to Christ, and you realize, he’s done all of that, he’s the one who cleanses, he’s the one who sets free, he’s the one who makes pure, we have no capacity for that, the heart is desperately wicked, it’s incurable, who can know it, the human heart (cf. Jeremiah 17:9). So who can say this Proverb of Solomon, who can say I have made my own heart clean? Here’s a guy at the end of his life who is going to be given over to idolatry, foreign wives, all of the things he should have taken to heart. Who can say I am pure from my own sin?

Honesty In Old Testament Buying & Selling Standards

“Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD.” (verse 10) Listen, this is talking about business, it’s talking about buying and selling. You know, Jesus said the greatest of the Commandments, the two tables of the Law, **‘you love the LORD God will all your heart and strength, and love your neighbour as yourself.’** That verse, divers weights and measures, were strictly a way for you to rip other people off in business, take advantage of them. Jesus, when he came to be baptized in the Jordan River, you know, John the Baptist baptizes him, a voice speaks from heaven and says **“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am already well-pleased.”** He never hung a shoddy door, never overcharged a customer, those were all the years in the carpenter shop, he hadn’t done a miracle yet, preached a sermon yet. **‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’** Here God says **“Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the LORD”** because you would put them on the scale, that’s how you would buy and you would sell.

Deal With Your Kids While There’s Time

Verse 11, “Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” Now it’s interesting, the word “child” there covers a long period in someone’s life, from a little child to youth. So it’s encompassing. A little child certainly is known by his doings, if you have a little kid whose been in his terrible two’s for the last three years, you know he’s six and he’s still in his terrible two’s, not only is he known by his doings, so are his parents, because that kid should be under control. You can say all things about the kid, *‘They provoke my kid,’* no, your kid was born in sin, the Bible says, he’s the cutest little sinner in your family. And if you don’t deal with him now, he’s going grow up to be the cutest big sinner in your family, and when he’s stronger than you you’ll be in trouble. So, **‘even a child is known by his doings,’** I mean, how many times do I say to my kids, *‘Did you do that?’* they put their hands over their rear end and go *‘Mmmm.’* *‘Why are you taking a defensive posture there?’* **“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.”**

Listen & Observe, Use Your Eyes & Ears For God

“The hearing ear, and the seeing eye the LORD hath made even both of them.” (verse 12) It doesn’t mention the mouth, the hand, or the foot, those are modes of expression. This is **‘listen**

and observe,' the hearing ear, the seeing eye, those are the things that the LORD God hath made, and the idea is, use them for him. We are still, with all of our science and genius today, learning how the hearing ear and seeing eye function. Again, your eyeball is a radio receiver, it receives long and short electrical waves. You don't see with your eyeball, it takes those long and short radio waves through the rods in your retina, 110,000,000 rods, 10,000,000 cones, turns it into an electrical signal, sends it through your optic nerve, which is part of your brain. And somewhere in your brain there's a chemical screen that pulls it up. So you're sitting here looking around the room, you're seeing all of this, your cones are differentiating between the thousands of different hues of brown and green and red, and then your rods are doing black and white. You're not seeing with your eyeball, somewhere in your brain there's a screen that comes up, they don't know how it works. When I go to bed at night, I think about my sons, and I pull them up on the screen, and my eyes are closed and I can see them, I pray for them, my daughters, my grandkids, my wife. I try to remember, and it's a losing battle, at my age I'm forgetting more and more it seems, and I try to remember on Saturday nights, in my mind I can kind of see the first service, second service, the third service, because everybody comes and sits in the same seats, you're kind of predictable. You make a really funny face when you come in and find someone has stolen your seat, they're obviously a novice, they don't know. I can pull that up in my mind and say *'Lord, help me speak life to them, help me Lord to speak to the ones that are going to be broken,'* we have a chemical memory, the ability to pull up in our minds those pictures. Hearing, we sit here tonight, and hopefully your listening not to me but to the Holy Spirit, frustrated doing as best he can with me. But your hearing what he's speaking to your heart. But you sit here, there goes a phone, I guess that person didn't listen to the announcement and turn their phone off. You hear sirens in the background, you hear wheels screeching, you hear the kid running down the hall, you hear all of these things with one mechanical drum, all of that is divided up and sent to different places in your brain. And you have libraries, ok, that's an ambulance, that's a train going by, that's thunder, ok that's a kid running, you're just filing, filing, filing, it's genius, it's beyond what we understand. But it says right here, it's the LORD. **He's made the hearing ear and the seeing eye. He wants you to listen, and to observe.** You can use it for pornography, you can use it for all kinds of other stuff. You know, when you consider the genius of it, he put it together, and I'll tell you this, when the Rapture happens [or the 1st Resurrection to Immortality, cf. 1st Corinthians 15:49-54] and when we stand in glory, that's when you're going to

realize what eyeballs are for, you ain't seen nothing yet. That's when you're going to realize what ears are for. When you hear **that** praise and worship there, then you're going to realize what ears are for. But the idea is, the LORD has made them both, the idea they are by him, for him, you yield those to him. Ah, listen and observe.

Get Up & Get Rolling

“Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.” (verse 13) I don't, but my body does, but I don't. **“Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty, open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.”** the idea is open your eyes, get up and get out of bed and get rolling.

‘Arguing On One Side Of Your Mouth While Boasting On The Other’

“It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.” (verse 14) any of you been in the market place in the Middle East anywhere? Just two of us? Three of us. Five of us, there's lots of us. The deal there is, when you go in the market place in the Middle East, you say *‘How much is that jewelry box?’ ‘That's eighty dollars, it's made of this, it's the best thing...’ ‘Aah, that's too much,’* and you walk out, they're offended because you're supposed to argue with them, *‘Come back,’ ‘Eighty dollars, I'll give you ten dollars,’ ‘Ten dollars? I have children, I'll give it to you for \$70,’ ‘Ah, I'll give you ten,’* it's a game, you have to do that. And then you're trying to buy it, and you finally get it for \$30 and then you walk away and brag about it, that's what it says here. **‘It's nothing, it's nothing, saith the buyer,’** then when he's gone his way, he boasts *‘look at this, I got this for 30 bucks.’* Years ago we were in the Arab market in Jerusalem, down the Shuke, and we're arguing with this guy *‘You want to buy these two little curly boxes?’* and he started at 80 bucks, and we finally got him down to where we paid him 30 bucks apiece, *‘ok, ok, 30 bucks apiece,’* and then he said *‘Where you guys from?’* the guy was from Chicago! He had the accent and everything. **‘it is naught, it is naught, sayeth the buyer,’** the idea is, so many people argue, they argue on one side of their mouth and they boast on the other side.

Material Wealth Doesn't Count

“There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.” (verse 15) they’re more rare than strictly material wealth. You know, there’s a lot of funerals here in the church, we all, pastors, participate in them. And you never at a funeral, nobody ever says *‘This guy was loaded, he had so much gold and so much rubies.’* No, what they say is *‘Oh, he was a faithful husband, he was a considerate boss,’* things they never said while the poor guy was alive, but they all say this now that he’s laying there in the box, saying all this wonderful stuff. Say those things to each other while you’re alive. But they don’t say *‘Man, that guy could use a chain-saw! You should see this guy drive a rig,’* naw, they say *‘He was sensitive, he was my friend,’* you say all of those things, because they’re worth more, really, in the final analysis. Again, if all you leave your kids is something that a lawyer settles you haven’t left them anything at all.

Don’t Lend To Strangers & Fools

Verse 16, “Take his garment that is surety for a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.” You don’t get collateral from a fool is the idea, you don’t want to lend money to somebody whose wasting it different ways.

If You Don’t Want A Mouthful Of Gravel, Don’t Lie To Get Your Way

Verse 17, “Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.” or of lying, or falsehood, the idea is being deceitful, the bread of deceit is sweet to a man [or woman], but afterwards, there’s always an afterwards. Right? There’s always an afterwards. The bread of lying and falsehood is sweet to a man when he first gets his hands on it, but afterwards, his mouth shall be filled with gravel. That’s what the bread of deceit turns into, we say ***‘It leaves a bad taste in your mouth.’*** Ah, if you don’t want a mouth full of gravel, so don’t lie to get your way.

Every Purpose Is Established By Counsel

“Every purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.” (verse 18) look, this is throughout the Book of Proverbs, wisdom, counsel, wisdom, a man of wisdom draws it out. Here, it says **“Every purpose is established by counsel”** there shouldn’t be Lone-Ranger Christians. Every joint, every ligament supplies, we are not made to do well isolated or alone. I always

worry about somebody whose out there beyond the boundary of fellowship, we're made to be in church, we're made to be part of the Body of Christ. We're made to receive godly counsel, we're made to function that way. And he says **'every purpose is established by counsel, and by good advice make war,'** and entering into any contest you should be well-advised.

Don't Have Anything To Do With Gossips

"He [or she] that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips." (verse 19) "meddle" I like that word. It just could say **'Avoid blabber-mouths,'** and we all know somebody like that. You want something to spread, tell that person, and it moves. Ah, he [or she] that goes about as a talebearer is a person who really doesn't care, they get their pleasure out of that, somehow. There's an old joke, do you want to hear an old joke? Three of us? Talk to me afterwards. These three pastors sitting together, and they said, *'You know what, there's no accountability, it's hard, our job's lonely, there's nobody we can talk to, there's nobody we can open up to.'* They said, *'Alright, look, let's do this, can we open up to each other?'* *'Oh ok,'* the first guy said, he said *'I need to tell you this, in my drawer I've got a bottle of whiskey there,'* he said, *'Just once in a while I'm just so worn out, so exasperated, I just got to come in here and have a few slugs, it kind of calms me down, I know it's wrong, I should depend on the Lord,'* and they say *'Alright, we'll pray for you.'* and then the next guy says *'Just once in awhile I fall into pornography, I know it's wrong, and it doesn't happen often, it's just occasionally,'* and they say *'Alright, we're going to pray for you.'* and the third guy is sitting there all fidgety, and they say *'Come on, what's your problem?'* he says *'Alright, my problem's gossip, and I can't wait to get out of here.'* [loud laughter] It's an old one. **"He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips."** That's just good advice.

Whoso Curses Father Or Mother Back Then, Not A Good Thing

"Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness." (verse 20) that sounds pretty serious to me. Now I have a note here in my Bible, it says *'20/20 vision for teenagers,'* this is chapter 20, verse 20, 20/20 vision. **"Whoso curseth father or mother,"** this is not good news, **'your lamp is**

going to be put out in obscure darkness.' that's not a good thing to hear, as you go through that. If you read Deuteronomy chapter 21, verses 18-21, Leviticus 20, verse 9, Exodus 20, verse 17. If a young person in Israel cursed their mother or father, they drugged them to the middle of town, they came before the elders, they said **'This is our son, he's rebellious, he's a drunkard, he curses us,'** and it says **'The whole town gathers around the stones and stoned him,'** and everybody went home. And every other teenager behaved for weeks after that. I'm not endorsing that, I'm saying when Solomon wrote it, it was pretty serious, **"Whoso curseth his mother or his father, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness."** Look, God knows that destroys the moral fabric of society and of any culture. When a culture of society comes to the point where children, that's why he says a child is known by his doings, if a young child is not disciplined, then it just gets to the point where there's cursing, drunkenness, we hear of moms and dads getting beat up by their kids, and that ultimately destroys the moral fabric of a culture or society. It is built on families and it is built on homes. Communities and cities are built on families. One of the biggest plagues in our nation today is absentee fathers. It is the single largest contributor, whatever category they interview prisoners in, whether it's for robbery, rape or murder, the number one thing that most often comes in the interview is no father in the home. So, God understands, adultery was a capital offense, cursing mother and father, treating them that way openly, was dealt with in Israel, God understood the toll it took on the moral fabric of a culture. I'm not endorsing it, I'm just saying this is what Solomon said a long time ago. I'm glad we don't do that now because I wouldn't be alive. That was in my BC days, I was out there.

*It Takes More To Handle Prosperity & Wealth Than
Difficulty*

"An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed." (verse 21) So, like the prodigal, *'Give me my inheritance now, I want it now,'* he goes out, he wastes the whole thing on harlots, on drunkenness and so forth, and somebody who gets ill-gotten gain, or somebody whose not wise enough. You know, it takes more wisdom to handle prosperity and wealth than it does to handle difficulty [I don't know about that, test me Lord on that], because it's a greater stewardship. If you understand that it's something the Lord's put in your hands, it's tough to manage. So, **"an inheritance may be**

gotten hastily in the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed" if it's squandered and it's used wrongfully.

'Recompense Not Evil, Wait On The LORD, He'll Save You'

Ah, **verse 22, "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee."** challenges our faith all the time, **"Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee."** because revenge is sweet. Right? And I like those movies [so do I]. I like it, when Charles Bronson [or Sylvester Stallone] goes and kills all the nuts. Clint Eastwood, *'Make my day,'* goes and gets all the whackos. There's something in me that's attracted to that. Not you, not if you understand what I'm saying, don't give me that blank look like the pastor's terrible, cut me a break will ya. [laughter] There's something in us, it says here **'Don't do it, don't let it talk to you, say not 'I'm going to recompense evil, but wait on the LORD,'** that's tough [you ain't kidding]. [My favorite, but it's a bit nasty, for recompensing evil is the movie *"Boondock Saints."* It's totally worldly, but the bad guys get whacked by a couple of street-wise Irish toughs.] And the thing is, there's a line, if we step across it the stakes are so high. If you step across that line wrongly, and do something, it may feel great for several seconds, but then there's an *'Oh no,'* that's going to go on for years afterward, you know. **'Wait on the LORD, he'll save you.'**

Falsehood In Buying & Selling

Again, **"Divers weights are an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance is not good."** (verse 23) relating back to verse 10, it says it again.

'I Don't Understand Why My Life's Like This' 'Do Your Best, And Commit The Rest'

"Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?" (verse 24) This is not saying...Jesus said the very hairs of your head are numbered, there isn't anything the Father doesn't know about you. He said to Jeremiah **'Before you were conceived, I knew thee, before you were formed in the womb I called thee.'** By the way, A.E. Wildersmith, when he was alive, one of the twelve brightest guys on the planet, said that proves that time and matter can't produce life, because God said **'Before you were conceived, I knew thee.'** So you need information, time and matter, and it proves that information is [or

can be] outside of the Space-Time Continuum, of time and matter. The LORD said, ***'Before you were conceived, I knew you, before you were formed in the womb I called you.'*** There's a Divine interweaving in and of our lives. [see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/Psalms/Psalm%20139%201-24.html> to see how God weaves us into what we become starting right after conception, and knows us before the sperm hits the egg, essentially. Truly God's information about us goes beyond and outside of Space-Time, as A.E. Wildersmith said.] Does that mean we shouldn't do our best, we shouldn't try? No, not at all. My pastor used to say all the time, *"Do your best, and commit the rest."* But I'm amazed as I look in Scripture, to see the involvement God places in people's lives. We were in Genesis with our senior high kids this year, and I'm always amazed to see Abraham, he was an idolater, we're told in Joshua 24, he worshipped idols in Ur of the Chaldees, and Stephen before he was stoned in Acts chapter 7 says ***'The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Ur of the Chaldees.'*** There's election, God chose, revealed himself to Abraham [cf. John 6:44], drew him, an idolater from Ur of the Chaldees. There were no Jews. As Abraham was in the Promised Land, he's referred to as a Habiru, we derive the word "Hebrew" from that, but there's no children of Israel till Jacob has 12 sons who become the 12 tribes of Israel, after God wrestled with him. But you look at their lives and you think, you know, here's Abraham, he comes into the land, he goes down to Egypt instead of staying there, you look at his failings, none of them mentioned in the Book of Hebrews by the way, chapter 11. He ends up then with a son by Hagar, Ishmael, and then his other son Isaac. He ends up favouring, in the long run of course, Isaac. Isaac then has two sons, he favours one, Isaac goes down south also, you see the same thing replayed, because the template had been laid out. Isaac of course, carnally, favours Esau, because he likes his venison. That's why any father would favour a son. He's big, he's hairy, he brings home the bacon. So he goes through this thing of course, we see Jacob, who then steals the birthright, and deceives his father, the action he takes. Then he runs from Esau, and he ends up there in Bethel, he has the dream [a vision from God in a dream, in reality]. Right? You guys remember the dream he had there? He sees the angels of God ascending and descending on a great stairway to heaven? [not Led Zeppelin's *Stairway to Heaven* by the way.] And he wakes up and he says ***'Can you believe this? Of all the places I could have fallen asleep, I fell asleep right here on the stairway to heaven. What a coincidence.'*** And then you listen to him. You know, you're going to come to Joseph and Daniel, some sterling characters in the Old Testament, and you think if Joseph had woken up there, awakened on that

stairway to heaven, he'd have fallen on his face and worshipped the LORD, he'd have said 'LORD, anything you want,' but we have to have Jacob's too. Jacob says **'I'll tell you what LORD, if you'll go with me, if you'll bless me, if you'll prosper me, if you feed me while I'm gone, if you clothe me, if you bring me back here safe and sound, I'll give you 10 percent [of what I earn].'** It's what he does, that's a Jacob. He gets there to Padam-aram, falls in love with Rachel, thinks he's marrying her, wakes up in the morning, he got Jacob'd! [The LORD saying through] Laban 'Oh, didn't we tell you, you shouldn't deceive your old blind father to rip off the blessing,' Uncle Laban, he said, **'We have a rule here, I forgot to tell you, you gotta marry the older one first, then you marry the younger one.'** and he goes through the whole process there. As he finally has to leave Laban, he's running back, and then he tells the family **'Uncle Harry is waiting for us, this may not be good, he's big, he's hairy, if you feel him in the night he feels like a goat, and the last time I saw him he wanted to kill me.'** So he gets to the river, he sends his wife and kids and all the bribery across first, and it says when he's left alone the LORD wrestles with him. And I'm so thankful the LORD waits till we're alone, and he wrestles with me when I'm alone, he doesn't humiliate me, doesn't have the desire to do that. But he will thump me when I'm alone. I'm thankful for that. And you watch then, Jacob comes limping away from that, God changes his name to Israel. So, Joseph, Benjamin, the sons of his old age, raised under Israel more than Jacob, and Jacob tells Joseph *'I had a dream, and because of the dream, I fled, and when I got here, I worked for seven years, I got ripped off, I worked for seven more years, but the dream set the course of my life,'* and you see, Joseph has a dream, it sets the course of his life, he's the favored son, because of the favoritism that had been in the family. Because of that he gets sold to the Midianites and is carried down to Egypt. When he's down in Egypt he works there for seven years as a slave, it seems, in the house of Potipher, then he gets ripped off, then he's in prison for seven more years, it replays and it replays, and it's almost like the lessons God instills in the family in each life, till finally this guy in Egypt with some interesting dreams confides them to Joseph, and then Joseph tells the baker and the butler, **'Yeah, I understand what those dreams mean,'** and then there's Divine amnesia for a couple years, until the one guy that's saved alive remembers **'I know a Hebrew kid that interprets dreams,'** he ends up in one day on top of the world, he saves the world, he saves the children of Israel, he sets the course. But when you look through those families, it was through favoritism, which was wrong, it was through conniving, it was through, you

know ***'I dreamed this, it set the course of my life, but then I got ripped off for seven years, I had to work harder than I thought,'*** the same thing replayed in the life of Joseph, and you look at that and you think *'LORD, how do we separate,'* because on one side of the coin you're sitting here, you're reading Proverbs saying ***'Don't favour one kid over another,'*** you know, all this Godly instruction, and somehow you have God, whose sovereign, his grace is magnificent, he overrides all that we are, and all that we aren't, and all that we think we are, and he brings about his own ends, and he accomplishes great things, and he has the Plan it tells us in ***Ephesians, 'that we are his workmanship, and that there are good works foreordained, that we should walk in them, they're foreordained.'*** When we finally get to heaven [into the Kingdom of Heaven, which ends up on earth, cf. Rev. 20-21] and we get rewarded for all the things he did through our lives, this Plan's incomprehensible, unimaginable. And it says here, ***'That a man's goings are of the LORD, how can a man then understand his own way?' (verse 24)*** And how many of us, I talk to people all the time, one of the main things I hear, *'I don't understand, I don't understand, I don't understand.'* I should give them bumper-stickers with this verse on it. You don't have to understand, the Shepherd is never dependent on the IQ of the sheep, you just have to be willing to follow. If you understand that, you'll get to where you're supposed to be, because he's a gracious Good Shepherd. The only problem he has is with people that are trying to outthink him. Anybody who has a broken heart and is willing to follow, the ball's in his court, he leads. That's what this verse says. It's the long way around the barn, that's a proverb too, the long way around the barn.

Taking, Eating What's Holy

Verse 25, "It is a snare to the man *who devoureth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquiry.*" That's bad timing. This guy messes with something that's holy, if it's holy it's something that belongs to the LORD, and then afterwards he says, the idea here certainly someone probably coming to the Tabernacle or the Temple, doing things that are wrong, and afterwards saying that he's going to make things right. That's a snare for a man to devour that which is holy, and afterwards he's going to vow to make things right. [Comment: there was all kinds of holy food in the Temple or Tabernacle, meant only for the Levitical Priesthood and Levites, only they were supposed to eat it.]

*Again, The Judicial Power To Separate The Chaff From
The Wheat*

“A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.” (verse 26) does that make sense to you? about Michelin it’s talking about. **‘A wise king scattereth, he winnows the wicked, and then he brings the wheel over them.’** This would catch the attention of any Jew, because it’s backwards, the winnowing takes place second, after the threshing wheel is brought over the grain. The first thing you do is drag the threshing wheel over the grain to separate the wheat from the chaff, and then you cast it in the air and you winnow it. It says here, **‘a wise king winnoweth the wicked, and bringeth the threshing wheel over top of them.’** The idea is, it would grab the attention of any Jew, at least he’d go *‘Ught O, the king’s power is both threshing and winnowing.’* It’s interesting, it puts it in reverse order, no doubt to catch the attention of the reader, didn’t want that to slip by.

What Is ‘the spirit of man’?

“The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.” (verse 27) You may think, *‘Who cares about my belly?’* The spirit of man, the spirit is the lamp of the LORD, God is able to use this “spirit of man,” inner most part of man, searching all the inner parts of the belly, is the visceral part of man, the deepest part of man, you know, **‘guard your heart with all diligence,’ 4:23, ‘for out of it flow the issues of life.’** It’s not talking about the muscle that beats in your chest, it’s talking about the deepest part of your being, where desire sits, it’s a greater force than intellect. So it says here **“The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD,”** it’s our conscience, as it were, **“searching all the inward” the deepest “parts of the belly” parts of man, the most visceral parts of man.’** [Comment: Pastor Joe really didn’t get into what “the spirit of man” the human spirit is. We find the term “spirit of man” and “spirit in man” used in both the Old and New Testament. In 1st Corinthians 2:13-19 God defines the human spirit, the spirit of man, as acting and playing the part of our brain’s software, enabling human comprehension of physical facts, far above the reasoning and comprehending power of animals. He also defines God’s Holy Spirit which God can place within a human he’s called to Salvation, which enables a spiritual comprehension way beyond that of the normal “unsaved” human being. In 1st Corinthians 2:13-19 Paul makes the comparison between the two spiritual components that can exist in our brains. Solomon also in

Ecclesiastes reveals knowledge about the human spirit, or spirit in man. Every single human alive possesses this “human spirit” or “spirit in man.” God through it can essentially read all the thoughts of every human being on the planet. He knows what’s going on because he’s tapped into the human software of every human being’s brain. Same with animals, which Solomon says also have a spirit component to their brains. **Ecclesiastes 3:19-21, “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea they have all one breath; so that a man has no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity [temporary]. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward [upon death], and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?”** God is saying through Solomon that the human spirit within all of us, when we die, regardless of whether that human was good or evil, everyone’s human spirit goes upward, naturally to God, for safe-keeping if you will, and then God uses that human spirit to resurrect everything that person was, just as he or she was, in one of the two major resurrections prophesied occur in either 1st Corinthians 15:49-54, Revelation 20:4-6 or Revelation 20:11-13 and Ezekiel 37:1-14, and also John 5:28-29 and Daniel 12:1-3. It has been said that this human spirit is not only the software for the human brain, but it records all of our memories, as well as the total cellular structure and composition of every human being. God through the spirit-software inside all animals is also able to know everything that’s going on in the animal kingdom. You find lions attacking some people, but leaving others alone in the Old Testament, the teenage toughs that insulted Elisha, a bear came out of the woods and killed them. Do you think that was just coincidence? Look up “spirit in man” and “spirit of man” in a Strong’s Concordance and read those passages, it makes an interesting study. God said humans were created in the image of God in Genesis 1 and 2. Of all the animals on the planet, mankind is the **only** species that takes the elements out of the earth and creates things that didn’t exist before. In recent times, radios, cars, electronics, TVs, buildings, harnessing electrical energy, man, like God, but to a lesser degree is a creator, in that image of God as well. This creative genius is placed within the human brain, giving it exponentially greater computing power than mere animals. Paul said in 1st Corinthians 2:13-19 that God’s Holy Spirit gives spiritual comprehension far greater than the ordinary human without it possesses. Paul uses the analogy that someone having God’s Holy Spirit is granted spiritual comprehension, the difference being like that of a normal human’s comprehension, verses that of an animal, like a cow. Natural

humans can understand geometry, history, music, languages, so say nothing of having vast creative powers, whereas a cow, pig, even dolphins and elephants have none of that level of comprehension. Read Paul's statement in 1st Corinthians 2:13-19 for yourself.]

The Secret To A King Having Long Reign

“Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.” (verse 28) interesting, Solomon saying this, that the secret to a long reign in ancient Israel was for the king to exercise both mercy and truth, they were both necessary. Truth without mercy is cruel, mercy without truth is naïve, mercy and truth, it says, preserves the king, and his throne is upheld by mercy then, the idea is, because the king exercises mercy and truth, that he's preserved, and his throne then is upheld by the mercy of God.

The Glory Of Young Men verses Old Men, Different Stages Of Our Lives

“The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the grey head.” (verse 29) grey hair/white hair/no hair, the idea is, the glory of young men is their strength, the beauty or the dignity is the sense of it, of old men, and throughout the Book of Proverbs it talks about a life lived wisely, that's lived well, and that the fruit of that is recognized and evident towards the end of life. The glory of young men is their strength. The dignity of old men is their grey head, the idea is, there are different seasons in our lives, all of us, and at every stage of life it has it's advantages. [see the British movie Calendar Girls, hilarious, but this theme comes out strong.] You're young, the other day at my house, Memorial Day, kids were there, grandkids were there. My one granddaughter, it's like somebody wound her up in the morning and let her go. And she moves endlessly, and I think *'I wish I had that much energy, the things you could get accomplished,'* so the beauty, the advantage of younger men, their strength, that's an advantage in that season of life. [Comment: there will be a time, during the final Restoration and Revival of the Church, Body of Christ, where the servants of the LORD, old men and women, will be given the strength of the youth, read Isaiah 40:28-31, it says they will mount up as with eagles wings, they will run and not walk, they will walk tirelessly, while the strength of the youths will be failing. I'm waiting for that event, can't wait for it to come upon me.] The dignity of old men is wisdom, is the grey

head, the years you've learned, you've come to a certain position on certain things. There should be mutual respect, there should be mutual respect. The older saints in the Body of Christ should appreciate wonderfully those that are younger, those that have the strength to do things, just they get things accomplished, how thankful we are for that. And then some of the older folks that have been around for awhile, you know, you just talk to them and you think how they've been walking with the Lord a long time, *'how they know that Book, I hope I'm like that when I get older.'* Those are good things. But older people see things that younger people can't. I see benches now when I go to the Mall that I never saw when I was younger [laughter] [don't laugh, you'll get there too someday], just certain things that come into focus as you get older, and it's wonderful, really. There's certain stores I hate to go into with my wife, because there are no benches, I won't say their names here because they'll put benches in and she'll want to go all the time. ***'So, the glory of young men is their strength, and the beauty of old men is their grey head.'***

*The Deepest Part Of Man Can Learn Through Hardship,
Experiential Learning*

“The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.” (verse 30) the blueness of a wound, it's a wound where there's a bruise, it's cleansing away evil, not infection, so it's not a physical malady. The idea is, in the Old Testament, you were beaten sometimes for certain things. And the blueness of the wound meant you were whacked pretty good, and the blueness of a wound, it cleanseth away evil, an impression has been made there. **“so do stripes the inward parts of the belly.” (verse 30b)** it tells us in other places the stripes are for the back of a fool. It says, so do stripes, it cleanseth away the inward parts of the belly, ***the deepest part of man can learn through hardship.*** So, Proverbs is telling us all the way through it, you don't want to live in such a way where you need to get wipped or you need to get stripes, that was for the back of a fool. There are countries in the world today, and American citizens have experienced it. Some places in Indonesia, they catch you littering, you may be beat with canes. I'm not, you know, approving of that, but I do know this, you will never litter in Indonesia again. You may think I can't wait to get home and throw a piece of paper on the ground, you can yell across the ocean *'Na, na, na na!'* but you won't there.

In Closing

We're going to pick up here next week, chapter 21 if the Rapture doesn't happen, if the Lord tarries. **"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."** (21:1) That's why, one of the things that should encourage us, is we're told in 1st Timothy chapter 2, that we should pray for those in authority, we should pray for those in authority. The ones that frustrate you are the ones you don't like. Paul wrote that when Nero was ruling the world, and he was one mean mamajaba. Pray for those in authority, because the Lord holds the reigns on their life. Daniel tells us in chapter 4, verse 17, it tells us more in chapter 2 and chapter 4, that the LORD is the one who rules in the kingdom of men, and sometimes he raises up over nations even the basest of, the most carnal of men, because it serves a purpose that's Divine. Habakkuk would complain to the LORD and say **'You're going to do what with the Babylonians?'** He said to Habakkuk **'If I told you Habakkuk you wouldn't believe it, 'You can't use them, they're more evil than we are.'** God used them, he put Daniel there next to Nebuchadnezzar. At Babylon we're going to see Nebuchadnezzar. **"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."** (21:1) we should pray for those in authority. Also, anybody whose in authority, who reads this verse, it is a good warning for that person, because they need to realize, *'Wait a minute, God is sovereign, and I think I'm really something, but I'm not.'* He's the Lord of lords, and he is the King of kings, God is sovereign, and I'm glad of that when I watch the news. Aren't you? That Sovereignty is ruling the universe and not politics, not human politics. There is Divine politics that rules the universe, and even when we look at it and everything seems like it might be out of control, and I can't help thinking that way sometimes, but in fact everything is right on course. That's what this Scripture says. It is headed...and look, some of us we've been studying Prophecy, we've been studying Scripture for years, and now the things that the Scripture said are actually happening, and we're like *'Oh no, this is a bummer,'* no, no, no, the things that are happening around us right now are hastening the return of the Lord. Pray for our leaders, you should thank God, they've moved up the return of Christ by 20 or 30 years, some of these guys at this point, I guarantee you. So, read ahead, chapter 21, we'll pick up there, Lord willing, and go home, read through this on your own, say *'ok Lord, these verses, which one of them are for me to take hold of this evening.'* Let's stand, pray, Proverbs again, if you read one chapter every morning, tomorrow is the 28th, you read the 28th chapter tomorrow, if you do that. Ben Carson when he was

here, he told me he does it, he's been doing it for years, he reads every morning, tomorrow he'll read chapter 28, tomorrow night before he goes to bed, he'll read chapter 28 again. He reads the chapter of Proverbs that coincides with the day of the month, and he's done it for years, he reads it twice a day, when he gets up in the morning, he reads it again before he goes to bed. We need a king like that on the throne, I'll tell you...there are some great books out there, I can't be political, so don't get mad at me, I'm not trying, it would be nice, the nation rejoices when the righteous are in power, the Scripture tells us that...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Proverbs 20:1-30, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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There's a divine interweaving in our lives. See <http://www.unityinchrist.com/Psalms/Psalm%20139%201-24.html>