

Proverbs 27:1-27

“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. 2 Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips. 3 A stone *is* heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool’s wrath *is* heavier than them both. 4 Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but who *is* able to stand envy [jealousy]? 5 Open rebuke *is* better than secret love. 6 Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful. 7 The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet. 8 As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so *is* a man that wandereth from his place. 9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so *doth* the sweetness of a man’s friend by hearty counsel. 10 Thine own friend, and thy father’s friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother’s house in the day of thy calamity: *for* better *is* a neighbour *that is* near than a brother far off. 11 My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me. 12 A prudent *man* foreseeeth the evil, *and* hideth himself; *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished. 13 Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman. 14 He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him. 15 A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike. 16 Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, *which* bewrayeth *itself*. 17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. 18 Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured. 19 As in water face *answereth* to face, so the heart of man to man. 20 Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied. 21 As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so *is* a man to his praise. 22 Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him. 23 Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, *and* look well to thy herds. 24 For riches *are* not for ever: and doth the crown *endure* to every generation? 25 The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are

gathered. 26 The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are for the price of the field. 27 And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, and for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance for thy maidens."

Introduction

*We May Not Know What Tomorrow Holds, But We Know
Who Holds Tomorrow*

"Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (verse 1) James tells us that very clearly, ah, we don't know what tomorrow holds, we know who holds tomorrow, that's our advantage, but we don't know what tomorrow holds.

Don't Toot Your Own Horn

"Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips." (verse 2) we've got a dose of that this evening. This is **'Don't toot your own horn,'** (ah, translated strictly from the Hebrew), **'don't toot your own horn.'** You know when somebody's tooting their own horn, don't you. You know, you know people, well you think *'Well, they're Christian, but Lord, when we get to heaven, can my mansion not be near theirs, because I can't live around this forever.'*...everybody has a baloney meter inside, and you know when it's going off, when you're getting a load of baloney. He says **"Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips."** don't toot your own horn. We know when somebody's doing that.

*'If You Want Me To Have A Prison Ministry, Lord, Then
Don't Save Me From This Person'*

"A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both." (verse 3) [I've experienced this.] No

kidding. So, a stone, I've removed rocks around my house, stone is remarkable, a bag of sand, wonderful, bag of concrete, you unload much of those for a day you feel great by the time you go to bed, weighty. **“but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.”** When a fool is angry, blowing his stack, a fool, whose angry, blowing his stack, trying to be injurious, it says a fool's wrath is heavier than both of them, it's hard to not be provoked, it's to bear, when you know this guy [or gal] is a fool, this guy is screaming at me, *‘This guy is pushing me, Lord, I am on the edge, Lord, if you want me to have a prison ministry, then don't step in here. Ah, if you want me not to have a prison ministry, you have to help me, Lord, because this is heavier than rock and sand listening to this guy.’* [gals too can fit into this mold.]

Jealousy, Envy Are Dangerous Emotions

“Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy [margin: jealousy]?” or stand before jealousy, is the idea. One of the reasons that it says, you know, you can rob a man, you can do one thing, but if you commit adultery with his wife, he's not going to be satisfied. Who can stand before jealousy, who can stand before that kind of a situation. [Also, it can occur coming between a narcissist and his or her primary worshipper/friend, I've seen that kind of jealousy flare up, and it's not pretty. Narcissism is a mental disease, and Satan was the very first narcissist. What I'm trying to bring out is that jealousy, envy, are dangerous emotions. Handle those that are prone to these emotions with extreme caution.]

Open Rebuke Is Better Than Secret Love

“Open rebuke is better than secret love.” (verse 5) [Unless you are rebuking a scorner, which Solomon warned against doing.] I know you're thinking some days, that's true. **“Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” (verse 6)** Verses 5 and 6 go together. Open rebuke, now that's going to be from a friend, faithful are the wounds of a friend. Open rebuke, somebody whose challenging you, somebody who cares

enough to say something to you, is better than secret love, somebody who stands by and watches you injure or hurt yourself. Look, you raise kids, there comes a time when they are becoming young men and women, when you say *'Okay, let's sit down here, let me know what the rules of engagement are going to be. I love you, you're my son, or you're my daughter, but I need to know, are we at war, or are we not? Because if you think you're going to pursue this, I'm going to go to war with you, because I would rather in the long run not have you like me for awhile, and yet see your life prosperous, than for me and you to be buddies because I endorsed your lunacy and for me to have to watch you suffer for years. I believe if I take a stand here, we'll have to wait till you're a man, or 30 years old, we're going to reconcile. But I am not going to stand idly by and watch you destroy your life.'* Too many parents want to be buddies with their kids, your kid's got buddies, you know, go on facebook and look at them, they don't need one more buddy, they need a dad, they need a mom, they need somebody to stand in the gap. Open rebuke, it's better. It doesn't say it's going to be more appreciated, it's better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, they produce something, faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy, they're deceitful.

"The Full Soul Loatheth An Honeycomb; But To The Hungry Soul Every Bitter Thing Is Sweet"

"The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." (verse 7) You hear a lot about honey as we go through here, don't we? Now that was the Hagen Das of the day, so there was nothing better, in that world, the culinary world, the best thing you could do was with honey in this day. You ever get this full? I was this full yesterday, by the way. We do this thing in the summer, because my one daughter, her birthday is in the end of June and my other daughter's is in July, we got all these family members, so we do one kind of birthday thing, it's monetarily much easier on your budget if you can do it all at one time, than everybody having a separate party. Because you gotta buy presents, but you only have to buy food once. So yesterday was a great time, we barbequed, it's wonderful to do that when it's 93 degrees by the way. But, we had some fillets, some Delmonico steaks, had a great big sirloin steak, had some veal

chops on the bone, we had some venison, had a rack of lamb, we just. Ya, are you with me, are you there? I'm a carnivore, it was like the sacrificial system in the Old Testament, my yard, it was ascending, the savor of rest going up to the nostrils of God, and when that happens, *'Do you want desert? No, I want a piece of steak,'* because I'm a carnivore, *'No, no, I want a piece of meat, that's my desert.'* But then, of course, afterwards you're like, *'I don't want no honey,'* you're full, so you loathe, *'I don't want any honey, after the 19 pieces of meat I just ate.'* So, that's the picture here, ***'a full soul loatheth the honeycomb, but to the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet.'*** Lord, give us hungry souls, give us hungry souls. Don't let us be satisfied with the nonsense of this world. You know, it tells us there's multitudes, nations, kindreds and tongues, whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life, who are going to marvel at the antichrist at the last days, multitudes, nations, kindreds, tongues. Lord, give us hungry souls. Let us be hungering for your presence, for your Word, for you Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, not the culturally relevant spirit, not the cool spirit, the Holy Spirit. Lord, let us be hungry for the Holy Spirit, the things of Eternity. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth, your inheritance, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. Give us hungry souls, Lord. Don't let us be filled with a bunch of nonsense. We can do one more in three minutes.

Wanderlust, Wanting 'To Get Away From It All'

"As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place." (verse 8) you know, wanderlust, those days come in everybody's life, it enters into my mind, it has entered into my mind, go fill up the tank and head west. [my wanderlust dream is to get a passport (this shows how far I really want to get away), and take a long tour of Russia, visiting a lot of her historic battlegrounds, tracing the steps of Vasili Zaitsev, famous sniper of Stalingrad, or the city where Napoleon was stopped, Moscow, having a nice tourguide that knows his or her Russian history—with no time limit on how long this takes.] *'I can't hear about this anymore,'* I was sitting here one night, Robin and I were up here, and he was leading worship, and I said, we were praying for each other, I said, *'Let me fill the tank up, I'm*

gonna head West,' he said, 'Stop at my house and pick me up, will you?' You know, I'll betray my age here, but I just remember when *Easy Rider* came out, Dennis Hopper, nobody knew who he was, and they had those motorcycles, and you think *'If I get one of those motorcycles, and head out on the road, hearing Crosby Stiles and Nash playing down from heaven, all that stuff is going, Stepin Wolf, I want be wild, I wanta be free!'* you're gonna get in a accident, you're gonna have to pay for gas, you're gonna be miserable, having to ride home in a rainstorm. **"As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place."** **(verse 8)** I'm so thankful I know my place, I am so thankful I know my place. Look, if I could turn the clock back in my life, I wouldn't change a single thing. But whatever hardships there are right now, sometimes there are difficult situations, probably in the last five years have been more painful than all the years of ministry before that, for a number of reasons, but I look at what the Lord's done in my life, and looking back, the years of drugs, the years of all that were, God used all of that, I wouldn't change a single thing. Getting saved, 1972, so it's been 40-some years, I've been saved longer than I was unsaved. There's been heartache, there's been tears, great difficulties, but the lessons that come from those things. You know, my sons, again, Josh walks into my office during the day, I think, there's the idea guy, I never think that. Mike walks in, the senior high pastor, still takes my breath away. Pastor's kids are notorious for being scoundrels, I have four kids that are walking with the Lord, serving the Lord. My wife has been faithful to me for 36 years. Without Christ it never would have happened. I look at my life-partner, I look at the faces, Mike, Josh, Hanna, Joanna, their spouses, grandkids, I wouldn't change anything, because that broadens to you guys, on Wednesday nights, Sunday mornings, the churches that have born, over 20 churches in the area [Pastor Joe's Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia ended up with 30,000 members, which he probably very wisely found good pastors for these 20 churches, and distributed some of those 30,000 into these churches, so just think of what the Lord has done through Pastor Joe]. You know, just what the Lord's done, I'd never dreamed of, I never would have been presumptuous to think *'Wow, there's going to be a big church,'* I felt *'Lord, if 200 people come I'll be the happiest sucker on earth, Lord, I don't deserve that...'* I never dreamed of what he's done, and I sit here, and I think, *'I wouldn't change a single thing, I know my place,'* I have no desire to get on that motorcycle and head out anymore, I

don't have any desire to wander from my nest, I know my calling. I see your hand, and I know there's hard things ahead, if the Lord tarries. Nobody ever dies of good health, we're all gonna see a doctor. There's a doctor downtown, he wants to see me all the time, he doesn't take new patients but he's saving a space for me, 'You're old now, you need to come in and get examined,' 'I feel great, I'm staying away from you as long as I can.' [laughter] But I said, 'Look, let's face this, the day comes when every doctor needs a minister, and a day comes when every minister needs a doctor, so our paths are destined to cross someday.' And he hi-fived me. He said 'I'm there.' I said, 'Alight.'

True Friendship Is Shown In Honest, Hearty Counsel

Chapter 27 of Proverbs, there's about 16 different inferences, verses, dealing with friendships, relationships. We've come as far as **verse 8**, where it says **"As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place."** We finished with that last week. **Verse 9** says this, **"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel."** So, a friend that gives you good counsel in a difficult time, which is the right thing to you, they're telling you the truth, it says it's kind of like the sweetness of perfume or ointment, it's as that is to your senses, so is it you can feel toward someone who cares about you, whose a good friend, who gives you right counsel, there's a sweetness to that.

Make The Right Friendships

Verse 10, **"Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off."** No doubt, Solomon heard this from his father David, and there were those of David's court who surrounded Solomon as a young king, ah, to see his throne established. He says **"Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not,"** look, one of the things we see in this chapter, we'll talk about friendships and relationships, realize this, as you make friendships, you're making

friends for your kids too. Please, look, when I grew up, before I got saved, there were people I hung around with that I would **never** want around my kids. And then you get saved, you have a whole different value system, I'm so thankful my kids grew up around Chuck Smith, around Don and Jean McClure, Mike and Sandy MacIntosh, good friends, and that the kids grew up around them, known them since they were little. And it's important, because then they see church is not just Sunday, church is all week, the people you hang with, the people you talk with, that you pray with, the people you rejoice with, that you talk about the Lord with, ah, so important. Don't forsake your friends, recognize who they are, and especially your father's friends, there are some who have been built into your life, the Lord had made preparations before you were even born. He says those relationships are very important, don't go to your brother's house in the day of calamity, you are going to find out there are people in the family of God that are actually closer and more supportive sometimes than your own flesh. I know Cathy and I have realized that, my mom and dad are in glory, but there are people in the church, if my life falls apart, something difficult is going on, it's our brothers and sisters in the family of God that's surround us, they get to our house, they bring meals, just so important. So, **'better is a neighbour that is near than a brother that is far off.'**

'Son, Make Me Glad, Be Wise'

Another relationship, **"My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me."** (verse 11) Solomon's sons certainly didn't do that. i.e. **'You're a reflection of my life, my belief system, my worship, the God I embrace, what I've given my life to, my son, make those choices, do the things that will make my heart glad, that I may answer the one that reproaches me. Don't give the person that's picking on me one more reason to pick on me, because you're being a mental case, you're being crazy, don't do that, don't live in sin, you've heard the truth, you've been raised in it,'** and now his appeal is to his son to be wise, **'to make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me, you're a reflection.'** You guys that have Christian parents, thank the Lord, you are a reflection of them, and it's very important. [My father was a just

and honourable man, honest as the day is long, quiet, merciful and very wise, even though not a believer. My mother was a good woman too. I sincerely hope I'm a good reflection of them both.]

Bible Prophecy Is God's Foresight For The Believer

“A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.” (verse 12) So it's not just saying the prudent or the diligent man, the thoughtful man, it doesn't just say he sees evil, anybody who sees evil hides, a hyena does that, you watch the shows on Discovery Channel, all the animals do that, they do that by instinct. It doesn't say somebody who sees evil, though I think you should, coming, you high-tale it out, but it says the thoughtful person, the diligent person, here it's talking about the person in God's blessing, that they **foresee**, they see it beforehand, before it comes. And it says, what they do then is they hide themselves. Look, do you see what's coming on the world? Do you see it? So what it says, if you are someone who walks with the Lord, you know his Word, you're prayerful, that you foresee, you should be seeing ahead of time the things that are coming, we know from Scripture, we know from the Prophecies, we know what's coming. It says then what we should do is hide ourselves, and there's one way to do that, it's the Gospel, we're hidden in Christ, we're washed in blood. Whatever comes on this world, our life is hidden in Christ with God. We should set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth. The wise man foresees, this is a person with discretion, this is a person whose prudent, hides himself. Here's the problem, the fool or evil man, the unbeliever, doesn't do anything. It says, **“the simple pass on, and are punished.”** The Gospel is clear, it's all over, again. Amos will say that in his day the problem was **“there was a famine of the hearing of the Word of God.”** And that's what there is in America, there's not a famine of the Word of God, we gave the 700 Club, all these Christian shows, Christian radio, Christian this, Christian that, Christian bumper-stickers, Billy Graham Crusades, Harvest Crusades, there's not a famine of the Word of God, there's a famine of **the hearing** of the Word of God. We are in a culture and society that don't want to hear it. But because they don't want to hear it doesn't mean it doesn't have power anymore. It still has power to change lives. He's saying

here ***that the prudent man, someone who knows ahead of time, he sees ahead of time, he hides himself.*** And it's commending him, so this is a proper way of doing it. The simple, they pass on, they're punished. [***Bible prophecy is God's foresight for the believer.*** See

http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophecies/2ndcoming_4.htm.

Read that, and foresee the coming evil, danger. Many Jews during the 1930s could see what Hitler was about, but chose to be simple and ignore what they were seeing and hearing. The wise, the prudent ones got out of Europe, while six million of them died as slaves in Nazi Germany. World War III is coming on, and what Bible prophecy shows is that a resurrected and more powerful version of what arose in Europe during the 1930 and 1940s is going to arise, conquer and enslave much of the world. One tenth of the world's population is prophesied to live, whereas nine-tenths is prophesied to die in WWII before Christ returns and puts a stop to it all. God's children who are doing his will, not denying Christ, are promised protection, that promise of Jesus is contained in Revelation 3:10. Be sure to look it up and read it, it's one short verse you can take to the bank.] We can go into a paradigm shift [on a national and worldwide level] anytime and never return again, financially, militarily, morally, those things are never going to return. ***Without a God-given revival that shakes this entire nation, you're never going to return to the moral standard that our parents knew, never gonna happen, we've drifted too far.*** [So what is the Body of Christ supposed to do about this situation? I found in one of the Minor Prophets a prophecy from Yahweh to the Body of Christ, and Yahweh is the pre-Incarnate Christ. It is found in Zephaniah 2:1-3. What it amounts to are the marching orders for the Body of Christ just before the end, when the Tribulation comes. To read these God-given marching orders see

<http://www.unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/Zephaniah1.htm>

and scroll to Zephaniah 2:1-3. The upper nav bar above that article contains three articles about restoration and revival for the Church, what it involves. If you're interested in doing the Work of the Jesus Christ before the end comes, log onto them and read.]

Be Careful Lending To Strangers

“Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.” (verse 13) it’s basically saying, if you get involved with somebody that lends money to strangers, to foreigners, or foreign women, you’d better take his cloak, because he ain’t gonna have anything left. And in other places in the Law it says if you take a cloak from somebody, and then night time comes you have to give it back, so if that’s all the person has, they’re not cold. It’s saying here, if you have a friend whose foolish enough to get in business with foreigners and foreign women, and is giving them a loan, without any security, any wisdom, you’d better get his coat, because that’s all you’re going to get.

*About “He That Blesseth His Friend With A Loud Voice
Early In The Morning”*

“He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.” (verse 14) anybody relate to that? You may have a translation that makes it better. It says **“He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning,”** the idea is, it’s not a blessing. You get up, your friend’s asleep, and you walk in **‘PRAISE THE LORD!’** you know, they’re not going to be blessed, you’re blessed, but they’re not blessed. We raised four kids, and we have the springers and creepers, some of them spring out of bed in the morning if they hear a dish rattle they’re up. You have to tiptoe in the morning if you wanted quiet time, because if they heard a noise they were down. And others, they’re just creeping, they’re falling out of bed on the floor and sliding themselves across the floor on the carpet, they just can’t get it going in the morning, it’s not until night that their blood is flowing. And the idea is, we’re all different. But if you walk in, my mom used to do that to me. **‘JOE, IT’S TIME TO GET UP!’** And you just, Aghh. Anybody relate to that? So, I’m thankful that the Lord stoops down, you hate that when somebody does that to you in the morning. Right? But do you appreciate the fact that we have a God who stoops down and speaks to us in a still, small voice. We don’t like somebody yelling at us in the morning. But there is a nice quiet voice that comes and says, *‘Come on, get out of there, let’s spend some time together before the day gets started.’* Take that over the loud voice, trust me.

Back To That Contentious, Brawling Woman Again

We're back to this woman again, we've run into her at least 6 times in the Book of Proverbs. You know, it must be important for this to get in God's Word over and over and over again in the Book. ***When we first met her, she was like a continual dripping, then she's a riotous, clamorous, a wrangling woman, a boisterous woman, it's better to live on the corner of the housetop than in the house with her.*** Then, she drives her husband out, and it says it's better to live in the wilderness, he moves way out somewhere, than in the house with her. Then he finally comes back to the corner of the roof again, now we've kind of made full circle, all the way back to where she's dripping again. And it says ***"A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike."*** (verse 15) The Hebrew is this, ***"A leaky roof on a very rainy day and a contentious woman, brawling,"*** some translate it, a woman who wants to whup you, mean-spirited, ***"a leaky roof on a very rainy day and a contentious woman" 'they're kind of the same.'*** You know, it drives you crazy, Chinese water torture, she can drive you out of your mind. And I think, for this to be in the Book of Proverbs so many times, I think the LORD's trying to tell women, ***'I'm your Creator, your Redeemer, take into consideration some of the things I understand about how this relationship works.'*** It was great before the Fall, but it's been messed up ever since. Before the Fall God said ***'You know, it's not good' Genesis 2:18, 'for man to be alone, so I'm going to make him a helper.'*** So ladies, take that into consideration. If you're married, God looked at your husband at some point and said *'It's not good for this one to be alone, he needs help, and he brought you along especially designed, because he's just not going to make it on his own. But that doesn't mean he isn't gifted with the things that God has called him to do.'* So, the only thing we have from the other side of the Fall in paradise is marriage. Mawage I keep wanting to say when I think of that. And God designed it, the Supreme Court didn't. The only thing we have from the other side of the Fall is marriage. And it was to work a certain way. Before the Fall Adam loved his wife, he loved her the way Christ loves the Church. Eve no doubt came alongside of Adam, in the role God had designed for her in

marriage, and was his counterpart, taken from his side. The Fall brings destruction, because now man's pride, a husband's pride, gets in the way of that sometimes, he threatens and argues with his wife, men are proud, ladies, men are proud. That's a fallen state, it was functioning well before the Fall. Women, in marriage, now don't let anybody tell you, girls, outside of marriage you're supposed to submit to them, just punch them in the nose. Because the wife is different from the unmarried woman. But before the Fall she had a particular role with her husband, she didn't chafe under it, she didn't get angry under it. That of course was affected by the Fall also. Proverbs says a lot about domestic tension. Here again we're back to this idea of a leaky roof on a rainy day is like a brawling wife, they're kind of the same, and in this respect, in several respects. One is, a rainy day and a leaky roof, a rainy day keeps you from going out, and a brawling wife forces you out on a rainy day. A leaky roof, if you understood the construction in ancient Israel, the rooves were made with branches and mud, if you have a roof that's leaking, it's jeopardizing the structure, the integrity. And if a marriage is like that, it's jeopardizing the integrity of the marriage. So a continual dripping, a leaky roof, on a very rainy day, and a contentious woman, they're kind of alike. **"Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth itself."** (verse 16) or it's like trying to hold oil in your right hand, it just runs out, like mercury, you can't hold onto it. So it says, when those conditions exist, it's hard to keep that under wraps, it effects other people, it effects people that are around. So, do with that what you like. Verse 17, before we get in trouble.

*The People You Choose To Spend Time With Are Either
Going To Sharpen You Or Dull You To Spiritual Things*

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (verse 17) Guys, girls, this is your responsibility, as iron sharpens, it's not a stone, a whet stone, it actually says iron with iron. In this age, Solomon had swords, no doubt, they used files at this point in time, and it says **"As iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."** Now "the countenance of his friend" if you look down in verse 19 it says there **"As in water face answereth to face,"** those two

words, “face” and “face” are the same word as “countenance” in verse 17. But it’s translated more significantly as “edge,” we have this in Ezekiel chapter 21, it says ***“I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, that their heart may be faint, and their ruins be multiplied, ah, it is made bright, it is wrapped up for the slaughter, go thee one way or the other, either on the right hand or the left hand, withersoever thy face”*** he’s speaking to the sword, ***“withersoever thy face”*** which is the Hebrew word ***“your edge”*** it’s the edge of the sword, ***“withersoever thy edge is set.”*** In the Book of Ecclesiastes it says this, ***“If the iron be blunt, and he doth not whet the edge”*** that’s our word “face” or “countenance” ***“if he doth not whet the edge, then must he put more strength, but wisdom is profitable to direct.”*** So the idea is, as iron sharpens iron, it puts an edge on a sword, on an ax, it says here, that ***“so as a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.”*** ***The people you choose to spend time with are either going to sharpen you or dull you to spiritual things.*** And you have a responsibility to pick friends, not that just say ‘*Oh ya, I’m a born-again Christian,*’ well that’s fine, but be a fruit inspector, don’t be a judge, but be a fruit inspector, we’re told we can judge a tree by its fruit. So you want, I’m so thankful for the people in my life that will speak to me, challenge me, ‘*How’s your marriage? How’s your home, how are the kids?*’ that care more about my life than just what everybody else sees. ***So as iron sharpens iron, so is a man with the edge, the countenance, like the face of a sword, so is a man, the idea is, ‘a man sharpeneth the countenance, sharpens the edge of his friend.’*** And thank goodness for that, have those around you who are not yes-men, but who care enough for you to say ‘*Are you ok? I’m concerned about this in your life, what’s going on here?*’ *Be honest with me.*’ Have friends like that, those are real friends. ***“As iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the edge of his friend.”***

“He That Waiteth On His Master Shall Be Honoured.” Who Is Our Master?

Verse 18, “Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.” I like figs. I like Fig Newtons, I like figs. You take care of it, you’re

going to enjoy the fruit of it, “so” here’s the other relationship of it, comparison, **“so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.”** The idea is, he who cares for the things of his master, he who gets before his master and waits to serve him, to be steward over the things of his master, it says he will be honoured. It works with your fig tree, if you’re willing to put the time in with your fig tree, because you like to eat figs, are you willing to put the time in with your master? And our Master is Jesus Christ. If you put the time in with him, though he’s not tangible, you don’t hear him audibly, sometimes like John, we wish we could lean on his breast, but there is a calling about his presence, we want to develop that ability to sense his presence, to know him. So if we wait on our Master, it says we’ll be honoured. We do it in the things of life that produce something sweet, that we enjoy, that we invest time. Are we investing time in his presence? It’s a challenge for me too, looking in all of this.

You Have Those Friends That Really See You

“As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.” (verse 19) So the idea is, in this day they didn’t have mirrors, wasn’t like your wife only took three minutes to get ready, there was no mirror, so you have a flat pan with water in it, the only way you see your face is you look in the water, and the idea is that was where you got a reflection, **‘so as in water, face answereth to face, you see, so the heart, which is not a seen skill, so the heart of man to man.’** So the idea is, look, as you see your reflection in the water, you have those friends, I have people that are around me, I feel them, when they talk to me, when I watch them, I listen to them, I just don’t see, you know when somebody’s around you, they love you, you can feel that, and so it says **“the heart of man to man.”**

*“Hell And Destruction Are Never Full; So The Eyes Of Man
Are Never Satisfied”*

Verse 20, “Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.” the two great devourers and destroyers, I like the way that sounds, they’re never full, hell and destruction. **“so”** it says, **“the eyes of man are never satisfied.”** That’s why Solomon wasn’t happy with 699 wives, he had to have 700 wives and 300 porcupines, you know, he wasn’t satisfied. Isn’t that amazing? Even today in part of the Arab world, where they still take more than one wife, they say, *“One wife is too much, ten is not enough.”* That’s what they say over there, they don’t say that here. For me one’s enough, one I can handle, I got a license and everything. But here it says **“Hell and destruction are never full;”** ever **“so the eyes of man are never satisfied.”** We say *‘Their eyes are bigger than their stomach.’* The eyes of man are never satisfied. Because you know people like that, everywhere they go they have to have something else, everywhere they go they think *‘If I had this I’d be happy, everywhere I go if I just had a better one of these, a better watch, better car, better house.’* What he’s saying here, ***the heart of man is never satisfied.*** There’s something longing inside of us, the only thing that’s meant to satisfy that is the Living God, is the presence of God himself. And God won’t let any other thing that we go after satisfy us, it’s by design.

‘So As The Crucible Is For Silver And For Gold, So Is A Man To His Praise’ How Do You Handle Success?

Verse 21, “As the refining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.” What an interesting verse. As the refining pot is for silver, that refines silver, the crucible, and the furnace is for gold, God says here’s the greatest tool of refinement, **“so is a man to his praise.”** So what it’s telling us is every time a man is approved, he’s also proved. Every time someone approves of you, you’re also being proved. There’s just something in us like that. You know, people come up after church Sunday and say *‘That was a great sermon,’* part of my flesh goes, *‘Really!? Tell me again!’* And the part of me that’s trying to keep me in perfection goes *‘Just pray for me, pray for me, just pray for me.’* But there’s just something in that, but it’s whatever we do. If you’re a guitar player, someone says *‘That was great!’* *‘Oh really?’* and you’re trying to be humble, there’s something in us. So when

we are approved of others, and there's Press-clippings, it says here, **'we're also being proved, God Almighty also watches that.'** And that process is like the refining, the crucible for silver or for gold, he watches the human heart, when we get credit are will willing to step back and say *'You know, it's him, it's not me. God's been so gracious in my life, he's been so good to me.'* There are those, the Bible tells us, like Diotrefes, in 3rd John, verse 9, who love to have the preeminence, they just love to be recognized. You know, Luke tells us in his Gospel, at the end of the day, when the master comes home, and the servant's been in the house, he says *'You've done your work, done all this,'* he says at the end of the day, in the final analysis, you just say *'You know, I'm just an unprofitable servant, I've been able to live in my master's house.'* It tells us in 1st Corinthians chapter 4, we're just stewards of the mysteries of God, everything God's done. And if you don't have anything you didn't receive, if you've received what we have by God's grace what you have, why do you act as though you didn't receive it? Why do you act like it's you? And you know what it's like to be around people that are in love with themselves [narcissists], and you don't have to love them, because they love themselves so much they don't need anymore love. You're laughing, so you know what I'm talking about. So, as the crucible is for silver and for gold, so is a man to his praise, how do you handle success? How do you view yourself in that? Because when you're being approved, by God, you're also being proved.

'You're Not Going To Separate A Fool From His Foolishness'

"Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." (verse 22) I love the King James here. Now you all know what I'm talking about. In the home sometimes, they would have a stone bowl and they would have this stone handle with kind of a round bottom on it, and if they would have grain that hadn't been separated from the chaff, they would pour it in there in that bowl, and they would take the pestle and grind it to separate the wheat from the chaff. And then they could get the chaff off, and then they could grind the wheat then to flour, to powder. But it says, a fool, the way he is, if you put him in to that stone bowl, and you

grind him up with the pestle, like you're grinding the grain, you're not going to separate his foolishness from him. You may get the chaff away from the wheat, you ain't getting the foolishness away from the fool. So, don't try to grind a fool I guess what it's saying.

The Ordinary, Secular, Physical Things In Our Lives Are Sacred

Now verse 23 to the end of the chapter speaks to us about stewardship. Listen, this is important, I'm going to read through the verses, and we'll back up. **"Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever, and doth the crown endure to every generation? The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered. The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field. And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance for thy maidens."** (verses 23-27) So those of you with maidens should take care and notice what it's saying here. The idea is, listen, this is what it's saying here, look. Taking care of your flocks and your herds and your hay and your grass, and your herbs, and your lambs and your goats is a Divine responsibility. We fail sometimes in our minds, trying to separate the sacred from the secular. Remember that when Jesus came to be baptized in the River Jordan, John the Baptist baptized him, and it says the Spirit descended like a dove, and a voice from heaven says, ***"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*** The Greek said, ***"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am already well pleased."*** He had never preached a sermon, he had never done a miracle, he had no public ministry, he worked in a carpenter shop. He spent the vast majority of his life in obscurity, he would only have three years of public ministry and be crucified. The Father said ***"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am already well pleased."*** Every table he built, every door jam, everything he did he did it above board, he did his best, he never cheated a client, he never overcharged, he never used rotten wood, he was in fellowship every day with the flocks, with the herds, with the hay, with the grass, the herbs, with the lambs, with the goats. He lived that way and walked among us, because that's the way most of us will live out our lives, in a sense, in obscurity. Most of

us are not gonna be like Billy Graham, we're not gonna be in the pulpit, we're gonna live out our lives being stewards over the most common things in life that he's put in our paths. They become sacred things. The stewardship you exercise, your kids are going to see that. They're going to exercise stewardship the way you modeled. If you treated the most practical things like they're mundane, they're inconsequential, your kids are going to be sloppy, they're never going to handle things correctly. These verses say **'Those things are sacred,'** has God given you flocks and herds to take care of? David learned to be the king of Israel caring for the flocks of Jesse. Gideon learned his responsibility grinding grain. The disciples learned to be fishers of men being faithful to the fishing industry they had been called to. [see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/wwcofg/wearesalt.htm>

Remember, God trained Moses by having him watch over Jethro's flock of sheep for 40 years, before giving him the job of shepherding the 12 tribes of Israel in the Wilderness for 40 more years.] God called workers everywhere, he didn't call...you look at him calling Moses, feeding Jethro's flocks on the back side of the desert. You look, when he calls his disciples, when he calls David and so forth, you go through...So he's saying here, *'What are you surrounded with right now? What are your responsibilities right now? Do you hate to get up and go to work? You have kids to take care of?'* Moms have an endless pile of wash, you're gonna wash somebody else's clothes for 20 years, and one day they're gonna say *'Thanks,'* and they're gonna leave. And hopefully they're going to go out the door and they're going to walk with Christ and are going to marry a Christian man or a Christian woman, they're gonna work hard, they're gonna take care of their kids, they're going to take care of the stewardship they have, because they've seen it, and witnessed it. And understand that God's blessings are our stewardship, he gives us flocks, he gives us herds, and he gives us the hay and the herbs of the mountains, and he gives us all of this. And as we understand that, then in our minds we get rid of this idea of the sacred and the secular, that this is not spiritual, only Sunday [or Saturday] is spiritual. No, no you're in church every day, all day, as it were, under the eye of God, being steward over the things given to you, very important to see here. [transcript of a connective expository sermon on Proverbs 27:1-27, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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