

Proverbs

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The Excelsior Springs Church

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I. Introduction to the book of Proverbs

1. Reading the book of Proverbs is one of the most profitable uses of a Christian's time.
 - A. I have been reading a chapter of Proverbs each day for about 13 years.
 - B. I recommend that you do the same thing.
 - C. Proverbs has 31 chapters and most months have 30-31 days, so I recommend reading the chapter of Proverbs that corresponds to the day of the month everyday.
2. The purpose of the book is to give the reader understanding, knowledge, wisdom, judgment, subtilty, and discretion (**Pro 1:2-4**).
3. It is written from a Father to a son (Solomon to his son, and God to us) (**Pro 3:1; Pro 3:21; Pro 4:1; Pro 4:20; Pro 5:1; Pro 7:1**).
4. The layout of the book
 - A. The first nine chapters of Proverbs exhort the reader of the necessity and benefits of getting wisdom.
 - B. After making a thorough and compelling case for getting wisdom in the first third of the book, Solomon begins the actual proverbs in chapter 10 (**Pro 10:1**).
5. What is a proverb?
 - A. Proverb *n.* - 1. a. A short pithy saying in common and recognized use; a concise sentence, often metaphorical or alliterative in form, which is held to express some truth ascertained by experience or observation and familiar to all; an adage, a wise saw.
 - B. In other words, a proverb is a short saying based on observation and experience.
 - C. A proverb by its nature is not necessarily a promise or an infallible decree from God.
 - i. Proverbs by definition are common sayings about things that generally and normally hold true, but *all of them* do not *always* hold true.
 - ii. For example, Jesus Christ's ways *always* pleased the Lord (**Joh 8:29**), but His enemies were *not* always at peace with Him (**Pro 16:7**).
 - D. Usually, though, the wisdom contained in the Proverbs will hold true in life.
6. The themes of the book
 - A. Wisdom
 - i. The foremost theme in the book of Proverbs is to "get wisdom" (**Pro 4:5; Pro 4:7; Pro 16:16**), which is "the principal thing" (**Pro 4:7**).
 - a. Wisdom *n.* - 1. a. Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends; sometimes, less strictly, sound sense, esp. in practical affairs: opp. to *folly*.
 - b. Principal - *adj.* 1. First or highest in rank or importance; that is at the head of all the rest; of the greatest account or value; foremost: = *chief*
 - ii. *Wisdom* and its cognates *wise*, *wiser*, and *wisely* are used 125 times in the book of Proverbs.
 - B. Knowledge
 - i. The book of Proverbs tells us to receive knowledge (**Pro 8:10**).
 - ii. In order to judge rightly in matters relating to life and conduct, a man must first have the pertinent facts in his mind, which is *knowledge*.

- iii. Knowledge *n.* - II. Senses derived from the verb know, in its later uses. 5. a. The fact of knowing a thing, state, etc., or (in general sense) a person; acquaintance; familiarity gained by experience. 8. a. Acquaintance with a fact; perception, or certain information of, a fact or matter; state of being aware or informed; consciousness (of anything).
- iv. *Knowledge* and its cognates *know*, *knoweth*, *knowest*, and *known* are found 66 times in Proverbs.

C. Understanding

- i. The book of Proverbs exhorts us to get understanding (**Pro 4:5**).
- ii. In order to have knowledge, a man must have the intellectual ability to perceive and acquire facts and reason with them, which is *understanding*.
- iii. Understanding *n.* - 1. a. (Without article.) Power or ability to understand; intellect, intelligence. b. *of understanding*, intelligent, capable of judging with knowledge. Similarly *of some*, *of no*, *understanding*. c. With *the*: The faculty of comprehending and reasoning; the intellect.
- iv. *Understanding* and its cognates *understand* and *understandeth* are used 66 times in the book of Proverbs.

D. How understanding, knowledge, and wisdom relate to each other

- i. Putting it together, in order to be wise, which should be the ultimate goal of a Christian, a man must have the facts (*knowledge*), and the faculty of intellect, reason, and judgment (*understanding*), in order to consider the facts and apply correct thinking to judge rightly and choose the best means and ends in his life and conduct, which is *wisdom*.
- ii. God gives all three of these virtues to humble children of God who earnestly seek after them (**Pro 2:1-6**).

E. Discretion

- i. Discretion *n.* - 1. The action of separating or distinguishing, or condition of being distinguished or disjunct; separation, disjunction, distinction. III. [Cf. discreet.] 6. Ability to discern or distinguish what is right, befitting, or advisable, esp. as regards one's own conduct or action; the quality of being discreet; discernment; prudence, sagacity, circumspection, sound judgement.
- ii. *Discretion*, which is found six times in Proverbs.
- iii. Our modern politically correct world vilifies judgment and discrimination.
- iv. But God's word magnifies and encourages it, with this caveat: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (**Joh 7:24**).
- v. To be able to have wisdom, we must know how to judge between right and wrong, and discriminate between good and bad.

F. Prudence

- i. Prudence *n.* - 1. Ability to discern the most suitable, politic, or profitable course of action, esp. as regards conduct; practical wisdom, discretion.
- ii. *Prudence* and its cognate *prudent* appear 13 times in Proverbs.
- iii. The *prudent* man:
 - a. dwells with wisdom (**Pro 8:12**)
 - b. covers shame (**Pro 12:16**)
 - c. gets, conceals, and deals with knowledge (**Pro 18:15; Pro 12:23; Pro 13:16**)

- d. understands his way (**Pro 14:8**)
- e. looks well to his going (**Pro 14:15**)
- f. is crowned with knowledge (**Pro 14:18**)
- g. regards reproof (**Pro 15:5**)
- h. foresees evil and hides himself from it (**Pro 22:3; Pro 27:12**)

G. Foolishness

- i. Foolishness *n.* - 1. The quality or condition of being foolish.
- ii. Foolish *adj.* - 1. Fool-like, wanting in sense or judgement.
- iii. Fool *n.* - I. 1. a. One deficient in judgement or sense, one who acts or behaves stupidly, a silly person, a simpleton. (In Biblical use applied to vicious or impious persons.) The word has in mod.Eng. a much stronger sense than it had at an earlier period; it has now an implication of insulting contempt which does not in the same degree belong to any of its synonyms, or to the derivative *foolish*.
- iv. These definitions make clear that he who exhibits the attribute of *foolishness* lacks judgment, acts stupidly, and is worthy of contempt.
- v. *Foolishness* and its cognates *fool* and *fools* are used a 84 times in Proverbs.

H. Folly

- i. Folly *n.* - 1. a. The quality or state of being foolish or deficient in understanding; want of good sense, weakness or derangement of mind; also, unwise conduct.
- ii. *Folly* is used 13 times in Proverbs.

II. Interpreting a Proverb

1. There are two things to keep in mind when interpreting a proverb: 1) the general rules of Bible interpretation, and 2) the identification of the type of structure of the proverb.
2. The rules of Bible interpretation
 - A. There are no contradictions in the scriptures.
 - i. No verse of scripture can be privately (separated from the rest of the body of scripture) interpreted (**2Pe 1:20**).
 - ii. Private - Withdrawn or separated from the public body
 - iii. The public body in context is the scripture.
 - iv. Therefore, no interpretation (explanation) of a prophecy (divinely inspired utterance or discourse) of the scripture can be withdrawn or separated from the rest of the body of the scripture, for to do so would create contradictions.
 - B. Words should normally be defined with primary meanings.
 - i. When interpreting a verse, the words should be read distinctly (in a distinct or separate manner; separately, individually, severally) and the sense should be given (**Neh 8:8**).
 - ii. Sense - The meaning or signification of a word or phrase; also, any one of the different meanings of a word, or that which it bears in a particular collocation or context.
 - iii. *The meaning* (the primary meaning) of a word should be used by default unless to do so creates a contradiction or an absurdity, or the particular collocation or context of the passage makes it obvious that a secondary meaning is being used.
 - C. Scripture should be compared with scripture to understand scripture.

- i. The Bible is written so that the information on a given topic is scattered "here a little, and there a little" all through the scriptures (**Isa 28:9-10**).
 - ii. This is how God organized the Bible to teach us doctrine (**Isa 28:9**).
 - iii. All the information on a given topic is not given in one verse, so almost always one verse must be compared with other verses to get all the information.
 - iv. This is how the Holy Ghost teaches, and so ought we (**1Co 2:13**).
 - D. Reference texts must be distinguished from proof texts.
 - i. A proof text expressly states a point of doctrine.
 - a. An example of a proof text would be **Joh 5:24**.
 - b. Joh 5:24 states that a person who presently believes the gospel presently has everlasting life and his passing from death unto life happened prior to that (*is passed* is present perfect tense - something that happened in the past and continues into the present).
 - ii. A reference text refers to a point of doctrine but does not expressly define it. The point must be proved elsewhere.
 - a. An example of a reference text would be **Rom 10:13**.
 - b. Rom 10:13 states that a person who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Since the Bible speaks of more than one type of salvation, the question then needs to be asked, "Saved from what?".
 - c. The text doesn't say what type of salvation is being spoken of; it merely *refers* to a salvation.
 - d. Therefore, it would need to be compared with other texts to define what salvation is under consideration.
 - E. Pay attention to the context of the verse in question.
 - i. Text without context is pretext.
 - ii. Consider to whom the book or epistle was written.
 - iii. Was it written to an individual, a church, or the entire human race?
 - iv. Example: **1Co 12:27**
 - a. Don't read 1Co 12:27 and conclude that the entire human race is the body of Christ.
 - b. Don't conclude that "all believers" collectively the body of Christ.
 - c. The epistle was written to the church at Corinth (**1Co 1:2**), and therefore the text is stating that their local church was the body of Christ.
 - d. Then it can be deduced that each local church is the body of Christ.
 - v. Always read at least ten verses around the verse in question before beginning to interpret it.
- 3. The structures of proverbs
 - A. Solomon's proverbs are usually comprised of two parts which are joined together by a colon, a semicolon, or a comma, and generally involve a comparison between two statements.
 - B. The two clauses of a proverb are often linked together by conjunctives such as *and*, *but*, and *so*.
 - C. Occasionally, a proverb will be only a statement of truth that contains no comparison.

- D. In order to properly interpret a proverb, it is first necessary to identify its configuration.
- E. There are four basic configurations found in the book of Proverbs, which are:
- i. Contrasting - The clauses of the proverb are joined by a colon, semicolon, or comma followed by the word *but*.
 - a. The meaning of such a proverb can be understood by contrasting the two clauses and focusing on their difference.
 - b. The second clause will often explain the first by showing its opposite.
 - c. The contrasting configuration is the most common form used in the book of Proverbs. Examples of such proverbs are:
 - (i) "Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death." - **Pro 10:2**
 - (ii) "The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward." - **Pro 11:18**
 - d. Occasionally, the *contrasting* configuration is brought about by the use of the conjunctive *so*, as in the following:
 - e. "As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death." - **Pro 11:19**
 - ii. Comparison - The clauses of the proverb are joined by a colon, semicolon, or comma followed by the word *and*.
 - a. The meaning of such a proverb can be understood by comparing the two clauses and focusing on their similarity.
 - b. The second clause will tend to elaborate on the first. Examples of comparative proverbs are:
 - (i) "When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, there is shouting." - **Pro 11:10**
 - (ii) "He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated." - **Pro 14:17**
 - c. The *comparing* configuration is also sometimes accomplished by use of the conjunctive *so*, such as in the following proverbs:
 - (i) "As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him." - **Pro 10:26**
 - (ii) "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion." - **Pro 11:22**
 - iii. No conjunction - The clauses of the proverb are joined by a colon, semicolon, or comma, but no conjunction is used.
 - a. This configuration can be used with a comparative or a contrasting proverb.
 - b. The following are examples of such:
 - (i) "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul." - **Pro 16:17**
 - (ii) "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing: there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." - **Pro 13:7**
 - iv. Statement of truth - Some proverbs do not follow the two-clause model, but are simply a statement of truth with no comparison or contrast.

- a. An instance of such is:
- b. "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." - **Pro 14:7**
- c. Sometimes a *statement of truth* configuration will also contain a comparative concept, such as in the following proverbs:
 - (i) "He that is despised, and hath a servant, is better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread." - **Pro 12:9**
 - (ii) "The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." - **Pro 13:14**
- F. Recognizing these distinctions in the proverbs will aid us in properly interpreting them.

III. Chapter 1

1. **Pro 1:1** - "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;"
 - A. Solomon is identified as the author of the book of Proverbs.
 - B. Proverb *n.* - 1. a. A short pithy saying in common and recognized use; a concise sentence, often metaphorical or alliterative in form, which is held to express some truth ascertained by experience or observation and familiar to all; an adage, a wise saw.
 - C. In that a proverb is a short *wise* saying, the author of it must therefore be wise.
 - D. There was no man more qualified to write Proverbs than Solomon.
 - i. He asked for an understanding heart rather than long life, riches, or the lives of his enemies (**1Ki 3:9-11**).
 - ii. Because of that, God gave him a wise and understanding heart that had never, nor would ever, be equaled (**1Ki 3:12; 1Ki 4:29-31**).
 - iii. There was only one man who was wiser than Solomon: the Lord Jesus Christ (**Luk 11:31**).
 - E. Solomon spoke 3,000 proverbs (**1Ki 4:32**).
 - F. Considering that there are 915 verses in the book of Proverbs, and the actual proverbs begin in chapter 10 (**Pro 10:1**), Solomon spoke well over three times as many proverbs as are recorded in the book of Proverbs.
2. **Pro 1:2** - "To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;"
 - A. **Pro 1:2-4** gives Solomon's purpose for writing the book of Proverbs.
 - B. The primary purpose of the Proverbs is to *know* certain things.
 - i. Know - I. 1. a. *trans.* To perceive (a thing or person) as identical with one perceived before, or of which one has a previous notion; to recognize; to identify.
 - ii. Therefore, the human mind is capable of *knowing things*.
 - iii. This may seem obvious, but this simple fact has escaped many so-called great minds, both of the ancient Sophists of Socrates' day, and their philosophical grandchildren of the Enlightenment, who "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (**Rom 1:22**) and declared that a man cannot know anything for certain.
 - a. This, of course, is self-refuting nonsense.

- 11-28-18

- a. Firstly, it tells us that the instruction of wisdom is *available* for the taking.
 - b. Secondly, it lets us know that for a man to acquire the instruction of wisdom he must first desire it and be willing to accept it from another who is prepared to impart it to him.
 - c. Thirdly, for the instruction of wisdom to be received the recipient must exert mental effort by listening, attending, and giving heed to what he is being taught.
- B. Another purpose of the Proverbs is also to receive the instruction of *justice*, *judgment*, and *equity*.
- i. Justice *n.* - 1. The quality of being (morally) just or righteous; the principle of just dealing; the exhibition of this quality or principle in action; just conduct; integrity, rectitude.
 - a. *Justice* is an integral ingredient for a happy and tranquil life, both personal and societal.
 - b. Many people clamor for justice in the courts, but they themselves are not just and righteous in their personal lives.
 - c. Is it any wonder that justice has been turned on its head in the United States when judgment has not first begun in the house of God (**1Pe 4:17**)?
 - d. If God's people would judge themselves, they would not be judged by being given leaders who pervert justice (**1Co 11:31**).
 - e. Justice will not be found in a society devoid of wisdom.
 - f. By wisdom kings are supposed to reign and princes decree justice (**Pro 8:15**), which is why the *instruction of wisdom* must be first received, and *justice* will follow (**Pro 1:3**).
 - ii. Judgment *n.* - 1. a. The action of trying a cause in a court of justice; trial. 8. a. The faculty of judging; ability to form an opinion; that function of the mind whereby it arrives at a notion of anything; the critical faculty; discernment.
 - a. *Judgment* and *justice* go hand-in-hand.
 - b. These two virtues are essential in a good leader, as the Lord told David, "he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (**2Sa 23:3**).
 - c. God chose to us Abraham because he would "do justice and judgment" (**Gen 18:19**).
 - d. Every father would do well to follow Abraham's example.
 - e. The great king David "executed judgment and justice unto all his people" (**2Sa 8:15**).
 - f. God made Solomon king for the same purpose (**1Ki 10:9**).
 - g. O that leaders today would rule in the fear of God and do justice and judgment!
 - h. But men can't expect their leaders to execute justice and judgment if they themselves live morally reprehensible lives.

- i. Some men reason that getting religious will make up for their lack of principle and integrity, but the scripture says that "to do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice" (**Pro 21:3**).
- iii. Equity *n.* - 1. The quality of being equal or fair; fairness, impartiality; evenhanded dealing.
 - a. Even children have a sense of fairness, at least when it comes to how *they* are treated.
 - (i) A common chorus in every home with young children is "that's not fair!"
 - (ii) While nearly all men know that they should be treated fairly, and quickly recognize when they have not been, many of them have a memory lapse when it comes to their dealing rightly with others.
 - (iii) Hence the importance of reading the book of Proverbs, to "receive the instruction of . . . equity" (**Pro 1:3**).
 - b. Our country resembles Israel of old when it comes to a lack of equity (**Isa 59:14; Mic 3:9**).
 - (i) The wealthy pay a much higher percentage of their income in taxes than do lower income people.
 - (ii) Certain classes of people are accepted into universities and offered jobs based on their skin color, sexual preference, or protected status.
 - (iii) The ultra-rich and famous get off with short, cushy jail sentences for crimes that a normal man would not, such as billionaire Jeffery Epstein who served a 13 month sentence in a private wing of a county jail with work-release and immunity from further prosecution in the future for molesting young girls.
 - c. Dealing equitably with people is especially important for pastors (**1Ti 5:21**) and all Christians alike (**Jam 2:1**).
 - d. The Lord Jesus Christ is the model of a man who was just and fair in His dealing with men (**Isa 11:1-5; Mat 22:16**).

4. **Pro 1:4** - "To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion."

A. This verse gives the final reasons that Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs.

B. *To give subtilty to the simple.*

- i. Subtlety *n.* - 1. Of persons, the mind, its faculties or operations: Acuteness, sagacity, penetration: in modern use chiefly with implication of delicate or keen perception of fine distinctions or nice points.
 - ii. A man endued with subtilty has a mind that is sharp and keen which can penetrate through complex and convoluted ideas and perceive fine distinctions which are key to discerning the truth of the matter.
 - iii. Simple *n.* - 1. a. As *pl.* Persons in a humble or ordinary condition of life. 2. a. As *pl.* Those who are unlearned, ignorant, easily misled, unsuspecting, etc.
- 1611 Bible Ps. cxix. 130 The entrance of thy wordes+giueth vnderstanding vnto the simple. b. As *sing.* An ignorant or foolish person.

- iv. To "know wisdom" and "perceive the words of understanding" (**Pro 1:2**) requires that the mind be subtle, able to sort through false and extraneous information to find the truth hidden therein.
 - v. The simple-minded have no such ability (**Pro 17:24**).
 - vi. The simple don't have a focused mind capable of penetration and keen perception.
 - a. They are instead scatter-brained, chasing every thought that skips across their feeble mind.
 - b. The average person today truly *thinks* very little, if at all.
 - vii. How can the simple man rectify his problem and become wise?
 - viii. The solution *is simple*: read the Proverbs and meditate therein (**Jos 1:8; Psa 1:2**).
 - ix. God's word gives understanding to, and makes wise, *the simple* (**Psa 19:7; Psa 119:130**).
- C. *To give...to the young man knowledge and discretion.*
- i. Man is born with a problem: *stupidity* (**Pro 22:15**).
 - ii. Man's default intellectual state is *ignorance*, which is why the scriptures exhort parents to "train up a child in the way he should go" (**Pro 22:6**), and fathers to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (**Eph 6:4**).
 - a. Parents must do their part to educate their children when they are young, but every young man is himself responsible to "get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding" (**Pro 4:7**).
 - b. Where should the young man look to find knowledge and wisdom? -- the word of God (**Psa 119:9**).
 - c. Reading the proverbs, which are part of God's word, will give the young man "more understanding than all [his] teachers" when they are his meditation, and cause him to "understand more than the ancients" when he keeps them (**Psa 119:99-100**).
 - iii. Along with lacking knowledge, the young man also naturally lacks *discretion*.
 - a. Discretion *n.* - I. 1. The action of separating or distinguishing, or condition of being distinguished or disjunct; separation, disjunction, distinction. II. 2. The action of discerning or judging; judgement; decision, discrimination. III. 6. Ability to discern or distinguish what is right, befitting, or advisable, esp. as regards one's own conduct or action; the quality of being discreet; discernment; prudence, sagacity, circumspection, sound judgement.
 - b. A short survey of the decisions and actions of youth thoroughly proves that young men lack discretion.
 - c. One need only consider the friends, lovers, food, and entertainment chosen by the average youth, uninfluenced by his parents and the word of God, to consent wholeheartedly to this truth.
 - d. The solution to this problem is reading and studying the book of Proverbs which will give young people discretion to save them from the harmful influences of the world (**Pro 2:1-6, 10-11**).

5. **Pro 1:5** - "A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:"

A. *A wise man will hear.*

- i. There is hearing and then there is *hearing*.
 - a. Hear v. - 1. a. *intr.* To perceive, or have the sensation of, sound; to possess or exercise the faculty of audition, of which the specific organ is the ear.
 - (i) This type of hearing is done by wise and foolish alike.
 - (ii) The Pharisees heard Christ's words in the physical sense which was evidenced by the fact that they wanted to kill Him for what he said (**Joh 8:37-38**).
 - b. Hear v. - 4. To exercise the auditory function intentionally; to give ear, hearken, listen.
 - (i) This type of hearing is unique to the wise.
 - (ii) The Pharisees could not hear Christ's words with understanding because 1) they were not of God, and 2) they were fools and didn't want to (**Joh 8:43-47**).
- ii. The result of the second type of hearing is that the wise man will *increase learning*.
 - a. In order to increase learning, we must listen *intentionally*.
 - b. We must bow down our ears to hear the words of the wise (**Pro 22:17**).
 - c. In order to hear and increase learning, a man has to listen more than he talks (**Jam 1:19; Ecc 5:1**).

B. *A man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.*

- i. A wise man has enough sense to know that he doesn't know everything.
- ii. There are two ways to be wise: either know information personally, or know where to find it when needed.
 - a. A man of understanding realizes that he doesn't need to be an expert in every discipline, but need only know someone who is.
 - b. When he needs to increase his learning, rather than proudly and foolishly staying at home trying to figure it out himself, he instead attains unto wise counsel.
 - c. Attain v. - III. 10. To come so far as, succeed in coming to, get (to). *to attain to* = reach, arrive at.
- iii. A wise man doesn't wait for wise counsel to come to him, rather, he goes to it.
 - a. I will gladly take unsolicited advice from wise men, but I usually seek it out from them first when making any important decision.
 - (i) Before I would make any major, life-changing decision, I would seek wise counsel.
 - (ii) Such decisions would include going to college, choosing a career, changing careers, changing jobs, retirement planning, retiring, buying a house, buying a car or other large

expenditures, engagement and marriage, raising children, education plans for children, investing large amounts of money, starting a business, major health decisions, etc.

(iii) In all these areas, counsel should be sought *before* already having one's mind made up.

- b. The only man that *will learn* is he who *wants to learn*, and voluntarily seeks instruction.
- c. There is an old adage which says, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear."
- d. This is why it's a fool's errand to send most young people to college with a check in their hand, expecting them to get an education (**Pro 17:16**).

6. **Pro 1:6** - "To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings."

A. Let's look at the second half of this proverb first before getting to the first half.

B. *The words of the wise, and their dark sayings.*

- i. Even to a learned man, some of the proverbs are difficult to understand, hence the reason they are called *dark sayings*.
- ii. Dark *adj* - I. *literal*. 1. a. Characterized by (absolute or relative) absence of light; devoid of or deficient in light; unilluminated; said esp. of night. II. *fig*. 6. a. Obscure in meaning, hard to understand.
- iii. A dark saying is something that has been kept secret (**Psa 78:2 c/w Mat 13:35**).
- iv. Some proverbs, therefore, are secretive sayings with obscure meanings that are hard to be understood which is why they have to be *interpreted*.

C. *To understand a proverb, and the interpretation...*

- i. From the word order we see that *the proverb itself* must first be understood, after which *the interpretation* can be comprehended (**Pro 1:6**).
 - a. Put another way, to understand what a verse *means* we must first understand what it *says*.
 - b. To know what a proverb *says* requires that we identify its form which will usually be one of the following types: *comparing, contrasting, or a statement of truth* (see Interpreting a Proverb, Section II).
 - c. Once it is clear what a proverb *says*, then the *interpretation* must be given.
 - d. Interpretation *n.* - The action of interpreting or explaining; explanation, exposition.
 - e. To give the *interpretation* is to explain what the proverb *means*.
- ii. To understand a proverb and the interpretation, Solomon taught in the previous verse that a wise man must attain unto wise counsel, listen, and learn (**Pro 1:5**).
- iii. Proverb *n.* - 1. a. A short pithy saying in common and recognized use; a concise sentence, often metaphorical or alliterative in form, which is held to express some truth ascertained by experience or observation and familiar to all; an adage, a wise saw.

- a. Though a proverb is a saying in common use, its meaning is not necessarily obvious to all.
 - b. Given that a proverb is a wise saying that expresses a truth gained by experience, those who have yet to experience what the older and wiser generation have must therefore learn to understand and interpret their sayings.
 - iv. As previously stated, a man must attain unto wise counsels to understand a proverb and the interpretation (**Pro 1:5-6**).
 - a. How can a man understand what he reads without some man to guide him (**Act 8:30-31**)?
 - b. In the multitude of counselors there is safety (**Pro 11:14**).
 - c. The best counsel of all is the counsel of the LORD (**Pro 19:21**).
 - (i) God's counsel is found in His word (**Psa 119:24; Pro 2:6; Pro 22:20-21**), which is manifested through preaching (**Tit 1:3**).
 - (ii) The best way to understand a proverb and the interpretation is to learn in the manner in which the Holy Ghost teaches, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (**1Co 2:13**).
 - (iii) For the finest explanation of an author's work, it's best to ask the author himself.
 - (iv) The proverbs are no different.
- 7. **Pro 1:7** - "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."
 - A. *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge...*
 - i. There are certain things that carnal men without the fear of God (**Rom 3:18**) can know naturally (**Jud 1:10**).
 - a. They are ever learning *things*, but never come to the *knowledge of the truth* (**2Ti 3:7**).
 - b. This is not the knowledge that Solomon is speaking of in this verse.
 - ii. Solomon is instead speaking of *the knowledge of God* which comes after one understands *the fear of the Lord* (**Pro 2:5**).
 - iii. The world by its wisdom cannot have the knowledge of God (**1Co 1:21**).
 - iv. In order to have the knowledge of God and His truth, a man must first possess the *fear of the Lord* which is the beginning of knowledge.
 - a. Before a man can fear God, he must first have been born again by the Spirit of God because the natural man cannot fear God (**Rom 3:18**) and is not subject to the law of God (**Rom 8:5-8**).
 - b. He next must believe that God exists (**Heb 11:6**).
 - c. For an honest man, this merely requires:
 - (i) looking up at the heavens (**Psa 19:1**)
 - (ii) looking around at the amazingly complex creation (**Rom 1:20**)
 - (iii) looking at himself who is fearfully and wonderfully made (**Psa 139:14**)

- (iv) These three things demand that there is an eternal, omnipotent God that created them all.
- d. A humble child of God should be overwhelmed with a dreadful feeling of *fear* toward the omnipotent God that created all these things.
- e. Fear *n.* - 1. In OE.: A sudden and terrible event; peril. 2. a. The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil.
- f. A man's awareness of God's eternal power and infinite intelligence should give rise to a solemn *fear* of disobeying Him.
- v. The God of the Bible does not simply require a *healthy respect* like some fools say.
 - a. But rather we must, "fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (**Luk 12:5**).
 - b. Our God is a consuming fire who must be served acceptably with reverence *and* godly *fear* (**Heb 12:28-29**).
- vi. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge (**Pro 1:7**) and wisdom (**Pro 9:10**) because it *is wisdom* (**Job 28:28**).
 - a. Beginning *n.* - 1. The action or process of entering upon existence or upon action, or of bringing into existence; commencing, origination.
 - b. When a man fears God, he has made his first act of wisdom which opens the door for knowledge and more wisdom to enter.
 - c. The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom (**Pro 15:33**).
 - d. In other words, the fear of God teaches us wisdom.
 - e. Those that don't fear God hate knowledge (**Pro 1:29**) and therefore will not receive it.
 - f. The fear of the LORD teaches men to obey God and do His commandments (**Psa 111:10**).
 - (i) God's word is our wisdom (**Deut 4:5-6**).
 - (ii) When we learn and do His commandments, we learn His knowledge.
 - g. Men that fear God hate evil (**Pro 8:13**) and depart from it (**Pro 16:6**) and its snares of death (**Pro 14:27**).
 - (i) When we depart from evil, God increases our knowledge of Him (**Joh 7:17; Pro 1:23**).
 - (ii) When we avoid evil men and company with good men, we learn the knowledge of God (**Pro 13:20**).
 - h. The fear of the LORD leads to knowledge which leads to riches, honor, and life (**Pro 22:4**).
- B. *...but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*
 - i. A man who denies there is a God is a supreme fool (**Psa 14:1**).
 - a. A fool of this magnitude will certainly not find the knowledge of God, seeing he denies His very existence.
 - b. He will, of course, therefore despise God's wisdom and instruction.
 - ii. But not all fools deny God's existence.

- a. Many of them profess belief in the LORD, blessing His name when things go well, but then fretting against Him when they have perverted their way by their foolishness, and are suffering for it (**Psa 107:17; Pro 19:3**).
 - b. A cursory reading of the book of Proverbs unfortunately shows that believers, as well as unbelievers, often bear the characteristics of a fool.
 - c. Fool *n.* - 1. a. One deficient in judgement or sense, one who acts or behaves stupidly, a silly person, a simpleton. (In Biblical use applied to vicious or impious persons.)
 - d. Such a man naturally despises *wisdom*.
 - e. Wisdom *n.* - Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends; sometimes, less strictly, sound sense, esp. in practical affairs: opp. to folly
 - f. He also despises *instruction* because he has no desire to be shown the error of his way which would require that he make changes in his life.
 - iii. *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge*, but a fool never gets past the first rung of knowledge's ladder because he doesn't fear God's judgment and forges on ahead in his foolishness (**Pro 14:16**).
 - iv. As the old saying goes: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."
 - v. If a man despises instruction, thinks he knows it all, and has no need to be taught by another, he is a *fool*.
 - a. This goes for the child or young man (**Pro 15:5**) and the old man alike (**Ecc 4:13**).
 - b. Such a man not only despises his instructor, but also despises *himself* (**Pro 15:32**).
8. **Pro 1:8** - "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:"
- A. Solomon's son was the intended recipient of this collection of proverbs.
 - i. This verse is the first of twenty-two appeals that Solomon makes to "my son" throughout the book.
 - ii. If Rehoboam was the son to whom Solomon gave his wise instruction, sadly, it fell on deaf ears (**2Ch 10:8**).
 - iii. Such is often the case with the children of great men, who, not having put in the effort of their fathers, and therefore not appreciating what they have, fail to measure up.
 - B. Christians face a similar concern with their children.
 - i. This is especially the case for those parents who were converted from a life of sin and error, and thus deeply appreciate the salvation and the knowledge of the truth that they have in Christ Jesus.
 - ii. The children of such Christians, if not properly instructed by their parents, have a high likelihood of not walking in the faith to the same degree, if at all, as their faithful parents.

- iii. This happened to the generation of Israel that followed those who had experienced the mighty power of God which brought them into the promised land (**Jdg 2:10**).
 - C. This is why God instructed the fathers in Israel to teach their children the law of God, that they forget not the LORD (**Psa 78:4-7**).
 - i. This principle is still incumbent upon Christian fathers today who are to "bring [their children] up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (**Eph 6:4**).
 - ii. Though this duty of imparting the law of God to children is primarily given to fathers, Solomon here charges his son to not only "hear the instruction of thy father," but to also "forsake not the law of thy mother" (**Pro 1:8**).
 - iii. Our society has turned this parental precept on its head with most instruction given to children coming from their mothers, and scant, if any, being provided by their fathers.
 - a. *Fathers* should be the primary instructor of their children in spiritual matters.
 - b. Why do you think that "Christianity" has been so feminized over the last few generations?
 - c. It's because most Biblical instruction given to children comes from their mothers, and very little comes from their fathers.
 - D. This verse implies what should be obvious: fathers and mothers should be *instructing, commanding* (**Pro 6:20**), and *giving laws* to their children.
 - i. I see far too many parents asking, suggesting, bribing, and begging their children to do what they want them to do.
 - ii. In this generation, a quick stroll down the grocery store aisle will confirm that children are not subject to their parents, but rather "are their oppressors" (**Isa 3:12**).
 - iii. Is it any wonder that our society is in such a dismal state?
 - iv. Solomon's warning ought to be heeded by all children who should obey and honour their parents in all things (**Col 3:20; Eph 6:2-3**).
 - E. Another important lesson from Solomon's words: heed good counsel, *even when coming from a hypocrite*.
 - i. Solomon wisely exhorted his son to "forsake not the law of thy mother;" yet he didn't follow his own advice.
 - ii. His mother (**Pro 31:1**), warned him to "give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings" (**Pro 31:3**).
 - iii. Sadly, Solomon forsook the law of his mother (**1Ki 11:4; Neh 13:26**).
 - iv. We should follow Solomon's advice, even though he himself did not.
9. **Pro 1:9** - "For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."
- A. The instruction of fathers and the law of mothers, when heeded by obedient children (**Pro 1:8**) is as precious jewelry worn for all to see.
 - i. Better it is to wear an ornament of *grace* than one of *gold*.
 - ii. A "wise reprove upon an obedient ear" is "as an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold" (**Pro 25:12**).

- iii. Young girls often want to wear earrings before their parents are ready to allow it, but if a young lady regards her parents' rules, she is already wearing the finest gold earring she could wish for.
- iv. Jewelry is often worn to beautify a person and draw the attention of others.
- v. A wise and well-mannered child who respects and observes the commands and instructions of her parents will stand out more than if she were wearing a golden crown and three pounds of gold chains around her neck.
- vi. I have seen people go out of their way to compliment the parents of well-behaved and well-mannered children.
- B. This is not only true of children, but adults alike (**Pro 4:7-9**).
 - i. The most handsome necklace a man can don is one made of mercy and truth (**Pro 3:3**).
 - ii. A godly woman adorned with "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" (**1Pe 3:3-4**) looks far more attractive to her husband than does the "fair woman which is without discretion" (**Pro 11:22**).
- C. A father's commandment and a mother's law should be kept and not forsook (**Pro 6:20**), especially when they are repetitions of God's commandments and laws.
 - i. In order to ensure they are not lost, Solomon tells his son to "bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck" (**Pro 6:21**).
 - ii. This is the finest necktie that a young man will ever wear which will be noticed and praised by many.
 - iii. Most decent parents would not let their children leave the house dressed like slobs.
 - a. How much more important it is to not let them leave home without having adorned them with the knowledge of God.
 - b. Parents, just as God instructed Israel, teach the scripture to your children while they are still young and impressionable (**Deu 6:6-9**).

10. **Pro 1:10** - "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

- A. Having exhorted his son of the importance and benefits of getting wisdom for the first nine verses, Solomon begins a warning to his son of potential danger that lies ahead.
- B. Children are born into this world with a depraved heart (**Psa 58:3; Gen 8:21**).
 - i. If that wasn't bad enough, they also have ungodly friends who try to *entice* them to do evil.
 - ii. Entice v. - 1. *trans.* To stir up, incite, instigate (to a course of action); also to provoke (to anger).
- C. My experience with children has taught me that they generally fall into three categories.
 - i. The *instigators*
 - a. There are usually one or more these children in every group.
 - b. They are the trouble-makers.
 - c. They are not necessarily bad kids (although sometimes they are), but they need constant supervision and restraint.

- d. They *instigate* other children (the *instigated*) who normally would behave themselves if they were not incited to foolishness by the *instigators*.
 - e. To maintain order, the *instigators* must be identified and publicly reprimanded (or punished if necessary) so that the other *instigators* and the *instigated* will see and fear (**1Ti 5:20; Pro 19:25; Pro 21:11**).
 - f. These children make managing children a challenge.
 - ii. The *instigated*
 - a. There are usually between a handful to a small majority of these children in every group.
 - b. If the *instigators* are not reigned in early, the ranks of the *instigated* will grow as the more timid children (*potential instigateds*) are emboldened to join in the folly.
 - c. The *instigated* children behave well in the absence of an *instigator*.
 - d. Trouble-making doesn't come as naturally to them.
 - e. If they or one of their fellows are punished, they quickly calm down and remain that way for a while.
 - iii. The *unaffected*
 - a. There are usually between a handful to a large minority of these children in every group.
 - b. They are *unaffected* by the actions of the *instigators* and the *instigated*.
 - c. They sit quietly and mind their own business no matter how much chaos is going on around them.
 - d. These children make managing children a breeze.
 - iv. The *instigated* are the children and young adults that particularly need to heed the warning of (**Pro 1:10**).
 - v. Raising children on an uninhabited island would be much easier, but that's not the world we live in.
- D. Peer pressure is a powerful influence for children and adults alike.
 - i. This is why God warned Israel to not follow a multitude to do evil (**Exo 23:2**).
 - ii. King Saul fell into this snare when he listened to the people (**1Sa 15:9,20-21**) instead of God (**1Sa 15:3**).
 - iii. Men have a tendency to adopt "herd mentality" and follow the crowd, even when they have no idea where it is headed.
 - iv. This happened with the two hundred men who followed Absalom in his rebellion against David (**2Sa 15:11**).
 - v. This type of "group think" was responsible for the uprising in Ephesus instigated by Demetrius the silversmith who had ulterior motives (**Act 19:23-32**).
- E. Patriots should take note: there is usually a *presented reason* for a political uprising, and then there is the *real reason*.

- i. Christians should be very cautious in getting involved in such demonstrations because it might just be that sinners have enticed them to action only to be used for their own nefarious purposes.
 - ii. Never forget Solomon's warning: "A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good" (**Pro 16:29**).
- F. Solomon's warning to his son should teach us another valuable lesson: we don't have to, nor should we, consent to enticement.
 - i. Consent v. - I. To agree together. 1. *intr.* To agree together, or with another, in opinion or statement; to be of the same mind. II. To agree to a proposal, request, etc. 6. Voluntarily to accede to or acquiesce in what another proposes or desires; to agree, comply, yield.
 - ii. The scripture teaches that "every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" (**Jam 1:14**).
 - iii. Enticement is not itself sin, nor is it irresistible.
 - iv. Lust and enticement consented to brings forth sin and death (**Jam 1:15; Pro 1:18**).
 - v. To prevent this, we must "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness (consent not), but rather reprove them" (**Eph 5:11**).
 - vi. A companion of fools shall be destroyed (**Pro 13:20**).
 - vii. Heed the wise words of Solomon, and "Do not err, my beloved brethren" (**Jam 1:16**).
- 11. **Pro 1:11** - "If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:"
 - A. Solomon here describes the nature and thinking of fallen, depraved men.
 - i. These are sinners (**Pro 1:10**) who have not been saved by grace (**Pro 1:16 c/w Rom 3:15**).
 - ii. Therefore, it can be concluded that the conspirators in Pro 1:10-19 are not a *rare exception* to the generally good members of the human family.
 - iii. They are actually *the norm* which all men would imitate if not saved by the grace of God, or, in the case of the reprobate, restrained by the hand of God (**Psa 76:10**).
 - iv. For a child of God with a conscience, it is difficult to imagine that there are men in this world who actually "lay wait for blood" and "who lurk privily for the innocent without cause", but there are such people among us.
 - B. They carry out their despicable deeds *privily*.
 - i. Privily *adv.* - 1. In a privy manner; not openly or publicly; secretly, privately; stealthily; craftily.
 - ii. They do their devilment in the darkness because they *are* darkness (**2Co 6:14**), and they *love* darkness (**Joh 3:19**).
 - iii. Sinners commit their sins at night when they are concealed (**2Pe 3:10; 1Th 5:7**).
 - iv. Deeds that must be done in secret are usually evil (**Eph 5:12**).
 - v. Thank God that we who were sometimes darkness are now light in the Lord (**Eph 5:8**).

- C. These reprobates would be classified as psychopaths today, for they "lurk privily *for the innocent without cause.*"
 - i. Psychopaths show no empathy for their fellow man, even for those they know to be innocent.
 - ii. Their consciences are seared with a hot iron (**1Ti 4:2**).
 - iii. They target the vulnerable without cause, feeling no pricks in their stony hearts, and deriving pleasure thereby.
 - iv. When a young man, or any man, comes into contact with someone possessing these wicked tendencies, he most certainly must steer clear of them completely (**Pro 1:15**).
12. **Pro 1:12** - "Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:"
- A. These wicked conspirators devise a plan to "swallow [the innocent] up alive...and whole."
 - B. Solomon likely learned of the ways of these evildoers from his father David who begged God for protection from such abjects (**Psa 56:1-2**).
 - C. These immoral men learned this tactic *of swallowing up* their prey *alive* from their father the devil, "that old serpent" (**Rev 12:9**) who "was a murderer from the beginning" (**Joh 8:44**).
 - i. Snakes *swallow up* their victims *alive* and *whole*.
 - ii. Snakes *lay wait* in the grass and lurk privily for their prey (**Pro 1:11**).
 - iii. The serpent's children do the works of their father (**Joh 8:41**) because they are "by nature the children of wrath" (**Eph 2:3**), being "full of...murder" (**Rom 1:29**).
 - D. Knowing that there are wicked men in the world who plot and scheme to murder the righteous could make a man paranoid and afraid to leave the house.
 - i. It is wise to walk circumspectly (looking around) (**Eph 5:15**).
 - ii. This is true in both in a spiritual and in a natural sense (**Pro 22:3**).
 - iii. But we must never be driven by fear (**2Ti 1:7**).
 - E. How do we "fear not" when we live in a dangerous world?
 - i. *Fear* needs to be countered with *faith* and *trepidation* with *trust* (**Psa 56:3-4, 13**).
 - ii. We must never fear what men can do to us (**Heb 13:6**).
 - F. The reprobates who desire to *swallow up the righteous as those that go down into the pit* will be the ones who are swallowed up of the grave and of hell (**Pro 28:17; Psa 7:14-16; Psa 9:15-17**).
13. **Pro 1:13** - "We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:"
- A. Here we find the true motivation of these brutal men: *money*.
 - i. Their inspiration for conspiring to lurk secretly and lay wait for the blood of the innocent was the insidious sin of *covetousness*.
 - ii. They were so "greedy of gain" that they were willing to "[take] away the life of the owners thereof" to get it (**Pro 1:19**).
 - iii. Evil men will stop at nothing to fulfill their lusts.
 - iv. The eyes of man are never satisfied (**Pro 27:20**).

- v. As Matthew Henry so eloquently wrote commenting on Lev 11:43-47, "Nature is content with little, grace with less, but lust with nothing."
- B. The love of money is the root of all evil (**1Ti 6:10**).
 - i. Wicked men should consider their ways and ask themselves if filling their houses with spoil is worth losing their own souls (**Mar 8:36**).
 - ii. Life does not consist of the abundance of possessions (**Luk 12:15**).
 - iii. The most important things in life are not things.
 - iv. It's better to make a difference than a fortune.
 - v. We cannot serve God and money, and if a man tries, he will end up hating one or the other (**Mat 6:24**).
 - vi. Walking straddled over a fence is sure to end in pain.
- C. The desire to be rich will ruin a man (**1Ti 6:9; Pro 28:22**).
 - i. If a man wants to fill his house with precious substance, he should seek to do so by living righteously and faithfully and working hard (**Pro 3:33; Pro 28:20**).
 - ii. He should not do so by plundering his neighbor, whether on the street corner or at the ballot box (**Exo 20:15**).
- D. Even if these thugs were successful in pillaging the innocent and robbing them of their substance, it would be short lived (**Pro 10:3; Pro 13:22**).
 - i. They may succeed in spoiling their innocent victims, but the LORD will "spoil the soul of those that spoiled them" (**Pro 22:22-23**).
 - ii. You reap what you sow (**Gal 6:7**), and "they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same" (**Job 4:8**).

14. **Pro 1:14** - "Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:"

- A. *Let us all have one purse.*
 - i. In other words, let's make all of our collective wealth commonly owned.
 - ii. It should come as no surprise that these men who secretly conspired to band together and plunder the wealth of others by any means necessary, including murder, are *communists*.
 - iii. If only those who followed Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot, and all other wicked communist leaders had read and heeded Solomon's warning. consented not (**Pro 1:10**), and refrained their feet from their path (**Pro 1:15**), tens of millions of innocent lives would have been spared.
 - iv. Communists always promise *equality* for the masses.
 - a. They repeatedly make good on their pledge, for the masses invariably end up being equal indeed, all sharing *nothing*.
 - b. On the other hand, the rulers enjoy the national wealth for themselves which they expropriated from the producers in society.
 - c. "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." (George Orwell, *Animal Farm*)
 - v. Even a communistic system of shared profits set up by the most well-meaning of men will fail because of human nature.
 - a. Human nature always looks out for itself and is inclined to avoid the pain of labor and enjoy the fruits of others when possible.

- b. When profit is not proportional to labor, the incentive to work is diminished.
- c. The pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock in the seventeenth century learned this lesson the hard way.
- d. At first, they tried a communal system where all worked to gather and grow food, and all shared the produce equally.
- e. After nearly starving to death, they decided a system of private property and "every man for himself" was much more conducive to human flourishing.
- f. The early Jerusalem church tried a system of communal living (**Act 2:44-45**).
 - (i) Notice a few things about this communal system.
 - (ii) God did not command them to do it.
 - (iii) It was voluntary to distribute one's goods, not compulsory (**Act 5:4**).
 - (iv) It doesn't appear to have worked out very well for them (**Act 11:29; Rom 15:26**).

B. *Cast in thy lot among us.*

- i. Lot *n.* - 1. a. An object (app. usually a piece of wood) used in a widely diffused ancient method of deciding disputes, dividing plunder or property, selecting persons for an office or duty, etc., by an appeal to chance or the divine agency supposed to be concerned in the results of chance. The 'lots', each bearing the special mark of one of the competitors, were placed in a receptacle (in Homeric Greece a helmet); according to Greek procedure the vessel was shaken, the winning lot being that which fell out first; in Scandinavia the winning lot was drawn out by an uninterested party.
 - a. When a man casts in a *lot* with others, he is taking a *chance*.
 - b. These socialists, therefore, are letting poor, unwitting dupes know that they are taking a *gamble* by joining themselves with them.
 - c. Unfortunately, many are too simple to recognize it.
- ii. The very nature of a *lot* demands that when it is drawn to divide the plunder, the result will not be *equality*.
 - a. If equality was the goal, a simple division equation would suffice.
 - b. As at the casino where the odds are always in favor of the house, so it is when making deals with collectivists: probability predicts a loss.
- iii. If the blood of millions in the last century is not reason enough to keep the simpleminded from joining those who want us all to "have one purse", hopefully these wise warnings of Solomon will be.

15. **Pro 1:15** - "My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:"

A. Solomon was a wise teacher.

- i. He first *warned* his son to not consent when enticed by sinners (**Pro 1:10**).
- ii. Then he gave him a detailed example of *what* the enticement might sound like (**Pro 1:11-14**).
- iii. Next, he *reiterated* his warning to walk not with them and refrain from their path (**Pro 1:15**).

- iv. Finally, he told him *why* to steer clear of such sinners: for their end is destruction (**Pro 1:16-19**).
- B. An important lesson can be gleaned from the order in which Solomon instructed his son.
 - i. It is essential to do *what* God commands us before we endeavor to understand *why* He commanded it.
 - ii. Once we do *what* God commands, then we can seek to know the Lord's *reason* for issuing the instruction.
 - a. For example: it's not necessary for a Christian to understand exactly why God commands him to not fornicate (**1Co 6:18**), before he decides to keep himself from premarital or extramarital sex.
 - b. After he has done *what* God said, he then is free to philosophize about *why* God may have given that precept.
 - iii. Children of God too often act like the children of parents who question the reason for their father's command before consenting to do it.
 - a. God doesn't put up with that type of rebellion and neither should parents.
 - b. Delayed obedience is disobedience.
- C. *Walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.*
 - i. These bloodthirsty communists (**Pro 1:11,14**) are so dangerous that a man dare not even walk with them, nor put his foot on their path.
 - ii. Solomon later warned his son to not so much as get near the wicked, but to turn from them and pass away (**Pro 4:14-17**).
 - iii. "To keep from falling over the edge of the precipice, one should move as far back from that edge as possible." (Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, p. 134)
 - iv. Be very careful who you follow, for there are *many* that walk the broad way that leadeth to destruction (**Mat 7:13-14**).
 - v. Following the wrong crowd could cost you your money (**Pro 28:19**), your wellbeing (**Pro 16:29; Mat 15:14**), or even your life (**Isa 9:16**).

16. **Pro 1:16** - "For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood."

- A. As was noted in the comments on Pro 1:11, these wicked men are reprobates (**Pro 1:16 c/w Rom 3:15**).
 - i. Since the wicked have no understanding (**Rom 3:11**), it is vain to try to reason them out of their evil plans.
 - ii. This is why Solomon admonished his son to "walk not thou in the way with them" and "refrain thy foot from their path" in the previous verse (**Pro 1:15**).
 - iii. We should never attempt to walk with the wicked in hopes of convincing them to change (**Psa 1:1; Pro 22:24-25**).
 - iv. Those that would conspire to kill and plunder the innocent demonstrate that they have a heart of stone which is unable to be changed apart from the sovereign operation of God.
 - v. He that would try will not be blessed of God, will get a snare to his soul, and will be destroyed (**Pro 13:20**).
- B. *Their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.*

- i. O that all saints were as motivated to do righteousness as sinners are to do wickedness!
- ii. The Christian life is often referred to as a *walk*, but too often it would scarcely pass for a *crawl*.
- iii. The children of God are too often caught *sleeping* instead of *watching* (**Mar 14:37**).
- iv. Conversely, the children of this world "sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall" (**Pro 4:16**).
- v. The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light (**Luk 16:8**).
- vi. These sinners are diligent and deep thinkers, whose studiousness would put many Christians to shame (**Pro 24:2; Psa 64:5-6**).
- vii. Just as the sluggard should go to the ant and consider her ways, and be wise (**Pro 6:6**), so should the Christian take note of the ways of sinners and imitate their *diligence*, but not their *devices* (**Heb 12:1; 1Co 9:26; Psa 119:60**).

17. **Pro 1:17** - "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."

- A. It would be an exercise in futility to spread a net in the presence of one's prey.
 - i. This is why these sinners lay wait and lurk privily so as not to be seen (**Pro 1:11**).
 - ii. Privily *adj.* - 1. In a privy manner; not openly or publicly; secretly, privately; stealthily; craftily.
 - iii. They think that their net will not be perceived by their victims, nor even by God himself, seeing that "there is no fear of God before their eyes" (**Rom 3:18**).
- B. The psalmist described such sinners in the tenth psalm (**Psa 10:8-12**).
- C. These murderers surmise that they have their tracks covered, operating under a cloak of secrecy in their plans to ensnare the guiltless.
- D. But they fail to realize that there is a "bird" who watched them spread their net, and He will deliver them (**Psa 91:3-4**).
 - i. The Lord will judge these vile men with one of His signature judgments: catching the wicked in their own net (**Psa 9:15-16**).
 - ii. The diabolical plans of evil men may go unnoticed by the sheep, but the Good Shepherd always has His watchful eye on His flock (**2Ch 16:9**).
 - iii. Since "the eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (**Pro 15:3**), any net set for the righteous is indeed spread *in vain*.
 - iv. Vain - II. 5. In the advb. phrase *in vain*, to no effect or purpose; ineffectually, uselessly, vainly.

18. **Pro 1:18** - "And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives."

- A. The intent of these conspirators was to *lay wait* and *lurk privily* for the lives of *the innocent* (**Pro 1:11**).

- B. But because there is a God in heaven who pleads the cause of the oppressed (**Pro 22:22-23; Pro 23:10-11**), the lives that these monsters will end up destroying will be *their own*.
 - C. For this reason, we should not despair when we see evil men in high places oppressing the helpless.
 - D. Remember, the LORD, the righteous judge, beholds it and will not suffer it to continue forever, but will render to the wicked their due (**Ecc 5:8; Psa 37:35-40**).
 - E. Solomon could warn his son with confidence that the net that these men spread for the innocent would be "for their own lives," based on his father David's experience (**Psa 35:7-8; Psa 57:6**).
 - F. As was noted in the comments on the previous verse, punishing men using the instruments which they planned to harm others with is one of God's signature judgments (**Psa 7:15-16**).
 - G. Numerous times throughout history God has rendered recompense to the enemies of righteousness.
 - i. God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech and of the men of Shechem upon their own heads (**Jdg 9:56-57**).
 - ii. God had Haman hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai (**Est 7:10**).
 - iii. God had the men that accused Daniel cast into the den of lions that they had planned to use to execute him (**Dan 6:24**).
 - iv. God takes the wise in their own craftiness (**Job 5:13**).
 - H. Solomon enshrined these observations in his timeless proverbs, not only for his son, but for all of God's children throughout all ages (**Pro 11:5-6; Pro 26:27; Ecc 10:8**).
19. **Pro 1:19** - "So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof."
- A. Solomon sums up his exhortation to his son to not be enticed by sinners (v.10), who in order to fill their houses with precious substance (v.13) would murder the owners thereof (vv.11-12), by reiterating that their end will be the destruction they thought to inflict on their victims (v.18).
 - B. This is the lot of *everyone* which would commit such a heinous crime.
 - i. There are no exceptions to this rule.
 - ii. There is no getting away with such a wicked act (**Num 32:23**).
 - iii. The recompense may not come immediately, but it will come eventually to *everyone* who commits such egregious sins (**1Ti 5:24**).
 - iv. With promises such as these from Almighty God, a young man would be wise to "consent thou not" and "walk not thou in the way with them" (**Pro 1:10, 15**) lest he *surely* come into condemnation.
 - C. If ever enticed by sinners to murder the innocent in order to reap their spoil, every child of God should remember Solomon's warning and consider the account of the murder of Naboth the Jezreelite who fell prey to conspirators of the same ilk as these reprobates in Proverbs 1.
 - i. Naboth had a vineyard that bordered king Ahab's palace which Ahab wanted for himself to plant a garden in (**1Ki 21:1-2**).

- ii. Being a righteous man and not willing to give up his God-given inheritance, Naboth declined the king's offer of a better vineyard which caused Ahab to sulk (**1Ki 21:3-4**).
- iii. Ahab's wicked wife Jezebel, being far more innovative and aggressive than her husband, devised a plan in which Naboth would be set on high among the people, only to have two children of Belial bear false witness against him saying that he blasphemed God and the king, which they did before executing him by stoning (**1Ki 21:5-14**).
- iv. They also apparently killed his sons so that they could not inherit his land (**2Ki 9:26**).
- v. Having taken away the life of the owner thereof, Ahab took possession of the vineyard (**1Ki 21:15-16**).
- vi. It seemed for the time that Ahab and Jezebel had literally gotten away with murder, but they failed to realize that there is a God in heaven pleading the cause of the oppressed.
- vii. The LORD sent the prophet Elijah to give Ahab a sobering message to let him know that he and his wicked wife had laid wait and lurked privily *for their own lives* (**1Ki 21:19, 23-24**).
- viii. Ahab and Jezebel met their fate just as the LORD had promised (**1Ki 22:37-38; 2Ki 9:30-37**), confirming Solomon's warning: "So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof" (**Pro 1:19**).

20. **Pro 1:20** - "Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:"

- A. In verses 20-33, wisdom is personified as a woman.
 - i. She publicly cries out to men from every corner of life, calling unto them to hear her reproof, turn from their foolishness, and be spared from the self-inflicted destruction that awaits them.
 - ii. In chapter one, as well as in chapters eight and nine, wisdom is referred to in the feminine.
 - a. In the Hebrew language, which the book of proverbs was originally written in, every noun has a gender, either masculine or feminine.
 - b. Being feminine in the Hebrew, the translators translated *wisdom* as feminine in the King James Bible.
- B. As the proceeding verses shall show, *wisdom*, which cries out to men to repent and then later judges them by filling them with their own devices, is *the LORD*.
 - i. Jesus Christ, who is the LORD (**Joh 1:1-3, 14; Joh 8:58; 1Ti 3:16**), is "the wisdom of God" (**1Co 1:24**).
 - ii. In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (**Col 2:3**).
- C. The fact that God, who is masculine, is represented by wisdom, who is feminine, is not a contradiction.
 - i. Ships serve as a good example of things which are dominant in masculine characteristics, but are nevertheless referred to by feminine pronouns.
 - ii. Ships are designed, built, and operated predominately by men and often even bear male names such as the *USS George Washington*, *USS Abraham Lincoln*, and *USS Ronald Reagan*.

- iii. Yet they are referred to with the feminine pronouns *she* and *her*, which has been the case for thousands of years (**Act 27:15**).
- iv. A feminine pronoun is fitting for *wisdom* which is softer and more tender in character and demeanor than some of the other attributes of God such as *judgment*.
- v. In addition to His dreadful side, the LORD also has a merciful and compassionate element to Him (**Psa 103:13**).
- vi. Possessing such kindhearted characteristics, Jesus Christ, "who of God is made unto us wisdom" (**1Co 1:30**), is rightly symbolized in Proverbs by *wisdom* which is a feminine personification.

D. *Wisdom crieth without*.

- i. Cry v. - 1. To entreat, beg, beseech, implore, in a loud and emoved or excited voice
- ii. Without adv. - 1. On the outside or outer surface; externally
- iii. It is evident from this verse that God uses an *external* rather than an *internal* method of communicating His word to His people.
- iv. Wisdom utters her voice to her people *in the streets*, not telepathically *in their heads*.
 - a. At times throughout Biblical history God spoke inwardly and directly to a few select prophets, but not at all times, nor to all men.
 - b. He communicated His wisdom "unto the fathers by the prophets" (**Heb 1:1**) in the Old Testament.
 - c. In New Testament times He has spoken unto us by his Son (**Heb 1:2**) who is the wisdom of God.
 - d. If we will learn wisdom, we must step *without* ourselves and read the word of God.
 - e. We must also listen to it preached (**Tit 1:3**) which is a man *crying* out the word of God.
- v. Wisdom cries not in the *seminaries* or the *secret places*, but in *the streets*.
 - a. We don't have to go far to hear it if we will just open our ears.
 - b. Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke openly to the world and said nothing in secret (**Joh 18:20**).
 - (i) Jesus told His apostles that what they heard in the ear they were to preach upon the housetops (**Mat 10:27**).
 - (ii) This is why I post my sermons on the internet.
 - c. The problem today is not that wisdom hasn't cried in the streets.
 - d. The problem is that few will hear it and "truth is fallen in the street" (**Isa 59:14**).
 - e. The rest of this chapter will show what happens to those who reject wisdom's cry.

21. **Pro 1:21** - "She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,"

- A. Solomon here elaborates on the previous verse (**Pro 1:20**).
- B. Wisdom doesn't proclaim her message in empty roads or barren highways.
 - i. She rather does so in the busiest of streets, in the *chief place of concourse*.

- ii. Chief *adj.* - 1.b Of things: Highest in rank, capital, head
 - iii. Concourse *n.* - 1. a. The running or flocking together of people; the condition or state of being so gathered together.
 - iv. In other words, wisdom cries in the midst of the crowd in order to be heard by the greatest amount of people possible.
 - v. Therefore, no man can fault God for not informing him of His truth, for He "commandeth all men every where to repent" (**Act 17:30**).
 - vi. Not only does wisdom cry in the bustling boulevards, but in every corner of the earth and heavens (**Rom 1:20; Psa 19:1**).
 - vii. *All* have heard wisdom's cry (**Rom 10:18**).
- C. Wisdom also cries *in the opening of the gates and in the city*.
- i. The gates were the entry of a city (**Pro 8:3**).
 - ii. Cities in Solomon's day were walled with gates allowing access to them.
 - iii. Thus the gates were bottlenecks of entry where condensed crowds of people served as the most efficient place for wisdom to *utter her words*.
 - iv. The gate of a city was also the place where the elders of the land assembled and civil judgment occurred, a city hall of sorts (**Deu 22:15; Pro 31:23; Amo 5:12,15**).
 - a. If there is ever a place where the cry of wisdom is needed it is in the places of judgment.
 - b. Courts are often corrupt, which Solomon knew first hand and lamented (**Ecc 3:16**).
 - c. The scripture declares that "he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (**2Sa 23:3**).
 - d. But without godly wisdom there is no justice, for it is *by wisdom* that princes decree justice and rule (**Pro 8:15-16**).
 - v. Therefore, neither judges nor the judged will have standing to plead ignorance in God's court on judgment day, for wisdom cried unto them at every turn while they walked the streets of life.
 - vi. If a Christian today is looking for a place to preach the wisdom of God, he could do so the next time he is at the airport in the *concourse* at the *gates*.

22. **Pro 1:22** - "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?"

- A. Notice first of all that God here instructs men by questioning.
- i. This is the first question that appears in the book of Proverbs.
 - ii. Interestingly, it is a rhetorical question in which the answer is implied in the question.
 - iii. Teaching by asking questions which are formulated to prompt the student to come to the truth without it being expressly declared to him is known as the Socratic Method, named after the Greek philosopher Socrates who is known for teaching in such manner.
 - iv. In truth, it should be called the Divine Method since God was teaching by this means long before Socrates.

- v. The Lord began this technique of teaching in the garden of Eden after Adam and Eve sinned when He asked them some soul-searching questions (**Gen 3:9, 11, 13**).
 - a. These were the first questions God ever uttered in the history of the universe.
 - b. They were asked for the same purpose that God asked them to men in Proverbs chapter one: to expose their sin, cause them to acknowledge it, and bring them to repentance.
- B. These searching questions asked by *wisdom* were pronounced *in the chief place of concourse* (**Pro 1:21**).
 - i. This means that the majority of people fall under this censure.
 - ii. Simplicity, scorning, and hatred of truth are not isolated, but rather, are systemic problems in the human race.
 - iii. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child (**Pro 22:15**).
 - iv. For those who are not chosen of God, wisdom's words remain foolishness, but to those who are saved, they are the power of God (**1Co 1:18**).
 - v. Wisdom's cry of repentance is aimed at, and will only be heeded by, her children.
- C. *How long?*
 - i. This question implies that this deplorable condition has been ongoing for *a long time*.
 - ii. It also shows that it has been going on for *too long*.
 - iii. Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God (**1Co 1:24**), had to ask His disciples a similar question: "*how long shall I suffer you?*" (**Mat 17:17**).
 - iv. Thankfully, the Lord "*is longsuffering to us-ward*" (**2Pe 3:9**).
- D. *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?*
 - i. This rhetorical question reveals that simple ones *love* simplicity and suggests that they *should not*.
 - a. Simple *adj* - 9. Deficient in knowledge or learning; characterized by a certain lack of acuteness or quick apprehension: a. Of persons (and animals).
 - b. Simplicity *n.* - 2. a. Want of acuteness or sagacity; lack of ordinary knowledge or judgement; ignorance; rusticity. c. A simple person; a simpleton.
 - c. Ignorance is not a virtue but a vice.
 - d. Those who are more simple and ignorant than they should be, given the mind that God dealt to them, should not be proud of it, but rather ashamed.
 - ii. Most religions require the brain to be checked at the door.
 - a. "Once he does so, he has no further use for his reason. He enters the Church, an edifice illuminated by the superior light of revelation and faith. He can leave reason, like a lantern, at the door" (*Explanation of Catholic Morals*, p. 76)."
 - b. True Christianity, which is a religion of knowledge, is not so.

- iii. Every Christian should be ever growing in the knowledge of God throughout his life and should never be content to remain stagnant (**Pro 8:10; Pro 18:15; 2Pe 1:5; 2Pe 3:18**).
- E. *...and the scorers delight in their scorning...*?
 - i. The question implies that scorers do indeed *delight* in their scorning.
 - a. Scorner *n.* - 1. One who scorns, derides, mocks or contemns; esp. one who scoffs at religion
 - b. Scorn *v.* - 1. To speak or behave contemptuously; to use derisive language, jeer
 - c. Delight *v.* - 1. a. *trans.* To give great pleasure or enjoyment to; to please highly. 2. *intr.* (for *refl.*) To be highly pleased, take great pleasure, rejoice: a. *in* or *to do* (anything).
 - d. In other words, scorers take great pleasure in mocking, deriding, and speaking contemptuously of the wisdom of God.
 - ii. Unregenerate sinners love their sin which is why they will not believe and obey the gospel.
 - a. Jesus, the light of the world, came and preached to them, but "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (**Joh 3:19**).
 - b. When He told them the truth, "they laughed him *to scorn*" (**Mat 9:24**).
 - c. They later crucified Him, fulfilling the prophecy that they would laugh him *to scorn* (**Psa 22:7-8**).
 - iii. Scorers are not in good company.
 - iv. They better heed wisdom's call to cease delighting in their scorning before they meet the fate of their fellows.
- F. *...and fools hate knowledge?*
 - i. A foolish scorer hates to be reproved which is why he will not go unto the wise (**Pro 15:12**).
 - ii. If fools don't want to be dead fools, they must stop hating knowledge and start embracing it (**Hos 4:6**).
 - iii. Knowledge would preserve the fool (**Pro 2:10-11**) and deliver him (**Pro 11:9**).
 - iv. But he is too stupid (**Pro 12:1**) to recognize it and instead bites the proverbial hand that feeds him.
- G. Despite the simple's love of simplicity, the scorer's delight in scorning, and the fool's hatred of knowledge, wisdom nevertheless cries unto them to repent which brings us to the next verse.

23. **Pro 1:23** - "Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you."

A. *Turn you at my reproof.*

- i. Wisdom gives the antidote to simplicity, scorning, and ignorance: *turning* from foolishness.
- ii. As was noted in the previous verse, the fools to whom wisdom cries are headed for destruction.

- a. Just as a car driving toward a cliff, their only option to spare themselves devastation is to *turn*.
 - b. Turn v. - IV. To change or reverse course. 13. *trans*. To alter the course of; to cause to go another way; to divert, deflect.
 - c. Sin compounds the longer it's left unchecked (**Rom 6:19; Jer 9:3; Isa 30:1**).
 - d. The *longer* (**Pro 1:22**) they wait, the sharper the turn will have to be for disaster to be averted.
- iii. *Turning* is a synonym of *repentance* and *conversion*.
 - a. Convert v. - II. To turn or change in character, nature, form, or function. 8. a. *trans*. To turn in mind, feeling, or conduct; to bring into another state (of mind, etc.).
 - b. Repent v. - 1. *refl*. To affect (oneself) with contrition or regret for something done, etc. 3. *intr*. To feel contrition, compunction, sorrow or regret for something one has done or left undone; to change one's mind with regard to past action or conduct through dissatisfaction with it or its results.
 - c. Therefore, the call of wisdom to "turn" is the selfsame call of the gospel to "repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance" (**Act 26:20**).
- iv. Scripture warns us to "exhort one another daily, while it is called *To day*; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (**Heb 3:13**).
- v. More than once the Lord admonishes us of the urgent need to turn from our sins *now* (**Heb 3:7-8, 15; Heb 4:7; 2Co 6:2**).
 - a. God gives a space of repentance (**Rev 2:20-21**), but when the space is exceeded punishment follows (**Rev 2:22-23**).
 - b. God has a cup in which He measures our sin; and when it is full, judgment comes with a vengeance (**Gen 15:16**).
 - c. None of us know how full our cup is, so we better *make haste* and *delay not* to keep God's commandments (**Psa 119:60**).
- B. *I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*
 - i. Wisdom's message doesn't stop with a call to repentance.
 - ii. Attached to it is also a promise: *I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.*
 - iii. Here is how a man knows that he has been filled with God's Spirit: *when God's words are made known unto him.*
 - iv. We are filled with the Spirit when the word of Christ dwells in us richly (**Eph 5:18-19 c/w Col 3:16**).
 - v. When a wayward sinner hearkens to wisdom's cry and turns at her reproof, he will begin to be filled with God's Spirit and to understand the word of God.
 - vi. When that man does God's will to the extent that he knows it, the Lord will make him to understand His doctrine (**Joh 7:17**).
 - vii. The more of God's will he does, the more of it he will know, and on the process goes (**Pro 4:18**).

24. **Pro 1:24** - "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;"

A. *Because I have called, and ye refused.*

- i. Here we see that *man*, not *God*, bears culpability for his lack of wisdom.
- ii. No man can claim ignorance when he is punished for his sin and foolishness (**Act 17:30**).
- iii. The problem was not a lack of calling on wisdom's part.
 - a. As was noted previously, she called everywhere including "in the streets...in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates...in the city...in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths...at the coming in at the doors...[and] upon the highest places of the city" (**Pro 1:20-21; Pro 8:2-3; Pro 9:3**).
 - b. The blame rather lays solely on those who refused the cry of wisdom.
 - c. The fact that they *refused* indicates that they heard, considered, and decided to reject the call.
- iv. In refusing the call of wisdom, they also declined the blessing attached to it (**Pro 8:33-36**).
- v. When God calls, His children better answer or judgment awaits (**Isa 65:12; Isa 66:4**).
 - a. Parents should take heed to this sobering lesson of how God deals with His children.
 - b. When they call, the children better answer quickly or trouble should follow.
 - c. If the trouble that follows is simply *more calling* by the parents, they only demonstrate their weak and ineffective leadership and are setting their children up for failure and serious problems later in life.

B. *I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded.*

- i. Just as a man would extend his hand to pull a drowning person out of the water, so the LORD extends His hand to save His children from dying in their folly.
 - a. We commonly refer to trying to help someone get through a difficult situation as *reaching out to them*.
 - b. But oftentimes those to whom we reach out do not reach back.
 - c. Pastor Phil Jonker said it well: "you can't fix people that don't want to be fixed; you can't change people that don't want to change."
 - d. Those who have attempted in vain to help a wayward sinner get back on the strait and narrow should take comfort in the fact that God has met with the same frustration.
- ii. Those who don't embrace God's outstretched hand will be on the receiving end of His mighty fist (**Isa 5:25**).
- iii. This is the case with the fools to whom wisdom cries in the remainder of this chapter.

25. **Pro 1:25** - "But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:"

A. *But ye have set at nought all my counsel.*

- i. Fools not only refuse wisdom's call and disregard her outstretched hand (**Pro 1:24**), but they *set at nought* all her counsel.
 - a. Nought - 1. Nothing. 6. *to set at nought*: to despise, defy, scorn, disregard.
 - b. They didn't merely despise *some* of wisdom's admonition; they hated *all* of it.
 - c. These fools did to Wisdom personified what their progeny did to Wisdom incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ who is "the wisdom of God" (**1Co 1:24**), when they "set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe" (**Luk 23:11**).
 - ii. Men show themselves to be unwise when they refuse godly counsel, thinking that their way is right in their own eyes (**Pro 12:15**).
 - a. When wisdom's counsel is *set at nought* by fools, God *sets them at nought* by revoking His counsel from them and thereby causing their downfall (**Pro 11:14**).
 - b. When they reject the LORD's counsel their plans shall come *to nought* (**Isa 8:10**).
 - iii. Though men defy and disregard God's counsel, thinking that they know better, the counsel of the Almighty remains steadfast (**Pro 19:21; Isa 46:10**).
 - iv. Those that despise wisdom's words do so at their own peril and reject the counsel of God *against themselves* (**Luk 7:30**).
 - v. This fact will become evident as wisdom in the coming verses pronounces condemnation on all that set at nought her words.
- B. *...and would none of my reproof.*
- i. One reason that counsel is often rejected is that contained in the advice is *reproof* which is offensive to the carnal mind.
 - ii. Such was the case with the men who heard the cry of wisdom and *would none of her reproof*.
 - iii. *Would* is the past tense of *will*.
 - a. Would - pa. tense of *will* v.1
 - b. Will - 1. *trans.* with simple obj.: Desire, wish for, have a mind to, 'want' (something); sometimes implying also 'intend, purpose'.
 - c. Those who don't receive reproof do so because they do not desire or wish to have it.
 - iv. Reproof *n.* - 1. Shame, disgrace, ignominy or reproach, adhering or resulting to a person in consequence or by reason of some fact, event, conduct, etc. (Occas. with a and pl.) *Obs.* (went out of use in mid-1500s) 3. Censure, rebuke, reprimand, reprehension.
 - v. To be rebuked or reprimanded is never an enjoyable experience because it causes feelings of pain, uneasiness, embarrassment, and humiliation.
 - a. For this reason most people avoid both giving and receiving it.
 - b. When confronted by a brave reprover, a fool, rather than considering it and being thankful for it, will respond in anger and counteraccusation and despise the man who cared enough about him to tell him that he was wrong (**Pro 15:12**).

- c. Such a man thereby shows that he is nothing but a stupid fool (**Pro 12:1**).
- vi. If a man cannot receive reproof without becoming angry and lashing out, he will not get the reproof that he desperately needs.
- vii. This is because the wise will avoid correcting him to escape the abuse that will ensue (**Pro 9:7-8**).
- viii. A wise and godly man will not only receive reproof with an open ear, but he will love the man that had the courage to rebuke him and will thank God for it (**Psa 141:5**).
 - a. Such a man will grow in wisdom and character because those closest to him, including his pastor, will be willing to correct him when necessary.
 - b. Too often, pious sounding Christians outwardly welcome rebuke until it actually comes, at which time they show their true colors and respond like fools who *would none of wisdom's reproof*.
 - c. Those who do so have a difficult life ahead of them (**Pro 13:15**).

26. **Pro 1:26** - "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;"

- A. The punishment for repeatedly choosing to hate knowledge (**Pro 1:22**) and refuse reproof (**Pro 1:25**) is *calamity*.
 - i. Calamity *n.* - The state or condition of grievous affliction or adversity; deep distress, trouble, or misery, arising from some adverse circumstance or event.
 - ii. *Destruction* is the result of stubborn ignorance (**Hos 4:6**).
 - iii. The judgment for repeatedly rejecting wisdom is not a slap on the hand or a mild reprimand; but rather grievous affliction, deep distress, and misery.
 - iv. If this seems severe, remember that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (**Heb 10:31**).
 - v. If it seems far-fetched that such calamity could result from rejecting wisdom's counsel, then just ask the approximately one fourth of all young adults who are suffering the grievous affliction of sexually transmitted diseases because they rejected wisdom's ample warning to "flee fornication" (**1Co 6:18**).
- B. *I also will laugh at your calamity.*
 - i. God has a sense of humor, laughing at the calamity of fools who hate knowledge and despise reproof.
 - ii. Every instance of the LORD laughing in scripture is the laughter of *derision* (**Psa 2:2-4**).
 - iii. Derision *n.* - The action of deriding or laughing to scorn; ridicule, mockery.
 - iv. The Lord laughs at the wicked who plot against the just (**Psa 37:12-13; Psa 59:8**).
 - v. This may seem cruel of God to laugh at the anguish of sinners, even though they brought it upon themselves.
 - a. But recall that these fools *set at nought (to scorn)* God's counsel (**Pro 1:25**).

- b. In that they scorned Him, God simply responds in kind, "answer[ing] a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" (**Pro 26:5**).
- c. When *the wisdom of God* walked the earth and spoke the truth to men *they laughed him to scorn* (**Mat 9:24**).
- d. Turnabout is fair play: as Jesus said to the wicked, "woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep" (**Luk 6:25**).
- e. God will get the last laugh.

C. *I will mock when your fear cometh.*

- i. God will not only *laugh* at those who despise His words, but will also *mock* them.
- ii. Mock v. - To hold up to ridicule; to deride; to assail with scornful words or gestures.
- iii. Notice that the LORD said that He will mock *when*, not *if*, their fear comes.
- iv. The judgment that follows the rejection of God's reproof is not a *possibility* but a *promise*.
- v. Those who delight in scorning and mocking God's judgments will one day be suffering under severe adversity only to look up to God in the heavens who will be howling with laughter and shooting out His lip in ridicule of them.

27. **Pro 1:27** - "When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you."

- A. The LORD elaborates on the *calamity* (**Pro 1:26**) that will surely befall the foolish who despise His reproof.
- B. God expounds on the *fear* which would come upon them "as desolation."
 - i. Fear n. - 1. In OE.: A sudden and terrible event; peril. 2. a. The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil.
 - ii. Fear is debilitating and "hath torment" (**1Jo 4:18**).
 - a. Lions use the paralyzing effect of fear when they creep up on their prey and roar causing their victim to freeze up momentarily while they go in for the kill.
 - b. Satan uses fear to overcome his prey as a roaring lion walking about, seeking whom he may devour (**1Pe 5:8**).
 - iii. Those who refuse the reproof of God's words and reject His commandments have not the love of God in them (**Joh 5:42**) which casts out fear (**1Jo 4:18**).
- C. The consequence of defiance of God is *fear*: and not just any fear, but fear that cometh as *desolation* (**Pro 1:27**).
 - i. Desolation n. - 1. The action of laying waste a land, etc., destroying its people, crops, and buildings, and making it unfit for habitation; utter devastation; an act or occasion of this kind.
 - ii. The fear that will come upon foolish men who disregard and mock God's warnings will cause them utter *destruction* and *devastation*.
 - iii. Their destruction will come as a whirlwind (a tornado).
 - a. A tornado will wreck a man's house.

- b. Crippling fear will wreck a man's life.
 - c. Both will bring him *to nought*.
 - D. This tornadic fear, which the LORD promises will come upon rebels, will cause them *distress* and *anguish*.
 - i. Distress *n.* - I. †1. a. The action or fact of straining or pressing tightly, strain, stress, pressure; fig. pressure employed to produce action, constraint, compulsion; less usually, pressure applied to prevent action, restraint. 2. a. The sore pressure or strain of adversity, trouble, sickness, pain, or sorrow; anguish or affliction affecting the body, spirit, or community. b. with *a* and *pl.* A sore trouble, a misfortune or calamity that presses hard; esp. in *pl.* straits, distressing or strained circumstances.
 - ii. Anguish *n.* - 1. Excruciating or oppressive bodily pain or suffering, such as the sufferer writhes under.
 - iii. Notice again that it is not *if* fear, distress, and anguish come upon foolish sinners who reject God's word, but *when*.
 - E. This description of the fear, desolation, destruction, distress, and anguish that comes upon those who ignore God's word should make every man that fears God stop dead in his tracks, repent, and reverse course.
 - i. But fools will disregard (**Pro 14:16**) and suffer for it (**Psa 107:17**).
 - ii. They will eventually call upon Him, but not until it's too late as the next verse shows.
28. **Pro 1:28** - "Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:"
- A. Scoffers always think that judgment is a long way off (**2Pe 3:4**).
 - i. Therefore they *set at nought* wisdom's counsel and receive none of her reproof (**Pro 1:25**).
 - ii. After wisdom has cried tirelessly for a sufficient amount of time (**Pro 1:20-27**), she *stops crying*.
 - iii. This is evident by her change of pronouns from *ye* and *you* in verses 22-27 to *they* and *them* in verses 28-33.
 - iv. Beginning in verse 28, wisdom no longer *speaks to* the simple ones, but instead *talks about* them.
 - v. Once wisdom stops crying, the fools who turned a deaf ear and scorned at her words *start crying*.
 - vi. Unfortunately for them though, it's too late; wisdom's office hours are over and her door is shut.
 - B. God gives ample time for men to heed His warnings before judgment ensues.
 - i. But when a man's allotted time is up, it's up, and there is no turning back the clock.
 - ii. When distress and anguish comes upon them (**Pro 1:27**) they then decide that they want to listen to wisdom's cry, and they call upon her.
 - iii. But just as the men in Noah's day who likely beat upon the door of the ark when the flood waters rose, but received no answer, so the simple ones who ignored and scorned wisdom's counsel call upon her, but she will not answer.

- iv. They *seek her early* as soon as trouble arrives; but, as a train that has already left the station, they will not find her.
- C. The Lord's ears are open to the righteous, but when the righteous work wickedness and rebel against Him past their space of repentance (**Rev 2:21**) the Lord shuts His ears to their prayers and turns His face against them (**1Pe 3:12**).
 - i. Consider some examples.
 - a. The fornicator
 - (i) He was warned repeatedly by the LORD in His word to forsake his whoremongering (**1Co 6:18**) and to "remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house" (**Pro 5:8**).
 - (ii) He will call out to God when he contracts a sexually transmitted disease and beg for Him to take it away, but He will not answer.
 - (iii) How foolish and regretful will he feel in that day when he remembers God's admonitions through His word, his pastor, and his parents that he stupidly despised and took no heed to (**Pro 5:11-13**).
 - b. The sodomite that contracts AIDS.
 - c. The adulterer who loses his wife, children, church, and reputation.
 - d. The alcoholic who is diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver.
 - e. The drug addict whose brain is fried.
 - f. The smoker who gasps for breath while dying from emphysema.
 - g. The glutton who has his feet amputated because of self-inflicted diabetes.
 - h. The paraplegic teenager who insisted on driving recklessly.
 - i. The gambler who bets away his life savings.
 - j. The undisciplined spender who files for bankruptcy or dies in poverty because he didn't save money.
 - k. The lascivious man who is left impotent and unable to perform sexually due to his pornography addiction.
 - ii. Their cry will all be the same: "how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!" (**Pro 5:12-13**)
- D. When God repeatedly cries out to His children and receives in response indifference, mockery, and rebellion, He turns away His ear and will not answer their cries for relief when judgment begins (**2Ch 36:14-17; Mic 3:4; Jer 11:11-12, 14; Jer 14:11-12; Eze 8:18; Zec 7:8-14**).
- E. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (**Heb 10:31**).

29. **Pro 1:29** - "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:"

- A. The LORD reiterates the reason for His judgment of fools.
 - i. That God might be justified in His sayings, and overcome when he is judged (**Rom 3:4**), the LORD reminds the foolish why calamity has befallen them (**Pro 1:26-27**) and He has stopped calling and listening (**Pro 1:28**) and

started laughing (**Pro 1:26**): *because they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD.*

- ii. He had pled with them with a stretched out hand asking how long they would hate knowledge (**Pro 1:22**).
 - iii. They responded by continuing headstrong in their folly.
 - iv. They finally turned and called upon Him simply because anguish had taken them.
 - v. The LORD now gives an answer to their cries which can be summarized by "I told you so," by simply reiterating their sinful attitude which caused their judgment.
- B. In his affliction, man often forgets the foolish decisions which put him in that dreadful condition and complains to God about it (**Psa 19:3**).
- i. Instead of turning his attention inward and examining himself to search for possible causes of the judgment under which he suffers, too often a man instead turns his attention heavenward and blames God for letting it happen.
 - ii. The LORD has a good memory and is quick to remind him who is to blame.
- C. *They did not choose the fear of the LORD.*
- i. This is the underlying cause of these fools' hatred of knowledge.
 - ii. In that "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge" (**Pro 1:7**), it's no wonder that they hated knowledge, not having the requirement for it.
 - iii. The fear of the LORD is a *choice* for a child of God, not an inalienable attribute.
 - a. Reprobates do not have the spiritual capability to fear the LORD (**Rom 3:18**).
 - b. But such is not the case with the regenerate who have the ability to do so through the new birth.
 - c. The regenerate can nevertheless *choose* to not fear the LORD by not departing from evil (**Pro 16:6**).
 - d. But with choice comes culpability; those who do not choose the fear of the LORD inevitably choose the desolation which will invariably result.

30. **Pro 1:30** - "They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof."

- A. The LORD continues His explanation of why judgment has come on the fools to whom He gave ample opportunity to turn from their folly and hearken to His call of repentance.
- i. The reason destruction came is the same reason that God had previously given: they would none of wisdom's counsel and they despised all her reproof (**Pro 1:25 c/w Pro 1:30**).
 - ii. God shows Himself wise and heads off any objection that might be raised against Him by reminding the foolish that they were made aware of the consequences of their sin long before calamity befell them and are therefore without excuse.
- B. By comparing verse 25 with verse 30, we see that the simple ones both *despised* and *rejected* the LORD's counsel and reproof.

- i. Recall from the notes on verse 25 that to *set at nought* means *to despise*, and *would* means *to desire or want*.
 - ii. In the former verse they despised wisdom's counsel and desired not her reproof; in the latter they despised her reproof and wanted none of her counsel.
 - iii. It is fitting that wisdom's words were *despised* and *rejected* given that the embodiment of wisdom, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom is hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (**Col 2:3**), was "*despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*" (**Isa 53:3**).
 - iv. Whereas natural men despise and reject the wisdom of God (both the concept and the Person), Wisdom's obedient children neither despise nor reject the Lord Jesus Christ, nor His ministers which proclaim Him and His wisdom (**Gal 4:14**).
 - C. There is a direct correlation between not receiving God's words and rejecting God Himself.
 - i. God regards His word above even His very name (**Psa 138:2**).
 - ii. Therefore, when a man rejects the counsel and reproof of the LORD's word, he rejects God Himself (**Psa 81:11**).
 - D. The same is true of men who reject God's word when declared by a prophet of old or a preacher today.
 - i. Those that despise the rebuke of the word of God despise not the man who preaches it, but the God who bid him to do so (**1Th 4:7-8; Luk 10:16**).
 - ii. Those who despise the reproof and counsel of the word of God when it is declared to them best beware.
 - iii. They are treading the same path as the fools in Proverbs 1.
 - iv. They will meet the same fate as they did by eating of the fruit of their own way, being filled with their own devices, and ultimately being destroyed thereby (**Pro 1:31-32**).
 - v. "Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die" (**Pro 15:10**).
31. **Pro 1:31** - "Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices."
- A. God first *pronounced the judgment* that those who reject wisdom's counsel and despise her reproof will be judged severely with calamity, fear, desolation, destruction, distress, and anguish (**Pro 1:26-27**).
 - B. Now He explains *how* and *by what means* the judgment will be executed: *by letting the fools suffer under the weight of their own foolish ways*.
 - i. This world operates under numerous immutable laws such as gravity and other laws of physics which are unforgiving and cannot be overruled.
 - a. If a man swings from a rope that is not strong enough to counterbalance the force of gravity, the rope will break and the man will suffer the consequences of his foolish decision.
 - b. When a child disobeys his parents' instruction forbidding him to touch the stove and gets burned, he suffers the just desert of his rebellion.

- c. These are called natural consequences, and they are one of God's methods of punishing sinners.
 - ii. Consider some natural consequences of sinful, foolish, or unwise decisions and actions:
 - a. AIDS and other STDs are the judgment for sodomy, fornication, and adultery.
 - b. Cirrhosis of the liver is the judgment for alcoholism.
 - c. Poverty is the judgment for undisciplined spending and going into debt.
 - d. Obesity is the judgment for gluttony and undisciplined eating.
 - e. Emphysema and lung cancer are the judgment for smoking cigarettes.
 - f. Divorce is the judgment for unfaithfulness, selfishness, unkindness, not spending enough time at home, not appreciating one's spouse, etc.
 - g. Losing one's children is the judgment for not training them up in the way they should go and not giving them the time and attention they need.
 - h. Being fired is the judgment for being lazy, late, disrespectful, etc. on the job.
 - iii. While there is not always a direct cause and effect relationship between the things just mentioned, oftentimes there is, and a wise man will consider his ways.
- C. Making sinners eat the fruit of their own ways and be filled with their own devices is one of God's signature judgments.
 - i. Using the wickedness, lust, or backsliding of men or nations as the means of correction is poetic justice on the LORD's part.
 - ii. One of the worst forms of punishment God inflicts upon His children is to let them have things their way.
 - iii. "There are two kinds of people: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, 'All right, then, have it your way.'" (C.S. Lewis)
 - iv. The scripture is full of warnings regarding this often used method of judgment by God (**Pro 14:14; Psalms 94:23; Jeremiah 2:19; Jeremiah 6:19; Jeremiah 14:16; Psalms 81:11**).
- D. Oftentimes, men assume that God's judgment is the precursor of it.
 - i. Christians often say that God will judge our nation for things such as sodomy, fornication, abortion, broken families, debt, and wicked leaders.
 - ii. What they fail to realize is that all these things *are the judgment of God*.
 - iii. **Rom 1:18-32** declares that God gave men up to fornication, sodomy, wickedness, being without natural affection, and all manner of evil because they rejected the knowledge of God.
 - iv. These things are not *the cause* of God's judgment; they *are His judgment*.
- E. A man will reap what he sows.
 - i. If a farmer sows the seeds of briars and thistles, he will in time reap briars and thistles.

- ii. A child who fails to observe his father's warning and sows weeds expecting to reap vegetables will learn a very difficult lesson at the time of harvest.
 - iii. The same principle applies to God's dealings with His children.
 - iv. When He warns them against making foolish decisions and they stubbornly refuse, they will be made to reap what they sow (**Job 4:8; Pro 22:8; Gal 6:7**).
- F. The Almighty will often give rebels the very thing that they so obstinately desire against all good counsel as a judgment against them.
 - i. He did this with Israel when they clamored for flesh to eat after He had already given them manna from heaven to meet their needs.
 - ii. It was flesh they wanted, and it was flesh they got; and they got it in such abundance that they loathed it (**Num 11:18-20**).
 - iii. In addition to the judgment of the overabundance of flesh, the LORD added affliction on top of it (**Psa 106:14-15; Psa 78:29-31**).
- G. Sometimes, God takes a more active role in judging sinners for their foolish rejection of His call to repentance and wisdom by sending them a strong delusion to cause them to believe a lie because they refused to receive the truth (**Isa 66:4; 2Th 2:10-12**).
- H. The story of the false prophet Balaam is a good example of God's dealings with headstrong fools who are determined to do whatever they desire regardless of what the God has said.
 - i. Balaam was greedy of gain and "loved the wages of unrighteousness" (**2Pe 2:15**).
 - ii. He desired to go with Balak the king of Moab in order to curse Israel and be financially rewarded (**Num 22**).
 - iii. After receiving the offer, Balaam went to the LORD hoping to get God's rubber-stamp on His plans.
 - iv. But wisdom cried and said, "thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed" (**Num 22:12**).
 - v. After relaying the LORD's message to Balak and receiving a better offer, Balaam rejected the counsel of God and returned to the LORD hoping that He had changed His mind (**Num 22:13-19**).
 - a. The LORD had already cried unto Balaam to turn at His reproof (**Pro 1:23**).
 - b. Balaam would none of it and despised it (**Pro 1:24-25**).
 - c. The LORD then answered the fool according to His folly (**Pro 26:5**), and made Balaam eat of the fruit of His own ways and be filled with his own devices (**Pro 1:31**).
 - d. He told him what he wanted to hear, saying, "if the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do" (**Num 22:20**).
 - e. This was the opposite of what the LORD had told Balaam previously, which would have spared him trouble.
 - f. But because Balaam would have none of God's counsel, the LORD gave him what he wanted as a judgment against him and then opposed him as His enemy (**Num 22:22**).

- g. After several failed attempts to follow his own lust in disobedience to God, Balaam ended up dying for his iniquity by being slain with the sword (**Num 31:8**).
- h. Balaam was a victim of his own devices, as will be all fools who disregard wisdom's cry and are given over to their own way as a judgment against them, for "the turning away of the simple shall slay them" (**Pro 1:32**).

32. **Pro 1:32** - "For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them."

A. *The turning away of the simple shall slay them.*

- i. Wisdom had cried to the simple exhorting them to "turn you at my reproof" (**Pro 1:23**).
- ii. But instead of heeding God's command to "turn away your faces from all your abominations" (**Eze 14:6**), they instead turned away their ears from the truth (**2Ti 4:4**).
- iii. The keeping of God's commandments adds years to a man's life (**Pro 3:1-2**).
- iv. Turning away from them shortens it (**Pro 10:27**).
 - a. The LORD warned Israel that turning away their heart from Him would indeed slay them, and therefore admonished them to choose life (**Deu 30:17-19**).
 - b. King Amaziah learned this lesson the hard way (**2Ch 25:27**).
- v. Christians face the same fate when they turn away from God who speaks from heaven through the scripture (**Heb 12:25**).
- vi. Too many parents can attest to the truth of God's pronouncement that the turning away of the simple shall slay them.
- vii. Some have mourned over children who would none of wisdom's reproof and turned away from the LORD, only to be slain by drugs, alcohol, STDs, reckless driving, gang violence, or suicide.
- viii. While fools turn away from God, inviting His wrath, contrarily, "wise men turn away wrath" (**Pro 29:8**) by repenting at wisdom's reproof.
- ix. Want to avoid this judgment? Follow Job's example: "neither have I *gone back* from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (**Job 23:12**).

B. *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*

- i. Prosperity *n.* - The condition of being prosperous, successful, or thriving; good fortune, success, well-being.
- ii. Prosperity in itself is not necessarily sinful or harmful.
 - a. It's true that the wicked are often prosperous (**Psa 73:3-5**).
 - b. But God also gives prosperity and success to the righteous who meditate in His word (**Jos 1:8**) and to those who humbly seek wisdom as did Solomon (**1Ki 10:7**).
- iii. Though prosperity can be a blessing, it will try the righteous at least as much as poverty, if not more so (**Pro 30:8-9**).
- iv. Affluence will destroy children of God faster than poverty will (**Deu 8:11-20**).

- v. It takes a very wise and strong man to be able to handle wealth and success **(Pro 11:16)**.
- vi. Excessive wealth is often too much for a weak man to handle without blowing it like a drunken sailor or allowing it to make him puffed up with pride.
 - a. Most men can identify with the Psalmist at one point or another in their lives when he said, "in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved" **(Psa 30:6)**.
 - b. Being made proud by wealth is a bigger failure than being made poor by it.
- vii. For the average dolt, winning the lottery or receiving a large inheritance is a curse rather than a blessing.
 - a. Stories abound of fools winning millions of dollars in the lottery, only to end up more broke in a few years than they were before they bought the ticket **(Pro 13:11; Pro 20:21)**.
 - b. Most men will respond to this assertion with denial, thinking that such would not be the case with them; they would know how to manage money and hold on to it: it would not change them, they surmise.
 - c. Let such a man ask himself these questions.
 - (i) Do I spend more when I make more?
 - (ii) Do I save money no matter what my income?
 - (iii) Do I save more now than I did five, ten, or twenty years ago when I made less, or do I save the same now as I did then and spend the extra?
 - (iv) When I get a raise, do I save the extra after giving the LORD His share, or do I adjust my standard of living to meet my new higher salary?
 - (v) Has my standard of living risen proportionally to my income over time?
 - d. A man's answers to these questions will be a good indicator of whether or not prosperity would destroy him and whether winning the lottery or inheriting a large sum of money would be a curse to him.
 - e. If a man spends more when he makes more, saves the same now as he did years ago when he made far less, and adjusts his standard of living to match his salary as it increases; he can assume with reasonable certainty that, because he spends every extra dime he makes, a significant increase in wealth and prosperity would be of no real benefit to him and would likely be a curse that would destroy him.
 - f. Such a man should thank God for not materially prospering him, because for God to do so would be his destruction.

33. **Pro 1:33** - "But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."
- A. The LORD concludes His rebuke and warning of the simple who would not hear with a word of encouragement to those who will.
 - i. These last words of wisdom's discourse were not addressed to the prating fools that fell, but to the wise in heart who will receive commandments (**Pro 10:8**).
 - ii. The simple ones, who themselves are not hardhearted, ear-stopping fools, will consider the dire judgment of their peers and will be instructed and admonished thereby (**Pro 19:25; Pro 21:11**).
 - B. *But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely.*
 - i. Safety is one of the most cherished human needs.
 - a. An unsafe place or situation breeds fear which is tormenting (**1Jo 4:18**).
 - b. Safely *adv.* - Without harm or injury occasioned or received.
 - c. This most valuable and sought after commodity of safety is obtained, not by purchasing a gun or a home security system, but simply by hearkening unto wisdom's cry.
 - d. If a Christian struggles with fear and feelings of insecurity, the antidote to that torment is to "keep sound wisdom and discretion" by reading the word of God and trusting in Him which will allow him to walk through this world safely and without fear (**Pro 3:21-26**).
 - ii. God's promise of dwelling safely isn't a guarantee that trouble will never come.
 - a. Trouble will come (**Joh 16:33**).
 - b. But the LORD will bring us through the trouble as He did for Israel when He brought them out of the land of Egypt and "led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies" (**Psa 78:53**).
 - iii. In addition to living in safety, one of the deepest desires of a Christian is (or at least should be) to "lead a *quiet* and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (**1Ti 2:2**).
 - a. Quiet *n.* - II. 3. Free from disturbance, molestation, or annoyance; not interfered or meddled with; left in peace. a. of a state, condition, procedure, etc. Phr. *anything for a quiet life*:
 - b. The one simple step necessary for reaching this goal of a quiet life, free from disturbance and full of peace, is the same that ensured safe dwelling: *hearkening unto wisdom*.
 - c. Christians should read the scriptures and "study to be quiet" (**1Th 4:11**).
 - d. When they do so they will learn how to live righteously by keeping the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ which will result in peace and quietness (**Isa 32:17-18**).
 - e. Harkening unto the encouragement, instruction, and rebuke of God's word gives safety, peace, and quietness; and "when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" (**Job 34:29**).

IV. Chapter 2

1. **Pro 2:1** - "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;"
 - A. Proverbs 2 begins with a formula to follow to get understanding and find the knowledge and wisdom of God (**Pro 2:1-6**).
 - B. *My son, if...*
 - i. These three words, tell us that whatever comes next is *conditional*.
 - ii. Solomon would have made an excellent computer programmer, having shown his mastery of the *if-then statement* by adeptly using a complex tri-conditional statement:
 - a. ...*if* thou wilt receive my words... (**v.1**)
 - b. ...*if* thou criest after knowledge... (**v. 3**)
 - c. ...*if* thou seekest her as silver... (**v. 4**)
 - d. ...*then* shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. (**v.5**)
 - iii. The conditional *if* statements reveal that the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of God are available only to those who meet God's criteria.
 - iv. *If* the conditions are met, *then* the promised wisdom is given.
 - v. *If not*, it is withheld.
 - vi. Now that we know the formula to get the knowledge and wisdom of God, we have no one to blame but ourselves if we don't get it.
 - C. *If thou wilt receive my words...*
 - i. The first condition given to obtain the knowledge of God is to *receive* God's words.
 - ii. Receive v. - To take in one's hand, or into one's possession (something held out or offered by another); to take delivery of a thing from another, either for oneself or for a third party.
 - iii. Though the words written to his son are said to be Solomon's words, they are also *God's words* written to His sons since the book of Proverbs is scripture which was written under the inspiration of God (**2Pe 1:21**).
 - a. God offers His knowledge and wisdom to all of His children, which is implied by the fact that they are entreated to *receive* His words.
 - b. God's words are only held out to His regenerate children who have the ability to receive them in faith, not to the natural man who "*receiveth not* the things of the Spirit of God" (**1Co 2:14**).
 - iv. The first step in finding the knowledge of God is *receiving* His word.
 - a. But in order to be of any value, the word of God must not simply be accepted into one's hand "as the word of men."
 - b. It must rather be received into one's heart, "as it is in truth, the word of God" (**1Th 2:13**) with all readiness of mind (**Act 17:11**).
 - D. ...*and hide my commandments with thee*.
 - i. We can't stop after having initially *received* the word of God; we must *hide* it in our hearts.
 - ii. This means memorizing Bible verses.
 - a. You can do this intentionally by picking a verse and repeating it many times for days in a row.

- b. You can also do this by reading the Bible often and by listening to sermons often which will cause the verses to be etched in your memory over time.
 - iii. If the word is not *hidden* within us then Satan can snatch it away (**Mar 4:15**).
 - iv. The Bible can be confiscated by wicked men, but the scriptures can never be wrested from a Christian who has them hidden, not in his house, but in his heart.
 - v. Having the word of God hidden in the heart is not only the means of finding the wisdom of God, but is also the best way for a believer to keep himself from sin (**Psa 119:11; Job 22:22-23**).
- 2. **Pro 2:2** - "So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;"
 - A. The first condition which must be fulfilled to find the knowledge of God is comprised of two steps.
 - i. The first step is to receive the words of God and hide them in his heart (**Pro 2:1**).
 - ii. God's words must be received and hidden within *so that* we can take the next step which is to incline our ears unto wisdom and apply our hearts to understanding (**Pro 2:2**).
 - iii. So adv. - V. 23. *so that* (also *so alone*), denoting result or logical consequence; also sometimes = 'in order that'.
 - iv. A man therefore cannot *incline* his ear unto wisdom until he has first *received* God's words with that ear.
 - v. He cannot *apply* his heart to understanding until he first has *hidden* those words in his heart upon their reception.
 - B. Wisdom - 1. a. Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends; sometimes, less strictly, sound sense, esp. in practical affairs: opp. to *folly*.
 - i. A man's judgment is only as good as his information.
 - ii. To judge rightly in matters of life, a man must of necessity first have truth in his mind.
 - iii. In that the word of God is truth (**Joh 17:17**), a man must have knowledge of the scriptures before he is able to exercise sound judgment.
 - iv. Hence the reason that receiving God's *word* (**Pro 2:1**) must precede receiving His *wisdom* (**Pro 2:2**).
 - C. *So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom...*
 - i. Incline v. - 1. Bend or bow (the head, the body, oneself) towards a person or thing, and hence forward or downward; b. To bend or turn *one's ear(s)* towards a speaker, to give ear, listen favourably, attend (*to*).
 - ii. The Lord exhorts His children numerous times to *incline* their ear unto Him (**Jos 24:23; Pro 4:20; Pro 5:1; Pro 22:17**).
 - a. How many Christians incline their ear unto a talebearer who whispers secrets about another, being all too eager to hear the gossip, but make little effort to incline their ear unto God's wisdom?

- b. How many Christians incline their ear to the television, talk radio, or YouTube for hours per day with perfect attentiveness, but doze off during an hour long sermon expounding the wisdom of God?
 - iii. Acquiring wisdom requires effort.
 - a. When a man is interested in what another has to say and desires to fully comprehend it, he will get close to the speaker, turn his head to ensure clear hearing, lean toward the man, and focus his mind on what is being said.
 - b. The same level of exertion is required to learn the wisdom of God.
 - c. Wisdom has to be *attended* unto (to direct the ears, mind, energies to anything) (**Pro 5:1**).
 - d. To incline his ear unto wisdom, a man must figuratively bow down toward the holy scriptures which come directly from the mouth of God (**Pro 2:6**).
 - e. In NT times, God "hath manifested his word through preaching" (**Tit 1:3**) by way of pastors who "speak the wisdom God" (**1Co 2:7**) from the scriptures.
 - f. If a man truly desires wisdom, he will expend energy to focus his mind when listening to sermons in order to hear with comprehension what is being taught, while figuratively, and sometimes literally, *inclining* his ear unto wisdom.
- D. *And apply thine heart to understanding*
 - i. The ear must be inclined to wisdom, and the heart must be *applied* to understanding.
 - a. Apply *v.* - II. To bring oneself into close practical contact with a pursuit. 13. To give or devote (any faculty) assiduously *to* some pursuit, or *to do* something.
 - b. Every instance of the word *apply* in the Bible is used in reference to the heart, such as the following (**Psa 90:12; Pro 22:17; Pro 23:12**).
 - c. To find the knowledge of God and to attain unto wisdom, the heart must be brought into close contact and devoted (*applied*) to the pursuit of *understanding*.
 - d. Understanding *n.* - Power or ability to understand; intellect, intelligence.
 - e. The heart is the seat of the emotions, which is what too many Christians exclusively use it for.
 - f. But it is also where the intellect resides, for man is said to understand with his heart (**1Ki 3:12; Job 38:36; Mat 13:15**).
 - ii. The heart is to be applied to *understanding*, not *emotion*.
 - a. Therefore, for a man to truly "find the knowledge of God" (**Pro 2:5**), he must use his *intellect*, not his *feelings* (**Pro 15:14; Pro 14:33**).
 - b. Most religion which passes for Christianity focuses on *emotion* rather than *faith* and *reason*.
 - c. Remove the music programs from today's "churches," which only stir the emotions of the goats, but provide no food for the sheep, and those organizations would soon go out of business.

- d. Matthew Henry said it well commenting on Dan 3:1-7: "Note, That way that sense directs the most will go; there is nothing so bad which the careless world will not be drawn to by a concert of music, or driven to by a fiery furnace. And by such methods as these false worship has been set up and maintained."
 - e. If a Christian desires to truly know God, he must stop seeking an emotional experience and start *applying his heart to understanding*.
- 3. **Pro 2:3** - "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;"
 - A. This verse sets forth the second condition, which itself contains two requirements that must be met to find the knowledge of God (**Pro 2:5**).
 - B. *If thou criest after knowledge*.
 - i. After *receiving* God's words and *hiding* them in our hearts (**Pro 2:1**), and *inclining* our ear unto wisdom and *applying* our heart to understanding (**Pro 2:2**), the next step is to *cry* after knowledge.
 - ii. Knowledge *n.* - The fact of knowing a thing, state, etc., or (in general sense) a person; acquaintance; familiarity gained by experience.
 - iii. We are not to cry after the knowledge of earthly things such as science, literature, the arts, or politics, but rather "the knowledge of God" (**Pro 2:5**).
 - a. The apostle Paul had a lot of earthly knowledge prior to his conversion.
 - b. He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel (**Act 22:3**), one of the most prestigious teachers in Israel (**Act 5:34**).
 - c. He was therefore a highly educated and accomplished man (**Php 3:4-6**).
 - d. But Paul considered his renowned education to be "but dung" and "but loss" that he might have "the excellency of *the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*", for which he "suffered the loss of all things" (**Phi 3:8**), only desiring "that I may *know him*" (**Phi 3:10**).
 - iv. The knowledge of God is not innate in man.
 - v. Nor is it given to those who exert little effort to get it.
 - vi. It's only given to those who *cry after it*.
 - a. Cry *v.* - To entreat, beg, beseech, implore, in a loud and emoved or excited voice.
 - b. Therefore, if a man desires the knowledge and wisdom of God, he must *ask* for it.
 - c. But simply asking will not suffice.
 - d. If his request is to be granted, he must beg, beseech, and implore the LORD, not in a lukewarm, lackadaisical tone, but in a loud and impassioned voice.
 - e. God "is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (**Heb 11:6**), not those who halfheartedly do so.
 - f. Jesus said, "ask, and it shall be given" (**Mat 7:7**).
 - g. But, as we compare scripture, we find that the appeals that are guaranteed to be granted are those that are made with *importunity*, not just a simple inquiry (**Luk 11:5-9**).

- h. Importunity - 4. Troublesome pertinacity in solicitation. 1526 Tindale Luke xi. 8 Because of hys importunate he woll ryse and geve hym as many as he nedeth.
 - i. God will give His elect the knowledge they desire if they cry day and night unto Him for it (**Luk 18:1-5**).
 - vii. God wants to see that His children sincerely desire to know His truth before He grants it to them.
 - a. The LORD is longsuffering toward His elect and will never chastise them for repeatedly pleading with Him for knowledge and wisdom.
 - b. Rather than upbraid them for their ignorance, He will instead give wisdom liberally to those who ask in faith, nothing wavering (**Jam 1:5-7**).
 - c. Upbraid v. - 2. To reproach, reprove, censure (a person, etc.).
 - d. Liberally adv. - 2. Bountifully, freely, generously.
 - C. *And liftest up thy voice for understanding.*
 - i. *Understanding* is the faculty of the intellect, the power or ability to understand a thing.
 - ii. To have the knowledge of God without the power to apprehend the meaning of it is of little value.
 - iii. Just as the knowledge of God has to be cried for, so too understanding is promised to those who *lift up their voice for it*.
 - iv. Many young men have received the understanding they earnestly desired after they lifted up their voice in prayer to God, begging Him for it, no matter the cost.
 - v. I am one such man.
 - vi. Such are following in the footsteps of the godly psalmist who cried to God for understanding of His word (**Psa 119:34, 73, 125, 169**).
4. **Pro 2:4** - "If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;"
- A. The third and final condition necessary to find the knowledge of God (**Pro 2:5-6**) is also comprised of two elements: *seeking* and *searching* (**Pro 2:4**).
 - B. We must first *ask* (**Pro 2:3**), and then *seek*, before *finding* the knowledge of God (**Mat 7:7-8**).
 - C. *If thou seekest her.*
 - i. Asking is *necessary*, but not *sufficient*, for finding God's knowledge and wisdom.
 - ii. We must prove that our desire for the truth is genuine by *seeking* it.
 - iii. Seek v. - 1. a. To go in search or quest of; to try to find, look for (either a particular object—person, thing, or place—whose whereabouts are unknown, or an indefinite object suitable for a particular purpose).
 - a. *Asking* involves *desire*, but *seeking* requires *effort*.
 - b. *Asking* is relatively *easy*, but *seeking* is *difficult*.
 - c. Because of *apathy*, few men *ask* for knowledge and wisdom.
 - d. Because of *laziness*, even fewer yet will *seek* for it.
 - iv. The fact that the knowledge of God must be sought for implies that God conceals it from men in general.
 - v. He does so by hiding it in plain sight: for wisdom cries from every corner of life (**Pro 1:20-21; Pro 8:1-3**).

D. *If thou seekest her as silver.*

- i. Here we see the intensity that understanding, knowledge, and wisdom are to be sought after.
- ii. Mining for gold and silver is not for the slothful, but for the industrious.
 - a. For millennia men have compassed land and sea, enduring hardship and deprivation, with the hopes of finding precious metals.
 - b. They often forsook family and career for the chance of finding a fortune they deemed worth it.
 - c. Rarely is silver found lying on the surface of the earth, but is nearly always discovered buried deep within it, requiring extreme effort and risk to extract it.
 - d. As it is for him who seeks silver, so it is for the man that seeks the knowledge of God: it will cost him dearly, sometimes including even his family, friends, time, reputation, career, and lifestyle.
 - e. The knowledge and wisdom of God are far more valuable than gold or silver, and are therefore worth exerting more time and effort to find and acquire than them (**Pro 3:13-15; Pro 8:10-11, 19; Pro 16:16**).
- iii. While the act of seeking is difficult, finding the place to search is not.
 - a. We must look no further than the word of God (**Pro 2:6**).
 - b. We must "*search* the scriptures" (**Joh 5:39; Act 17:11**).
 - c. God's law (where His knowledge is found) is more precious than gold and silver (**Psa 19:7-10; Psa 119:72, 127**).

E. *And searchest for her as for hid treasures.*

- i. If a Christian is to find the knowledge of God, it will be by searching for it with the same ambition as he would when looking for a sunken ship full of precious cargo or treasures that ancestors had buried on the family farm.
- ii. To find material treasures, a man might have difficulty ascertaining where to begin looking.
- iii. But to find true treasure, he only need look as far as Jesus Christ, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (**Col 2:3**).
- iv. To know the truth of God, we must read and study the word of God (**Joh 8:31-32**).
- v. By doing so, we can lay up "*treasures* in heaven" (**Mat 6:20**).
- vi. Finding the treasure of the knowledge of God is worth selling all that a man has to buy them (**Mat 13:44-46**).
- vii. It is worth giving up whatever one has to obtain that treasure (**Mar 10:28-30**).

5. **Pro 2:5** - "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God."

A. In the first four verses of this chapter, Solomon gave eight specific requirements necessary for finding the knowledge of God (**Pro 2:1-4**).

- i. The LORD stressed the conditional nature of acquiring this knowledge by repeating the word *if* three times.

- ii. Thus there are three general prerequisites required to obtain of the knowledge of God.
 - a. *if thou wilt* (**Pro 2:1**): He must be willing to have it.
 - b. *if thou criest* (**Pro 2:3**): He must ask for it earnestly.
 - c. *if thou seekest* (**Pro 2:4**): He must search for it diligently.
 - iii. If all these prerequisites are fulfilled, then, and only then, will we understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God (**Pro 2:5**).
 - B. The man who desires, asks, and seeks in the manner prescribed *shall* find the knowledge of God (**Jam 1:5-7**).
 - i. The LORD didn't say that such a man *might*, *could*, or *will possibly* find the knowledge of God, but that he *shall* find it.
 - ii. This means that the person who has not found the knowledge of God has not earnestly desired it, asked for it, and sought for it.
 - iii. The reason that most people (including many that profess to be Christians) never find the truth is solely owing to the fact that they don't want it badly enough and are not willing to exert the effort required, and forsake whatever is necessary, to attain it.
 - iv. Therefore, the man who claims that he sincerely wants to find and understand the truth and is willing to do whatever is necessary to obtain it, but never finds it, is a liar; for God has said that it *shall be given* to such a man.
 - C. *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD.*
 - i. Though the knowledge of God is the primary object of the seeker of truth (**Pro 2:3**), it is first necessary to understand "the fear of the LORD [which] is the beginning of knowledge" (**Pro 1:7**).
 - ii. The fear of the LORD is not only an emotion, but is also a concept that can be understood when it is taught to a man with the spiritual capacity to receive it (**Psa 34:9-11**).
 - iii. There is no fear of God before the eyes of natural men who are spiritually dead in their sins (**Rom 3:18**).
 - iv. But for the righteous, the fear of the LORD...
 - a. is a fountain of life (**Pro 14:27**)
 - b. can be chosen (**Pro 1:29**)
 - c. is the beginning of wisdom (**Pro 9:10**)
 - d. is the instruction of wisdom (**Pro 15:33**)
 - e. teaches them to hate evil (**Pro 8:13**)
 - f. teaches them to depart from evil (**Pro 16:6**)
 - v. Thus, when a man truly desires the knowledge of God, the Almighty first makes him to understand the fear of the LORD which enables him to clean up his heart in preparation for seeking and finding the truth.
 - D. *And find the knowledge of God.*
 - i. Once a man understands the fear of the LORD his eyes are then opened to find the knowledge of God.
 - ii. The knowledge of God's truth is the key which opens the door to a rich Christian life, and should therefore be highly preferred by every believer.

- iii. God desires that His people know Him more than for them to offer to Him sacrifices (**Hos 6:6**).
 - a. The LORD judged His people Israel "because there [was] no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land" (**Hos 4:1**).
 - b. God has not changed (**Mal 3:6; Heb 13:8**).
 - c. He still chastens His people in the New Testament for their ignorance of His truth (**1Co 15:34**).
 - iv. The knowledge of God is deep and rich, unsearchable and past finding out, which is why a Christian's pursuit of it should never end (**Rom 11:33**).
 - v. We should count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord (**Php 3:8**).
 - a. We should devote our lives to "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against *the knowledge of God*, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (**2Co 10:5**).
 - b. We should pray that we and our brethren would increase in the knowledge of God (**Col 1:10**).
 - c. We should cry after knowledge and lift up our voice for understanding, esteeming the knowledge of God's truth more highly than any earthly pursuit.
 - d. When they do, grace and peace shall be multiplied unto us through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord (**2Pe 1:2**).
- 6. **Pro 2:6** - "For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."
 - A. In **Pro 2:1-5**, the Lord revealed the *method* of obtaining the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of God.
 - B. In **Pro 2:6** the LORD reveals the *source* of them.
 - i. It's necessary for us to diligently desire, ask, and seek for knowledge, but it's not within our power to produce it ourselves by mental effort.
 - ii. It's rather the gift of God, "for *the LORD giveth wisdom*: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (**Pro 2:6**).
 - C. *The LORD giveth wisdom*.
 - i. *Wisdom* is the ability to judge rightly in matters of life and conduct.
 - ii. It is the LORD alone who gives wisdom because He is the sole source of it in the universe (**Rom 16:27; 1Ti 1:17; Jud 1:25**).
 - a. "Wisdom and might are his" (**Dan 2:20**) and "he is mighty...in wisdom" (**Job 36:5**).
 - b. The depth of God's wisdom and knowledge are unsearchable (**Rom 11:33**).
 - c. But even though He has an infinite supply, God doesn't give wisdom to all men indiscriminately, but rather He gives it to men that are good in his sight (**Ecc 2:26**).
 - iii. The LORD *gives* wisdom, not merely *makes it available* to those who earnestly seek it.

- a. Give *v.* - General sense: To make another the recipient of (something that is in the possession, or at the disposal, of the subject). I. *trans.* To bestow gratuitously. 1. a. To hand over (a thing) as a present; to confer gratuitously the ownership of (some possession) on another person.
 - b. God not only gives wisdom to those who sincerely ask for it in faith, but He gives it to them *liberally* (**Jam 1:5**).
 - c. Liberally *adv.* - 2. Bountifully, freely, generously. b. Without stint; abundantly, amply, plentifully.
 - d. This is what God did to Solomon when he asked for wisdom (**1Ki 3:9-12; 1Ki 4:29**).
 - iv. God not only gives wisdom to older people, but to younger people too who seek after it.
 - a. The older generation are usually endowed with wisdom, but such is not always the case (**Job 32:7-9**).
 - b. Sometimes older people still make foolish decisions.
 - c. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, *if it be found in the way of righteousness*" (**Pro 16:31**).
 - d. A wise child is better than an old fool (**Ecc 4:13**).
 - e. A young child that believes, studies, and submits his life to the scriptures will receive more wisdom from God than those who are many years elder than he who do not (**Psa 119:97-100**).
 - f. The Lord Jesus Christ at a mere twelve years of age was "filled with wisdom" (**Luk 2:40**) and "increased in wisdom" (**Luk 2:52**) as He matured.
- D. *The LORD giveth wisdom . . . knowledge and understanding.*
- i. Along with wisdom, the LORD also gives *knowledge* and *understanding* to those who zealously seek after it.
 - ii. *Knowledge* is "the fact of knowing a thing" (OED).
 - iii. To *know* is to "have cognizance of something, through observation, inquiry, or information; to be aware or apprised of; to become cognizant of, learn through information or inquiry, ascertain, find out" (OED).
 - iv. To learn information through observation and inquiry requires that a man first possess *understanding* which is the "power or ability to understand; intellect, intelligence" (OED).
 - a. To acquire facts without using the intellect to connect them logically so as to properly understand their relationship with each other is of little value.
 - b. One can know the individual meanings of a group of words, but until those words are ordered in a purposeful way via the intellect to convey a thought representative of reality, true knowledge is not attained.
 - c. Thus, the LORD gives a man understanding in order to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge; and once knowledge is obtained, He gives wisdom which enables the man to use his understanding to apply his

knowledge to a particular situation, judge rightly what is the proper course of action, and choose the best means of accomplishing it.

E. *Out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

- i. Now we find out *how* God gives wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to the seeker of truth.
- ii. Wisdom is not conferred not telepathically or miraculously.
- iii. God gives them by speaking them to us from His mouth.
 - a. But it doesn't come to us audibly, the claims of deluded charismatic "Christians" and madmen notwithstanding.
 - b. The LORD does so by speaking through His prophets and apostles who were holy men of God that spoke and wrote His words as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (**Heb 1:1-2; 2Pe 1:21; 2Sa 23:2; Jer 36:1-2**).
- iv. After inspiring His prophets and apostles to write down His words in the scriptures (**2Ti 3:16**), the LORD then ordained pastors to preach His word to His people and feed them with knowledge and understanding (**Jer 3:15; Tit 1:3**).
- v. Christians in turn must do as the noble Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (**Act 17:11**).
- vi. The written word of God is the wisdom and understanding of every child of God who reads and believes it (**Deu 4:5-6**).
- vii. If a Christian desires to "get wisdom [and] get understanding," he must not "decline from the words of [God's] mouth" (**Pro 4:5**), but instead read the scriptures, which are, as it were, God speaking directly into his ear, imparting wisdom to him and enabling him to make wise decisions and "cleanse his way . . . by taking heed thereto according to [His] word" (**Psa 119:9**).

7. **Pro 2:7** - "He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly."

A. The LORD has a depository of wisdom from which He dispenses to the diligent who ask and seek for it.

- i. Lay v. - 60. *lay up*. c. To deposit or put away in a place for safety; to store up (goods, provisions); to put by.
- ii. Even with infinite resources at His disposal, the LORD is nevertheless a saver, laying up wisdom for the time to come.
 - a. As a good leader, God leads by example in teaching His children the importance and necessity of saving, a principle that is taught throughout the Bible.
 - b. "There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up." (**Pro 21:20**)
 - c. It's prudent to under-consume to put away physical wealth for the future; how much more so is it incumbent upon a Christian to "lay up for [himself] treasures in heaven" (**Mat 6:20**).

- iii. The LORD repeatedly admonishes His people to follow His lead and lay up spiritual treasures, not in their houses, but in their hearts.
 - a. **Deu 11:18** - "Therefore shall ye *lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul*, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes."
 - b. **Job 22:22** - "Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and *lay up his words in thine heart*."
 - c. **Pro 7:1** - "My son, keep my words, and *lay up my commandments with thee*."
 - d. **Pro 10:14** - *Wise men lay up knowledge*: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.
 - e. **Pro 23:23** - *Buy the truth, and sell it not*; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.
- B. *He layeth up sound wisdom*
 - i. The wisdom that God lays up for us is not "the wisdom of this world" (**1Co 1:20**), nor the "the wisdom of men" (**1Co 2:5**), but rather *sound* wisdom.
 - ii. Sound *adj.* - II. 8. a. In full accordance with fact, reason, or good sense; founded on true or well-established grounds; free from error, fallacy, or logical defect; good, strong, valid.
 - iii. Sound wisdom is *the truth* which conforms to reality and is in agreement with fact and reason.
 - a. Truth *n.* - II. 5. a. Conformity with fact; agreement with reality; accuracy, correctness, verity (of statement or thought).
 - b. Sound wisdom (truth) is found in the word of God which is truth:
 - (i) "Thy word is true from the beginning..." (**Psa 119:160**)
 - (ii) "...all thy commandments are truth" (**Psa 119:151**)
 - (iii) "thy word is truth" (**Joh 17:17**)
 - c. It is reliable and cannot be gainsaid.
 - d. It therefore can be trusted unreservedly: "blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust" (**Psa 40:4**).
- C. *He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous*
 - i. God doesn't cast His pearls before swine (**Mat 7:6**).
 - ii. He only lays up sound wisdom for *the righteous*.
 - iii. Righteous *adj.* - 1. a. Of persons: Just, upright, virtuous; guiltless, sinless; conforming to the standard of the divine or the moral law; acting rightly or justly.
 - iv. God is only concerned with the righteous (**Psa 34:15**).
- D. *He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly*.
 - i. Uprightly *adv.* - 1. In a just or upright manner; with strict observance of justice, honesty, or rectitude; sincerely, justly.
 - ii. Buckler *n.* - 1. A small round shield
 - iii. In other words, God is the protector and defender of the righteous.
 - iv. He accomplishes this by two means: *directly* and *indirectly*.
 - a. God *directly*, through His sovereign control of all things, hedges His children about, keeping the devil and the evil of this world from them (**Psa 5:12; Psa 91:4-10**).

- b. He also *indirectly* safeguards His obedient children by giving them wisdom through His word which enables them to make wise decisions to avoid the snares and traps of the wicked (**Pro 2:10-12, 16**).

8. **Pro 2:8** - "He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints."

A. *He keepeth the paths of judgment*

- i. Keep v. - II. Transitive uses (in early use also intr.). * To have regard, pay attention to, observe. 9. To have regard, to care, to reck 14. To guard, defend, protect, preserve, save.
- ii. Given the context of God being a *buckler* (a means of defense; a protector) (**Pro 2:7**) who *preserves* the way of His saints (**Pro 2:8**), to *keep* is accordingly defined as "to guard, defend, protect, preserve, save."
- iii. Thus, the LORD guards, defends, and protects the paths of judgment.
- iv. In that the paths that the LORD keeps are paths of *judgment*, it is apparent that these are figurative paths which are "course[s] of action or procedure, line[s] of conduct, way[s] of behaviour."
- v. There are many such metaphorical paths on which a Christian should walk, such as:
 - a. "the path of life" (**Psa 16:11**)
 - b. "the path of the just" (**Pro 4:18**)
 - c. "the paths of righteousness" (**Psa 23:3**)
 - d. "the paths of uprightness" (**Pro 2:13**)
 - e. All these paths are "right paths" (**Pro 4:11**), being "the paths of the LORD" (**Psa 25:10**).
- vi. Seeing that "narrow is the way which leadeth unto life" (**Mat 7:14**), every Christian ought to pray to God to "shew me *thy ways*, O LORD; teach me *thy paths*" (**Psa 25:4**), and "make me to go in *the path of thy commandments*" (**Psa 119:35**).
- vii. There are also other "froward...paths" (**Pro 2:15**) which a follower of Christ must definitely avoid such as:
 - a. "the path of the wicked" (**Pro 4:14**)
 - b. the paths of strange women which "inclineth...unto the dead" (**Pro 2:18**)
 - c. We must definitely avoid those types of paths (**Pro 1:15**).

B. *The paths of judgment*

- i. Judgment n. - 1. a. The action of trying a cause in a court of justice; trial. 8. a. The faculty of judging; ability to form an opinion; that function of the mind whereby it arrives at a notion of anything; the critical faculty; discernment. b. Good or sound judgement; discernment, discretion, wisdom, understanding, good sense.
- ii. In the context of *wisdom* (Pro 2:6,7,10), *understanding* (Pro 2:6,11), and *discretion* (Pro 2:11), *judgment* refers to sense #8 above.
 - a. Therefore, the *path of judgment* is a course of action and conduct that is characterized by using the faculties of wisdom and discernment to

make sound decisions to arrive at correct opinions while navigating oneself through life.

- iii. Because man's judgment is often lacking and feeble, God protects and guards his path, "lead[ing] [him]...in the midst of the paths of judgment" (**Pro 8:20**), keeping him from deviating too far either to the left or the right so that he "enter[s] not into the path of the wicked, and go[es] not in the way of evil men" (**Pro 4:14**).

C. *And preserveth the way of His saints.*

- i. Saint *n.* - B. n. A holy person. 1. One of the blessed dead in Heaven. 3. a. In biblical use, one of God's chosen people; in the New Testament, one of the elect under the New Covenant; a member of the Christian church; a Christian.
 - a. The dictionary's definition is in accord with the scripture which also defines a saint as one of God's faithful elect who is a member of a Christian church (**Rom 1:6-7 c/w Rom 8:28-30; 1Co 1:2**).
 - b. A *saint* is NOT some dead guy that idolatrous fools pray to in disobedience to God.
- ii. Preserve *v.* - 1. *trans.* To keep safe from harm or injury; to keep in safety, save, take care of, guard.
- iii. The LORD takes care of His saints, both eternally and temporally, keeping them safe from harm or injury (**Joh 10:28**).
 - a. **Psa 37:28** - For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.
 - b. **Psa 31:23** - O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.
 - c. **Psa 97:10** - Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.
 - d. **Psa 145:20** - The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.
 - e. **2Ti 4:18** - And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.
 - f. **Jud 1:1** - Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:
- iv. Not only does the LORD preserve His saints, but He also *preserves their way*.
 - a. He does so *directly* by divine intervention (**Psa 121:8**).
 - b. He also does so *indirectly* by teaching them wisdom from the scriptures which enables them to make wise decisions that keep them from evil and its consequences (**Pro 4:5-6; Pro 16:17**).

- 9. **Pro 2:9** - "Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path."

A. Introduction

- i. Proverbs 2 began with the LORD giving conditions (desiring, asking, and seeking) which must be met to find the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of God (**Pro 2:1-4**).
 - ii. Upon their fulfillment, the LORD gives the desired reward through His revealed word (**Pro 2:5-6**).
 - iii. Along with these blessings, the LORD also protects and preserves both His saints and their way (**Pro 2:7-8**).
 - iv. The culmination of the process of asking and seeking on the part of the believer, and giving and protecting on the part of God, is the ability of His saints to understand righteousness, judgment, equity, and every good path (**Pro 2:9**).
- B. *Then shalt thou understand righteousness.*
- i. The word *then* shows that getting knowledge and wisdom is a prerequisite to understanding righteousness, for the possession of them precedes it (**Pro 2:6-9**).
 - ii. Righteousness *n.* - Justice, uprightness, rectitude; conformity of life to the requirements of the divine or moral law; virtue, integrity.
 - iii. For a man to be righteous, he must conform his life to the requirements of God's law.
 - iv. But in order to do so, he must first *understand* the law of God which is "the word of righteousness" (**Heb 5:13**).
 - v. Thus, the aim of obtaining the knowledge and wisdom of God is to understand both what godly living is and how to attain unto it.
 - vi. Knowledge is therefore not the end of the Christian life, but the means of it; for, "knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth" (**1Co 8:1**).
- C. *Then shalt thou understand...judgment.*
- i. The next godly attribute that the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom facilitates is *judgment*.
 - ii. As was noted in the comments on the previous verse, *judgment* is the ability to use the faculties of wisdom and discernment to make sound decisions to arrive at correct opinions while navigating the course of life.
 - iii. The most effective way to *understand judgment* is to study God's perfect example of it found in His word (**Psa 119:160; Psa 147:19**).
- D. *Then shalt thou understand...equity.*
- i. The next attribute that will be understood as a result of finding the knowledge of God is *equity*.
 - ii. Equity *n.* - The quality of being equal or fair; fairness, impartiality; evenhanded dealing.
 - iii. Having understood righteousness and judgment, which are inward and personal virtues, the knowledge of God next leads a man to understand *equity*, which, when properly understood, affects not only himself, but also his dealings with his neighbor.
- E. The word order in Pro 2:9
- i. The word order in Pro 2:9 is in keeping with the two great commandments of the law.

- a. The first and greatest commandment embodies righteousness (conforming one's life to the divine law): "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (**Mat 22:37**).
 - b. The love of God is shown by keeping His commandments (**Joh 14:15**), which is righteousness by definition.
 - c. The second great commandment encompasses equity (evenhanded dealing with one's fellow man): "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (**Mat 22:39**).
 - d. Loving one's neighbor as oneself is accomplished by treating him how one desires to be treated, or, in other words, *fairly*.
- ii. Proverbs 2:9 also follows the pattern set forth by the apostle James: "But the wisdom that is from above is *first pure, then peaceable*, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, *without partiality*, and without hypocrisy" (**Jam 3:17**).
- iii. When a man receives God's wisdom, which is *first pure, then peaceable and without partiality*, he consequently first comes to understand *righteousness* and then *equity* (**Pro 2:9**).
- iv. It is fitting that the seeker of truth will come to understand righteousness, judgment, and equity in that order, for this is the order in which God operates.
 - a. **Psa 98:9** - Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with *righteousness* shall he *judge* the world, and the people with *equity*.
 - b. **Isa 11:4** - But with *righteousness* shall he *judge* the poor, and reprove with *equity* for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
- F. *Then shalt thou understand...every good path.*
 - i. The understanding granted to the diligent seeker of truth doesn't end at righteousness, judgment, and equity.
 - ii. It includes the comprehension of *every good path*.
 - iii. There is no honorable course that a Christian can walk for which the word of God will not prepare him by imparting to him the understanding necessary for a prosperous journey thereupon.

10. **Pro 2:10** - "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;"

- A. In the first nine verses of Proverbs 2, Solomon gave the conditions for acquiring understanding, knowledge, and wisdom from God.
- B. In the rest of the chapter, Solomon gives some of the practical benefits of possessing wisdom, most notably its temporal saving and preserving qualities.
 - i. There are many benefits to getting wisdom, but a Christian's primary motivation for obtaining it should not be the temporal advantages it affords, but rather its intrinsic virtue.

- ii. The LORD first instructs His children to "get wisdom, get understanding" (**Pro 4:5**) before He reveals the earthly gain it provides: "she shall preserve thee...and she shall keep thee" (**Pro 4:6**).
- iii. We should desire wisdom, first and foremost, for the sake of having it because it "is the principal (first or highest in rank or importance - OED) thing" (**Pro 4:7**), not merely because "she shall promote thee [and]...bring thee to honour [and]...give to thine head an ornament of grace [and] a crown of glory" (**Pro 4:8-9**).

C. *When wisdom entereth into thine heart.*

- i. This statement indirectly reveals that the natural state of man's heart is one that is devoid of wisdom.
- ii. If wisdom is promised to enter into our hearts, then that means it does not currently reside there.
- iii. Wisdom isn't found innately in a man from his youth, but rather "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child" (**Pro 22:15**).
- iv. That foolishness must be driven out with the rod of correction before wisdom has a hope of replacing it.
- v. By nature, "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (**Jer 17:9**), "is little worth" (**Pro 10:20**), and is full of evil (**Mar 7:21-23**).
- vi. God must remove our old stony heart and give us a new heart so that we have the ability and desire to receive wisdom (**Eze 36:26-28**).

D. *And knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.*

- i. Knowledge is not appealing to those who don't have a heart prepared to receive it.
- ii. Rather than embracing it, "fools hate knowledge" (**Pro 1:22**) and "despise wisdom and instruction" (**Pro 1:7**).
- iii. When the heart has been prepared by God through regeneration to receive His word, instead of being irritating, knowledge becomes *pleasant*.
 - a. Pleasant *adj.* - Having the quality of giving pleasure; originally synonymous with *pleasing*, but now used more vaguely: Agreeable to the mind, feelings, or senses; such as one likes.
 - b. To the child of God with a renewed heart, the knowledge of God gives pleasure unto his soul which is the very essence of his being.
 - c. While knowledge is pleasing to his inward man, at times it is not so to his flesh, for "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (**Ecc 1:18**).
- iv. Though the truth may be hard to receive, and often will cost a man dearly, it will free his spirit from the bondage of lies which enslave him (**Joh 8:31-32**).

11. **Pro 2:11** - "Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:"

A. *Discretion shall preserve thee*

- i. When wisdom enters into the heart, one of its effects is the cultivation of *discretion*.
 - a. Discretion *n.* - II. [Cf. discreet.] 6. Ability to discern or distinguish what is right, befitting, or advisable, esp. as regards one's own

- conduct or action; the quality of being discreet; discernment; prudence, sagacity, circumspection, sound judgement.
- b. Discretion *preserves* us.
 - c. Preserve v. - 1. *trans.* To keep safe from harm or injury; to keep in safety, save, take care of, guard.
 - d. Therefore, having the ability to discern what is right with regards to our conduct will save us from much trouble, hardship, and harm in life.
- ii. Consider the following examples of people whose discretion preserved them.
- a. 3000 Jews on the day of Pentecost *saved themselves from their untoward generation (Act 2:40)*, when they *foresaw the evil and hid themselves (Pro 27:12)* by obeying the Lord and being baptized (**Act 2:41**).
 - b. The wise men who came to worship the young child Jesus were told to report His location to Herod (**Mat 2:8**), but wisdom entered their heart through a dream and *their discretion preserved them* as they departed into their country another way (**Mat 2:12**).
 - c. When Paul was made aware that the governor of the city of Damascus sought to apprehend him, *discretion preserved him* when he used sound judgment to escape during the night by being let down by the wall through a window in a basket (**2Co 11:32-33**).
 - d. During Israel's sojourning in the land of Egypt the Hebrew midwives were given an ungodly order from the king to kill all of the baby boys that were born to the Jews (**Exo 1:15-16**).
 - (i) They disobeyed and "saved the men children alive" (**Exo 1:17**), making up a story to cover for themselves (**Exo 1:19**).
 - (ii) Discretion not only saved them (**Exo 1:20-21**), but also the lives of many innocent children.
 - e. When Joshua sent spies into Jericho to bring back an intelligence report on the city, they lodged in the house of Rahab the harlot.
 - (i) When the king sent men to her home looking for the men of Israel, Rahab's discretion preserved both her and them.
 - (ii) She hid them on the roof and wisely and righteously lied to the officials, saying they went out another way (**Jos 2:3-6**).
 - (iii) Discretion preserved both her and them.
 - f. When Nehemiah was leading the effort to rebuild Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity, his enemies who opposed the rebuilding project sought to lure him into a meeting by deceit in order to bring down both him and those he led.
 - (i) Through the wisdom given him by God, Nehemiah sagely perceived their duplicity, recognizing that "they thought to do me mischief" (**Neh 6:2**).
 - (ii) He prudently declined their offer to meet four times (**Neh 6:3-4**).
 - (iii) Discretion preserved him and the great work which he oversaw.

- iii. As in all these examples, Christians should be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (**Mat 10:16**), applying the principles taught by God in the scripture, "walk[ing] circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise" (**Eph 5:15**), and using their God-given discretion to save themselves and those around them.

B. *Understanding shall keep thee.*

- i. Keep v. - II. Transitive uses (in early use also intr.). * To have regard, pay attention to, observe. 9. To have regard, to care, to reckon 14. To guard, defend, protect, preserve, save.
- ii. Receiving the word of God, which has been grafted into the heart by God in regeneration, is the means by which a child of God can *save*, or *keep*, his soul *temporally* (**Jam 1:21**).
- iii. God first "worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (**Php 2:13**) when He spiritually implants a new heart in a man and writes His law in it (**Heb 8:10**).
- iv. Once a child of God has a new heart with the law of God engraved upon it, the written word of God when read or heard can then be received into that heart, fitting into the sockets prepared for it by the LORD.
- v. That word, when received and put into practice (**Jam 1:21-22**) by way of the understanding imparted by God (**Pro 2:6-10**), will *preserve* and *keep* the obedient Christian from living a life displeasing to God.
- vi. *Understanding*, which is acquired through studying the word of God, when gotten and not forsaken, will keep a believer from error, lies, and foolish decisions.
- vii. When God's commandments are *kept* by His children, God will in turn "keep [them] from evil" (**2Th 3:3**) and "keep [them] from falling" (**Jud 1:24**).
- viii. He does this by giving them understanding which enables them to act wisely and avoid foolish decisions and actions that would be their destruction (**Pro 4:5-6; Pro 6:20-22**).

12. **Pro 2:12** - "To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;"

A. *To deliver thee from the way of the evil man*

- i. Solomon now gives us a specific example of the preserving influence that wisdom will have on us (**Pro 2:10-11**).
- ii. Discretion will *deliver* us from the way of the evil man.
 - a. Deliver v. - I. 1. *trans.* To set free, liberate, release, rescue, save. b. Now esp. To set free from restraint, imminent danger, annoyance, trouble, or evil generally.
 - b. *Deliver* is a synonym of *save* (**Act 2:21 c/w Joel 2:32**).
 - c. Thus wisdom and discretion will save an obedient Christian from the manner of the wicked.
 - d. The salvation under consideration is obviously not eternal salvation, but rather temporal salvation from the way of the evil man.

B. *The way of the evil man*

- i. The man who seeks and finds wisdom is promised to be saved from the way of the *evil* man.
- ii. Evil *adj.* - A. *adj.* The antithesis of good in all its principal senses. 1. Morally depraved, bad, wicked, vicious.
- iii. We should pray to be delivered from such men (**Psa 140:1; 2Th 3:1-2; Mat 6:13**).
- iv. An evil man "seeketh only rebellion" (**Pro 17:11**).
- v. In his transgression "there is a snare" (**Pro 29:6**) which will catch the unsuspecting.
- vi. A Christian must stay far from such a man to avoid the judgment that will befall him when "a cruel messenger shall be sent against him" (**Pro 17:11**), and his "candle...shall be put out" (**Pro 24:20**).

C. *From the man that speaketh froward things*

- i. Evil men are not always easily recognized as such.
- ii. So Solomon here gives one of their defining characteristics: they speak *froward* things.
- iii. Froward *adj.* - 1. Disposed to go counter to what is demanded or what is reasonable; perverse, difficult to deal with, hard to please; refractory, ungovernable; also, in a wider sense, bad, evilly-disposed, 'naughty'. (The opposite of toward.) 2. Of things: a. Adverse, unfavourable, untoward; difficult to deal with, refractory.
- iv. Jesus taught that the wicked heart of an evil man will be made manifest by what comes out of his mouth (**Luk 6:45**).
- v. Pay close attention to a man's words, and he will tell you who he is; and when he does, believe him -- and then avoid him (**Pro 4:14**).

13. **Pro 2:13** - "Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;"

A. In this verse and the following two, we are given a vivid description of evil men.

B. *Who leave the paths of uprightness*

- i. Notice first of all that evil men *leave* the paths of uprightness.
- ii. The fact that they *leave* the upright paths means that *they were once walking them*.
- iii. Uprightness *n.* - The state or condition of being sincere, honest, or just; equity or justness in respect of principle or practice; upright quality or conduct; moral integrity or rectitude.
- iv. As was noted in Proverbs 2:8, *paths* are courses of action or procedure, lines of conduct, ways of behavior.
 - a. Putting it together then, *paths of uprightness* are courses of action and behavior in life that are honest, just, and characterized by moral integrity.
 - b. These paths direct a man to the strait gate and narrow way "which leadeth unto life" that few find (**Mat 7:13-14**).
 - c. Men that walk such paths are good men, or at least appear to be while they tread them.
- v. Men who leave the paths of uprightness are either:
 - a. 1) Righteous men who backslide into sin and veer off of the path, or

- b. 2) Wicked men who never had a right to walk them in the first place, but only did so for a time to obtain some personal gain.
 - c. The Bible speaks of both types of men, warning Christians to take heed to not become the former, and to be careful to avoid the latter.
 - vi. Scripture gives many sobering examples of regenerate children of God who turned from the way of righteousness, such as:
 - a. Solomon
 - (i) God gave Solomon "wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore" (**1Ki 4:29**).
 - (ii) Yet when Solomon was old "his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God" (**1Ki 11:4**).
 - b. Israel
 - (i) God delivered Israel out of Egypt and they "by faith...passed through the Red sea as by dry land" (**Heb 11:29**).
 - (ii) Yet they died in the wilderness because of their sin, rebellion, and unbelief (**1Co 10:5-10; Heb 3:17-19**).
 - c. Examples like these should make us all be not highminded lest we also fall (**Rom 11:20; 1Co 10:12; Pro 16:18**).
 - vii. Scripture also gives examples of wicked men who will for a time company with the saints on the paths of uprightness in an effort to infiltrate the church to destroy it, or to hide their sin under the cloak of religion.
 - a. The Pharisees, who were of their father the devil (**Joh 8:44**), crept into churches as "false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out [their] liberty which [they] [had] in Christ Jesus, that they might bring [them] into bondage" (**Gal 2:4**).
 - b. Jude warned of "certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (**Jud 1:4**).
 - c. These wolves in sheep's clothing (**Mat 7:15**) will for a while appear to be walking the paths of uprightness, being "ministers of righteousness" (**2Co 11:15**), and will "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (**Rom 16:18**).
 - viii. The Bible teaches us how to avoid both types of men.
 - a. Whether the man is an unregenerate reprobate who crept into the church to lead others astray, or whether he is a child of God fallen into sin and gone out of the way, wisdom given by God through His word will deliver us from him (**Pro 2:10-13**).
 - b. Wisdom teaches us to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (**1Jo 4:1**).
 - c. Wisdom tells us to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (**1Th 5:21**).

- d. We must do so by measuring every man's words by the scripture to see what manner of man he is (**Isa 8:20**).
 - e. The key to not being led away by the wicked is continuing to grow in the knowledge of Christ (**2Pe 3:17-18**).
- C. *To walk in the ways of darkness*
- i. There is no middle ground: a man is either on the narrow way that leads to life or the broad way that leads to destruction (**Mat 7:13-14**).
 - a. Those who leave the paths of uprightness don't depart them to wander the roads of spiritual neutrality, but they rather do so to *walk in the ways of darkness*.
 - b. To *walk in darkness* is to follow the devil who is the prince of "the darkness of this world" (**Eph 6:12**).
 - c. If a Christian is to avoid walking in the ways of darkness, he must follow close behind the Lord Jesus Christ (**Joh 8:12; Joh 12:46**).
 - ii. Christians must reprove and avoid those who walk in the ways of darkness, not maintain fellowship with them.
 - a. Evil communications corrupt good manners (**1Co 15:33**).
 - b. We must cast off the works of darkness (**Rom 13:12; Eph 5:8**).
 - c. We must not be unequally yoked with sinners who walk in darkness (**2Co 6:14; Eph 5:11**).

14. **Pro 2:14** - "Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked;"

A. *Who rejoice to do evil*

- i. This is another characteristic of evil men who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness (**Pro 2:12-13**).
- ii. Godly men do not enjoy doing evil.
 - a. Instead, they "rejoice in the LORD" (**Psa 33:1**) and "rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil" (**Psa 119:162**).
 - b. But, because the flesh lusts against the spirit, they cannot always do the things that they would (**Gal 5:17; Rom 7:15, 19**), and at times they do evil against their godly desire to do good.
- iii. Evil men have no such inner struggle.
- iv. They don't weep and lament over sin, but rather *rejoice* in it.
- v. Rejoice *v.* - 1. *trans.* To enjoy by possessing; to have full possession and use of (a thing). *Obs.* 2. To gladden, make joyful, exhilarate (a person, his spirits, etc.).
- vi. To do evil brings gladness and joy to the wicked.
 - a. "Fools make a mock at sin" (**Pro 14:9**) instead of mourning for it.
 - b. Folly is joy to them that are destitute of wisdom (**Pro 15:21**).
 - c. Doing evil is their preferred pastime (**Pro 10:23**).
 - (i) Sport *n.* - 1. a. Pleasant pastime; entertainment or amusement; recreation, diversion.
 - (ii) Mischief *n.* - 1. a. Evil plight or condition; misfortune; trouble, distress; in ME. often, need, want, poverty. *Obs.* 2. a. Harm or evil considered as the work of an agent or due to a particular cause.

- d. Such sinners as these should not even be prayed for, for God will not hear pleas made for them (**Jer 11:14-15**).
- vii. By taking heed to the word of God, which is the means by which wisdom enters the heart, a Christian will be delivered from the way of such evil men (**Pro 2:10-12**).

B. *And delight in the frowardness of the wicked*

- i. Not only do depraved men love to *do* evil things, but they also "have pleasure in them that do them" (**Rom 1:32**).
 - a. Delight *v.* - 1. *a. trans.* To give great pleasure or enjoyment to; to please highly. 2. *intr.* (for *refl.*) To be highly pleased, take great pleasure, rejoice: a. in or to do (anything).
 - b. Frowardness *n.* - Froward quality or condition; perversity; untowardness
 - c. Nothing brings evil men greater pleasure than to see other reprobates walking down the paths of darkness with them.
- ii. A godly man's delight should be in the word of God, not in the frowardness of the wicked (**Psa 1:1-2; Psa 119:143; Rom 7:22**).
- iii. Every time a Christian enjoys perverse content such as nudity, fornication, sodomy, adultery, murder, blasphemy, feminism, false religion, and numerous other forms of evil portrayed in television shows, movies, books, magazines, or websites, he is delighting himself in the frowardness (perversity) of the wicked.
- iv. Being entertained by the evil ways of wicked men is just as disgusting as doing it oneself.
 - a. Remember this the next time you laugh at watching drunk people act like fools.
 - b. Remember this the next time someone is telling you a "funny" story about their drunken escapades of the past.
 - c. Remember this the next time some pig at work is telling you about his whoremongering.
- v. The antidote to falling into this snare of the unrighteous is to immerse oneself in the word of God which gives wisdom to deliver thee from the way of the evil man (**Psa 119:9-11**).
- vi. The more a child of God delights in the scriptures, the less he will delight in the frowardness of the wicked.

15. **Pro 2:15** - "Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths."

A. *Whose ways are crooked*

- i. This verse is the conclusion of the description of the evil men Solomon has been warning his son about.
- ii. Given that these wicked men "*leave* the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness" (**Pro 2:13**), it is little wonder that their "ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths."
 - a. Crooked *adj.* Bent from the straight form; having (one or more) bends or angles; curved, bent, twisted, tortuous, wry. Applied to

everything which is not 'straight' (of which *crooked* is now the ordinary opposite).

- b. The way of the righteous is a straight path which is not to be deviated from, either to the right hand or to the left (**Pro 4:25-27**).
 - (i) To leave the straight and narrow path of uprightness, a man must bend his direction; hence his way is *crooked*.
 - (ii) Thorns and snares are laid in the bends and curves of the crooked paths of the wicked (**Pro 22:5**).
 - (iii) To keep out of the traps, avoid the path altogether.
 - c. Trying to walk the twisted path of the wicked with hopes of straightening it out is a fool's errand (**Ecc 1:15**).
 - (i) Here are a few examples.
 1. Hanging out with friends at the bar to try to convince them to stop being drunkards by your good example.
 2. *Straightening out* Washington D.C. by running for congress.
 3. Continuing to go to a errant church with hopes of converting them.
 - d. Just stay off of the crooked path altogether before you fall into a ditch (**Pro 4:14-15**).
 - iii. In the context of Proverbs 2, *crooked* is being used figuratively, since one's ways can't literally be bent.
 - a. Crooked *n.* - 3. *fig.* a. The reverse of 'straight' in figurative senses (esp. with reference to moral character and conduct); deviating from rectitude or uprightness; not straightforward; dishonest, wrong, perverse; perverted, out of order, awry.
 - b. Even in this perverse generation in which we live, those who have a godly, normal sexual orientation are called *straight* by both the righteous and wicked alike.
 - c. This is a tacit admission that the way of sodomites is not straight and is therefore *crooked*.
 - d. Since the way of the sodomite is *crooked*, it is therefore "the way of the evil man" (**Pro 2:12**).
 - e. And to this agree the words of scripture (**Lev 18:22; 1Ki 14:24; Rom 1:26-27**).
 - iv. In this evil generation, it is as important as ever for Christians to hold fast to the faith, that we "may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a *crooked* and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (**Php 2:15**).
- B. *And they froward in their paths*
- i. Froward *adj.* - Disposed to go counter to what is demanded or what is reasonable; perverse, difficult to deal with, hard to please; refractory, ungovernable
 - ii. A man who has a rebellious spirit which is wont to do the opposite of what is asked or commanded of him by a legitimate authority is *froward* in his paths and is therefore an *evil* man (**Pro 2:12, 15**).

- iii. The Lord does not take a froward spirit lightly (**1Sa 15:23**).
 - a. No man's authority is absolute; and when any government goes beyond their sphere and requires of Christians obedience that is unbiblical, they "ought to obey God rather than men" (**Act 5:29**).
 - b. But when a government, or any authority, is exercising its God-given duties, then Christians ought to submit to it.
 - c. Those who "despise government" and are "presumptuous" and "selfwilled" are those who "walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness" (**2Pe 2:10**).
 - d. Wisdom from the word of God gives the godly man the discretion to avoid such and deliver himself from their pernicious ways (**Pro 2:10-15**).

16. **Pro 2:16** - "To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;"

A. Not only will wisdom deliver the young man from the *evil man* (**Pro 2:12**), but it will also save him from the *strange woman*.

- i. A *strange woman* is a fornicatress or a prostitute.
 - a. Strange *adj.* - 4. *strange woman*: a harlot.
 - b. Harlot *n.* - 5. Applied to a woman. a. As a general term of execration. c. *spec.* An unchaste woman; a prostitute; a strumpet. (Very frequent in 16th c. Bible versions, where Wyclif had *hoore*, *whore*; prob. as a less offensive word.)
 - c. Unchaste *adj.* - Not chaste; lacking chastity; impure, lascivious
 - d. Chaste *adj.* - 1. Pure from unlawful sexual intercourse; continent, virtuous.
 - e. Chastity *n.* - 1. a. Purity from unlawful sexual intercourse; continence.
 - f. Lascivious *adj.* - 1. Inclined to lust, lewd, wanton.
 - g. According to God's law, unlawful sexual intercourse is fornication (**1Co 6:18**) and adultery (**Heb 13:4**).
 - h. Fornication *n.* - Voluntary sexual intercourse between a man (in restricted use, an unmarried man) and an unmarried woman. In Scripture extended to adultery.
 - i. Therefore, a *strange woman* is not merely a prostitute, but is also a woman who offers the same service free of charge to boyfriends or men whom she dates.
- ii. According to a study completed by The Guttmacher Institute, 95% of people (94% of women and 96% of men) by age 44 have had premarital sex. (*Trends in premarital sex in the United States, 1954-2003*, [The Guttmacher Institute](#), 2007)
 - a. Therefore, by Biblical definition, 94% of women are, or were at one time in their lives, *strange women*, and 96% of men are, or were at one time in their lives, *whoremongers*.
 - b. With these appalling figures in this wicked and perverse generation, the need for wisdom, which will deliver the godly young man from the *strange woman*, is as crucial as ever.

- iii. The fact that wisdom is necessary to deliver a man from the strange woman shows that she is both dangerous and subtle.
 - a. Though women are "the weaker vessel" (**1Pe 3:7**), they nevertheless wield great power over men.
 - b. Consider some of the great men of the Bible who were brought down by a woman.
 - (i) The first man Adam in his sinless innocence "was not deceived" (**1Ti 2:14**) by the devil, but was nonetheless talked into sinning against God when he "hearkened unto the voice of [his] wife" (**Gen 3:17**), forever destroying the human race.
 - (ii) Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived (**1Ki 4:30-31**), with the exception of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Mat 12:42**).
 - 1. But "nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin" (**Neh 13:26; 1Ki 11:4**).
 - 2. Solomon should have taken heed to the counsel he gave his son and to the wise instruction of his mother who taught him to "give not thy strength unto women" (**Pro 31:3**).
 - (iii) And then there was Samson, a man of exceeding strength (**Jdg 15:15**), who was brought down by the antics of a sly woman (**Jdg 16:15-21**).
 - (iv) And lastly there was David, "a man after [God's] own heart" (**Act 13:22**), whose lust for a beautiful woman led him to commit adultery with her (**2Sa 11:2-4**) and to murder her husband to cover it up (**2Sa 11:14-17**).
 - c. Given the fact that women, whether wittingly or unwittingly, have great power over even the best of men, from a sinless man to the wisest man, and from the strongest man to the godliest man, it is of the gravest importance for a Christian man to "get wisdom" (**Pro 4:5**) from the word of God which will "deliver [him] from the strange woman" (**Pro 2:16**).
 - d. Fathers must make sure to teach their sons these things.
 - iv. Godly women would be wise to do the same to deliver themselves from lascivious men.
- B. *The stranger which flattereth with her words.*
- i. The primary weapon in the arsenal of the whore is *flattery*.
 - a. Flatter v. - 1. a. *intr.* Of an animal, bird, etc.: To show delight or fondness (by wagging the tail, making a caressing sound, etc.). Const. upon, with. *Obs.* 2. To try to please or win the favour of (a person) by obsequious speech or conduct; to court, fawn upon. Also *intr. to flatter with*.
 - b. Fawn v. - 1. *intr.* Of an animal, esp. a dog: To show delight or fondness (by wagging the tail, whining, etc.) as a dog does. b. *to fawn on, upon*: (of a dog, etc.) to show delight at the presence of; to lavish caresses on, to caress.

- c. The young man should beware of the woman who showers him with high praise, for the woman who does so spreads a net for his feet (**Pro 29:5**).
- ii. Proverbs 7 describes in fine detail the way of the strange woman "which flattereth with her words" (**Pro 7:5**).
 - a. She preys on the young man that is simple and void of understanding who wanders in darkness (**Pro 7:6-9**).
 - b. She dresses with "the attire of an harlot" and she is "subtle of heart" (**Pro 7:10**).
 - c. Unlike godly women who are "of a meek and quiet spirit" (**1Pe 3:4**) and are "keepers at home" (**Tit 2:5**), she is rather "loud and stubborn [and] her feet abide not in her house" (**Pro 7:11**).
 - d. She lies in wait for him, catching and seducing him (**Pro 7:12-13**).
 - e. She feigns religion to appeal to his spiritual side (**Pro 7:14-15**).
 - f. She tempts him with talk of her finely adorned bed (**Pro 7:16-17**).
 - g. She allures him with the suggestion of lovemaking, assuring him that her husband is gone and will not return for a great while (**Pro 7:18-20**).
 - h. Finally, "with her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him" (**Pro 7:21**).
- iii. She didn't need to use superior strength or weaponry to force the young man into her filthy bed, but merely "good words and fair speeches [that] deceive the hearts of the simple" (**Rom 16:18**).
- iv. Her lips "drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil" (**Pro 5:3**), but her mouth is "a deep pit [and] he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein" (**Pro 22:14**).
- v. As the following verses show, the LORD's warning to hearken unto wisdom in order to be delivered from the strange woman which flatters with her words is *deadly* serious (**Pro 2:18-19; Pro 5:20-23; Pro 6:32-33; Pro 7:22-27**).

17. **Pro 2:17** - "Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God."

A. *Which forsaketh the guide of her youth*

- i. Traditionally, women have married young in accordance with the command of scripture which says that "the *younger* women [should] marry, bear children, guide the house" (**1Ti 5:14**).
 - a. Solomon exhorted his son to "rejoice with the *wife of thy youth*" (**Pro 5:18**), and Malachi likewise referred to a man's wife as "the *wife of thy youth*" (**Mal 2:14**).
 - b. In that men and women married in their youth (especially in those days), and given the fact that "the husband is the head of the wife" (**Eph 5:23**), the *guide of a woman's youth* is therefore her husband.
- ii. Guide *n.* - 1. a. One who leads or shows the way, esp. to a traveller in a strange country; spec. one who is hired to conduct a traveller or tourist (e.g.

over a mountain, through a forest, or over a city or building) and to point out objects of interest.

- a. This verse implicitly teaches that a husband should fulfill the role of a leader for his young bride, directing and teaching her in the way of life.
- b. A Christian woman should cherish the opportunity to have a godly husband who is not only her lover and provider, but also her mentor; but such is not the case with the strange woman which forsaketh the guide of her youth (**Pro 2:16-17**).
- c. Forsake v. - 1. *trans.* To deny (an accusation, an alleged fact, etc.). *Obs.* 4. To abandon, leave entirely, withdraw from; esp. to withdraw one's presence and help or companionship from; to desert.
- d. Thus the strange woman, having been her husband's "companion" (**Mal 2:14**), forsakes him and withdraws her companionship from him that had stood by her side and led her for many years.

B. *And forgetteth the covenant of her God.*

- i. She is not only the wife of her husband's youth, but she is also "the wife of [his] *covenant*" (**Mal 2:14**).
- ii. He had "made a *covenant* with [his] eyes [that he] should [not] think upon a maid" (**Job 31:1**).
- iii. The covenant that she and her husband had entered together when they married was not merely an agreement between the two of them, but was also struck with Almighty God who joined them together and bound them to that covenant (**Mat 19:6**).
- iv. Therefore, when the strange woman forsook her husband and the covenant that she made *with him*, she also forgot the covenant of *her God*.
- v. Having forsaken her husband, she turns away from him and turns toward another man whom she tries to seduce by "flatter[ing] with her words" (**Pro 2:16**).
- vi. Wisdom from the word of God will deliver the young man from an unfaithful woman, for it instructs him that just as "the Ethiopian [cannot] change his skin, [n]or the leopard his spots...[neither] then may [she] also do good, that [is] accustomed to do evil" (**Jer 13:23**).
 - a. The young man should beware: if a woman forsakes her first husband, she is likely to forsake her next one also.
 - b. If she forgot her first covenant, she is liable to forget subsequent ones as well.
 - c. Thus the strange woman cannot be trusted, for "her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them" (**Pro 5:6**).
 - d. The only sure way to protect oneself from the adulteress is to keep clear of her entirely and "remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house" (**Pro 5:8**).
 - e. He that has wisdom will avoid such a woman like he would the plague, for he that flirts with her flirts with death (**Pro 7:25-27**).
- vii. If a Christian man is to protect himself from being swallowed up by the strange woman and having his life and soul destroyed by her, he must

receive God's words and hide His commandments with him (**Pro 2:1**), for "the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman" (**Pro 6:23-24**).

18. **Pro 2:18** - "For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead."

A. *For her house inclineth unto death*

- i. An encounter with a strange woman may be deadly.
 - a. Her house is a place where men go to lose their souls and possibly their lives as well.
 - b. A man that enters therein destroys his own soul (**Pro 6:32-33**).
- ii. Not only is his soul in jeopardy; if the whore's husband finds him, his very life may be at risk (**Pro 6:34-35**).
- iii. If the adulterer escapes the revenge of the strange woman's husband, he will not escape the retribution of the LORD (**Rom 12:19**).
 - a. Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge (**Heb 13:4**).
 - b. The judgment of God on a man who commits the "heinous crime" (**Job 31:11**) of adultery might come suddenly, as did the death of Ananias and Sapphira who likewise committed a wicked sin against the LORD (**Act 5:1-10**).
 - c. Or it may come later at the time of God's choosing (**1Ti 5:24**).
 - d. The man who is tempted to give in to the allure of the strange woman better remember that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (**Heb 10:31**).
 - e. The LORD's judgment for such an odious sin may well be the sexually transmitted disease he received from his lover, which he will have to suffer with and regret for the rest of his life (**Pro 5:11-13**).
- iv. If the whoremonger escapes with his life and health, he is still not off the hook, for the LORD has yet more ways of chastising him, such as taking from him his house, wealth, and retirement, destroying him financially through the courts for his dreadful sin (**Pro 5:8-10; Pro 6:24-26; Job 31:9-12**).

B. *And her paths unto the dead.*

- i. Here we find the identification of the victims of the strange woman: *the dead*.
- ii. She primarily seeks for those who have no moral compass nor godly principles that guide their lives.
 - a. She isn't usually looking for those who are "dead to sin" (**Rom 6:2**), but for those who are yet "dead in sins" (**Eph 2:5**) and are only concerned with "fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind" (**Eph 2:3**).
 - b. Such reprobates are easy targets for the adulteress because they don't have a regenerate spirit within them warring against the flesh and its lusts (**Gal 5:17**).

- c. Furthermore, they don't have God in their corner protecting them from her, for "the mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein" (**Pro 22:14**).
- iii. Desirous of a challenge, the adulteress not only goes after reprobates who offer little resistance, but she also "will hunt for the precious life" (**Pro 6:26**).
 - a. She seeks the "young man void of understanding" (**Pro 7:7**), who, when properly enticed, will go "after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird that hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life" (**Pro 7:22-23**).
 - b. Thus the reason that Solomon wrote this warning to his son and exhorted him to listen to him and get wisdom which would save him from her and his death that would follow (**Pro 7:24-27**).

19. **Pro 2:19** - "None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life."

A. *None that go unto her return again.*

- i. Solomon gives one final reason to be wise and avoid the strange woman.
- ii. It's a one-way trip.
- iii. There is more than one reason for this.
 - a. Foolish whoremongers could simply lose their lives for one of the reasons given in the comments on the previous verse, such as:
 - (i) God slaying them directly,
 - (ii) dying due to the natural consequences of an STD, or
 - (iii) being killed by vengeful husband.
 - b. But there is also another way in which those that go unto the strange woman will not return again.
 - (i) They will not return as the same men that they went as.
 - (ii) The man that commits adultery gets "a wound and dishonour...and his reproach shall not be wiped away" (**Pro 6:33**).
 - (iii) The reproach of such an egregious act is never entirely removed, even after decades have passed, because the memory of it resides in the minds of his family, friends, and neighbors for the rest of their lives.
 - (iv) Thus the man who was held in high regard never returns from the strange woman's house as his former self.
 - (v) David experienced the devastation of social ostracism after he committed adultery with Bathsheba, which he painfully lamented when he besought the LORD's mercy, saying "my lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off" (**Psa 38:11**).
 - (vi) As Solomon later noted in the book of Ecclesiastes, the social stigma of this sin increases in proportion to the reputation of the offender (**Ecc 10:1**).

B. *Neither take they hold of the paths of life.*

- i. The man who commits adultery has gone the way of the evil man and has left "the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness" (**Pro 2:13**).
- ii. He has veered from the strait gate and narrow way "which leadeth unto life," and henceforth shall walk through the wide gate on the broad way "that leadeth to destruction" (**Mat 7:13-14**).
- iii. All the joys of living shall be taken from him.
- iv. As he tries to take hold of the paths of life, they shall slip through his fingers as sorrow compasses him.
- v. Psalm 38 is considered by many to be David's lamentation for his dreadful sin of adultery, in which he vividly expressed his feeling of despair after taking another man's wife (**Psa 38:1-10**).
- vi. Let the Christian man take heed and hearken unto wisdom in order to spare himself from the agony which will certainly befall anyone who follows in David's footsteps.

20. **Pro 2:20** - "That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous."

- A. Having finished warning of the dangers of the evil man (**Pro 2:12-15**) and of the strange woman (**Pro 2:16-19**), Solomon now exhorts his son of the blessings that come to the man that gets wisdom.
- B. Taken alone, Pro 2:20 would not be a complete sentence.
 - i. But in the context of the chapter, it is an example of proper grammar.
 - ii. The reason being is that a grammatical function called an *ellipsis* is being used.
 - iii. Ellipsis - 2. *Gram.* The omission of one or more words in a sentence, which would be needed to complete the grammatical construction or fully to express the sense; *concr.* an instance of such omission.
 - iv. The things that were spoken of earlier, such as the acquisition of wisdom, knowledge, discretion, and understanding which deliver a man from evil men and strange women, are the prerequisites necessary to walk in the way of good men and keep the paths of the righteous.
 - v. Those things are left out of the beginning of the sentence in verse 20 to limit redundancy, and also because they are assumed because of the context.
 - a. If it were not for the ellipsis, verse 20 would read something like this:
 - b. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul, discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee to deliver thee from the way of the evil man, to deliver thee from the strange woman, that thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous."
 - vi. Another clear example of the use of an ellipsis is **Psa 136**.
 - a. The words "O give thanks" are used in verses 1-3, but are left out of the beginning of verses 4-7, 10, 13, 16, & 17 because the reader assumes it when reading the Psalm.
 - b. The words "O give thanks unto him" are left out of the beginning of verses 23 and 25 for the same reason.

C. *That thou mayest walk in the way of good men*

- i. Walking in the way of good men is living a life that is both guided by God and pleasing to Him: "the steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way" (**Psa 37:23**).
- ii. The possession of wisdom leads a man to good company, which in turn acts as a positive influence in his life, leading to greater wisdom: "he that walketh with wise men shall be wise" (**Pro 13:20**).
- iii. The scripture describes a good man as a man who:
 - a. "sheweth favour, and lendeth [and] guide[s] his affairs with discretion" (**Psa 112:5**)
 - b. "obtaineth favour of the LORD" (**Pro 12:2**)
 - c. "leaveth an inheritance to his children's children" (**Pro 13:22**),
 - d. "shall be satisfied from himself" (**Pro 14:14**),
 - e. "out of the good treasure of [his] heart bringeth forth good things" (**Mat 12:35**),
 - f. is "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" (**Act 11:24**), and
 - g. whose friends would die for him (**Rom 5:7**).
- iv. Therefore, the man who walks in the way of good men...
 - a. will be generous towards the poor, yet wise when helping them.
 - b. will be blessed of the LORD.
 - c. will manage and save his money so that he has enough to leave not only to his children, but also to his grandchildren.
 - d. will not depend on others nor on material wealth for his satisfaction.
 - e. will treasure up good in his heart and bring it forth for the benefit of others in due time.
 - f. will be full of the Holy Spirit and faith.
 - g. will have friends who love him so dearly that they would lay down their lives for him.
- v. Walking in the way alongside good men not only increases a man's wisdom and makes him a better person, but it also brings bountiful blessings into his life and protects him from danger. For example:
 - a. Lot's life was spared because of His association with his faithful uncle Abraham (**Gen 19:29**).
 - b. God blessed Laban for Jacob's sake (**Gen 30:27**).
 - c. Potiphar was blessed and prospered because of God's favor upon Joseph (**Gen 39:3-6**).
 - d. Even the criminals who sailed with Paul to Rome were brought through a horrible storm at sea, escaping death because of the godly man that was on board with them (**Act 27:24**).
- vi. There is a blessing in store for the man who *walks in the way of good men and keeps the paths of the righteous*, for the LORD "shall keep [his] foot from being taken" (**Pro 3:26**).

21. **Pro 2:21** - "For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it."

- A. As Christians seek and obtain wisdom (**Pro 2:1-6**) and walk in the way of good men in the paths of the righteous (**Pro 2:20**), they "*walk* before the LORD in the land of the living" (**Psa 116:9**).

- B. If they are *upright*, they shall *dwell* in that good land, and if they are *perfect* they shall *remain* in it.
- i. Upright *adj.* - III. *fig.* 8. a. Of persons: Adhering to or following correct moral principles; of unbending integrity or rectitude; morally just, honest, or honourable.
 - ii. Perfect *adj.* - B. Signification. I. General senses. 1. Thoroughly made, formed, done, performed, carried out, accomplished. *Obs.* 4. a. In the state of complete excellence; free from any flaw or imperfection of quality; faultless.
- C. Job is an example of such a man who "was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil" (**Job 1:1**).
- D. The path on which the upright man travels is the road of righteousness which leads him away from evil (**Pro 16:17**).
- i. There will always be wicked men who try to entice him to wander out of the way, but with the help and mercy of God, if he continues in it, he will possess good things (**Pro 28:10; Psa 37:18**).
 - ii. The perfect man not only is blessed by dwelling in the land of the living, but, more importantly, "the upright shall dwell in [God's] presence" (**Psa 140:13**).
 - iii. In that God is "the God of peace" (**Rom 15:33**), the end of the perfect and upright man is therefore peace (**Psa 37:37; 2Co 13:11**).
- E. While Solomon's words in Pro 2:21 are generally applicable to all of God's children throughout all time, they were particularly relevant to the Jews under the Old Testament.
- i. God's covenant with the nation of Israel, that they would be a peculiar people to Him and an holy nation, was a conditional covenant that depended on their obedience (**Exo 19:5-6**).
 - ii. The if-then statement in the covenant necessitates the reversal of those promises if Israel did not keep the covenant and obey God's voice.
 - iii. Israel was later promised that if they loved God, trusted in Him, and kept His commandments, they would dwell and remain in the land of Canaan (**Deut 11:8-9; Deut 30:15-20; Psa 37:3, 29**).
 - iv. These verses clearly show that Israel's dwelling in the land was conditioned upon their righteous obedience to God.
- F. The history of the nation of Israel is one of a people who continually rejected God, sinned against Him, and were judged for it.
- i. As a nation, they took not heed to the LORD's warnings against being seduced by the strange woman (**Pro 2:16-19**) and turned to idolatrous false religion and "played the harlot" and spiritually "committed adultery" against their God (**Jer 3:6-9**).
 - a. When Israel rebelled against the LORD in the days of the kings, He sent the Babylonians and destroyed Jerusalem and removed them from the land, carrying them captive into Babylon for seventy years (**2Ch 36:14-21**).
 - b. When the seventy years of captivity were fulfilled, the LORD allowed them to return to their land as He had promised by the prophets (**Jer 29:10**).

- ii. For the next four hundred years, Israel continued in their rebellion against God which culminated in the rejection and murder of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ (**Joh 1:11; Act 3:14-15; Act 7:52; 1Th 2:14-15**).
 - a. In 70AD, the space of their repentance was up and the LORD sent in the Roman armies which completely destroyed Jerusalem and either killed or carried away captive all of the Jews who remained in the city (**Luk 21:20-24**).
 - b. Those that call themselves Jews today (whether they are Jews by blood or not) do not believe in the true God because they reject the Lord Jesus Christ who is God manifest in the flesh (**Joh 1:1, 14; 1Ti 3:16**).
 - c. They hate Jesus Christ, which their writings in the Talmud show (see sermon series called [Israel: The Synagogue of Satan](#)).
 - d. Therefore, they hate God the Father (**Luk 10:16; Joh 15:23-24**).
 - e. They don't believe that Jesus is the Christ and are therefore antichrists who have not God (**1Jo 2:22-23; 2Jo 1:9**).
 - f. They don't keep God's commandments, the chief of which is to believe on Jesus Christ the Messiah (**1Jo 3:23; Deu 18:15, 18-19 c/w Act 3:20-26**).
- iii. Having not believed their own scriptures, and having rejected Jesus Christ, they are therefore not upright, nor perfect, and thus they have no right nor promise from God to dwell in the land of Palestine.
 - a. Therefore, the modern nation of Israel is not of God, nor is it a fulfillment of any of God's promises to Israel.
 - b. They are rather "them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan" (**Rev 2:9**).

22. **Pro 2:22** - "But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it."

- A. Whereas the perfect and upright will dwell and remain in the land of the living (**Pro 2:21**), the wicked shall be cut off from the earth.
- B. Cut v. - 56. *cut off*. d. To put to death (suddenly or prematurely), to bring to an untimely end.
- C. The following verses make clear that to be "cut off from the earth" is to be "put to death" (**Gen 9:11; Exo 9:15; Exo 31:14**).
- D. The LORD has declared that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (**Eze 18:4**).
 - i. The righteous dwell *on* the earth while the wicked dwell *in* the earth when they are cut off *from* the earth.
 - ii. But even to the wicked, in mercy, the LORD gives a space of repentance before He cuts them off.
 - iii. God told Abraham that his seed would dwell in a strange land for four hundred years before being delivered out of it and given the land of Canaan (**Gen 15:13-16**).
 - iv. The inhabitants of the land would eventually be cut off, but not for a long time because "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (**Gen 15:16**).

- v. God will dig about and dung around a tree slated for destruction to see if it will produce fruit, "and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that [he shall] cut it down" (**Luk 13:9**).
 - vi. Jesus taught His followers that they were not exempt from the judgment of the LORD, but would die the death of sinners if they didn't repent (**Luk 13:4-5**).
- E. The Christian who would have "length of days, and long life, and peace" (**Pro 3:2**) and not be cut off from the earth and rooted out of it (**Pro 2:22**) need only follow Solomon's prescription given in this second chapter of Proverbs to obtain it.
- i. If he will receive God's words and hide His commandments in his heart, incline his ear unto wisdom and apply his heart to understanding, cry after knowledge and lift up his voice for understanding, and seek it as silver and search for it as for hid treasures, then he will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God, and the LORD will give him wisdom, knowledge, and understanding which will keep his paths and preserve his way (**Pro 2:1-9**).
 - ii. When wisdom has entered into his heart and knowledge is pleasant unto his soul, discretion will preserve him and understanding will keep him, delivering him from the evil man and the strange woman, leading him to walk in the way of good men and keep the paths of the righteous, and enabling him to dwell in the land of the living in his uprightness living an abundant Christian life (**Pro 2:10-21**). 48

V. Chapter 3

1. **Pro 3:1** - "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:"

A. A quick summary of Proverbs 1-2.

- i. Solomon devoted the majority of Proverbs 1 to warning his son of the dangers of being enticed to do evil by wicked men (**Pro 1:10-19**).
- ii. Then he admonished him of the dire consequences of rejecting Wisdom's call of repentance (**Pro 1:20-33**).
- iii. In Proverbs 2, he exhorted his son to seek and cry after the knowledge and wisdom of God which, when acquired, would deliver him from the way of the evil man and the strange woman.

B. Introduction to Proverbs 3.

- i. Having taken ample time exhorting his son to get wisdom and understanding, and warning him of the peril that awaits those who don't, Solomon spends much of the third chapter detailing the blessings and benefits of remembering God's law and keeping His commandments.
- ii. The first 12 verses of chapter 3 are comprised six couplets.
 - a. The first verse of the couplet gives the commandment.
 - b. The second verse gives the reward or benefit of keeping it.
- iii. These first 12 verses give the formula for living a good life which includes:
 - a. A long, peaceful life (**Pro 3:1-2**).
 - b. Favor with God (spiritual fulfillment) and man (social fulfillment) (**Pro 3:3-4**).

- c. Direction and leading from God through life (**Pro 3:5-6**).
- d. Good health (**Pro 3:7-8**).
- e. Financial security (**Pro 3:9-10**).
- f. Discipline from God (**Pro 3:11-12**).

C. *My son, forget not my law.*

- i. This is the foundation for living the good life.
- ii. In that Solomon was one of God's prophets who "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (**2Pe 1:21**), these words are not only Solomon's to his son, but they are God's words to His sons warning them to forget not His law.
- iii. Forget v. - 1. *trans.* To lose remembrance of; to cease to retain in one's memory.
 - a. Reading and understanding the law of God will be of no value to us if we don't retain it in our memory where it is available to be recalled at any time.
 - b. Thus the reason that the LORD reminds His children to *forget not His law* (**Pro 4:5**), but to *remember* it (**Mal 4:4; Jos 1:13; Joh 15:20**).
- iv. The author of Psalm 119, who spent 176 verses magnifying the word of God, not only read the scriptures, but also made great effort to remember them, saying:
 - a. "I will not forget thy word" (**Psa 119:16**)
 - b. "yet do I not forget thy statutes" (**Psa 119:83**)
 - c. "I will never forget thy precepts" (**Psa 119:93**)
 - d. "yet do I not forget thy law" (**Psa 119:109**)
 - e. "yet do not I forget thy precepts" (**Psa 119:141**)
 - f. "I do not forget thy commandments" (**Psa 119:176**).
- v. When we don't keep God's commandments, we have not only forgotten God's law, we have forgotten God Himself (**Deu 8:11**).
- vi. Forgetting the LORD first manifests itself in failing to keep His commandments, which then leads to walking after other gods, and finally ends in death (**Deu 8:18-20; Psa 9:17; Psa 50:22**).

D. *But let thine heart keep my commandments.*

- i. Reading the word of God frequently is a necessary step to remember it.
- ii. But the prescription that Solomon gives for not forgetting the law of God is not merely reading it, but also doing it, and doing it often (*keep my commandments*).
 - a. Repetition is the most effective method of committing a thing to memory.
 - b. Those that only hear the word of God, but don't do it, are *forgetful hearers* (**Jam 1:22-25**).
- iii. The first commandment that a child of God should keep after he has heard and believed the gospel is to repent and be baptized (**Act 2:37-38**).
 - a. This will result in him being added to the membership of a local church (**Act 2:41**).

- b. When that happens and the new Christian continues "steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" (**Act 2:42**) by assembling with the saints and hearing the word of God preached, he will be reminded of God's law week after week and will not forget it.
 - iv. Remembering the law of God by keeping it will not only spare God's children from falling into sin and being chastened by Him for it, but it will also yield the blessing of a long and peaceful life, which Solomon shows in the next verse.
- 2. **Pro 3:2** - "For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee."
 - A. *For length of days, and long life...shall they add to thee*
 - i. Many people today spend much money, time, and energy in a mostly futile effort to lengthen their lives.
 - a. Special diets, exercise, and expensive supplements are pursued with religious fervor in hopes of getting to spend a few more years on this sin-cursed earth.
 - b. Worldly men look to advances in science, modern medicine, and even transhumanism as their savior that they hope will stave off death for decades, centuries, or possibly forever.
 - c. On the other side of the aisle, some religious folks today look to "natural" methods to prolong their lives, endlessly chasing one guru after another who claims to have just what God ordered to make us live at least twenty years longer than His book says that we will (**Psa 90:10**).
 - ii. The key to long life is not found at the Mayo Clinic, the local drug store, or even in one's own garden, but rather in remembering God's law and keeping His commandments (**Pro 3:1**).
 - a. If a man would put down the prescription drugs, 3D organ printers, organic food, vitamins, homeopathic potions, and essential oils, and instead pick up his Bible and read it everyday, remember what he reads, and put it into practice in his life, he would stand a much better chance of making it to the ripe old age of eighty.
 - b. Could some of the above-mentioned things extend one's life? Possibly.
 - c. Will taking God's prescription for longevity be more effective? Absolutely (**Pro 3:7-8; Pro 4:10; Pro 9:10-11; Pro 10:27**).
 - iii. There are at least three reasons why remembering and doing the word of God results in the lengthening of life.
 - a. Firstly, the Almighty, who declares that "them that honour me will I honour" (**1Sa 2:30**), will bless the God-fearing man with a protracted life because life is a blessing.
 - b. Secondly, God will extend the life of His pious saints in order for them to show "[his] strength unto this generation, and [his] power to every one that is to come" (**Psa 71:18**).
 - c. Thirdly, a long and healthy life is a tangential effect of keeping God's commandments, for the man that does so avoids sins which have life-

shortening results such as fornication and sodomy (STDs), drunkenness (liver disease, drunk driving), gluttony (diabetes, heart disease, etc), brawling, etc.

B. *...and peace, shall they add to thee.*

- i. Not only will reading, retaining, and practicing the precepts of the word of God increase the *length* of a Christian's life, but it will also increase the *quality* of it.
 - a. Along with length of days and long life, *peace* shall also be added to the doer of the word.
 - b. Remembering God's law is equivalent to keeping one's mind fixed on Him, and the man who does so will be kept in perfect peace (**Isa 26:3**).
- ii. The Biblical definition of *righteousness* is keeping God's commandments.
 - a. It was said of Zechariah and Elisabeth, John the Baptist's parents, that they were "both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (**Luk 1:6**).
 - b. "Righteousness and peace" are so closely bound together that they are said to "have kissed each other" (**Psa 85:10**).
 - c. Thus, keeping God's commandments, which is righteousness, brings the peaceful life that God has promised, for "*the work of righteousness shall be peace*; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever" (**Isa 32:17**).
 - d. As the scripture says, "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: *for the end of that man is peace*" (**Psa 37:37**).

3. **Pro 3:3** - "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:"

- A. In addition to length of days, long life, and peace (**Pro 3:2**), keeping God's commandments (**Pro 3:1**) also brings the blessings of *mercy* and *truth* to a child of God.
- i. Of these two, *truth* is the most obvious benefit that derives from remembering God's law and keeping His commandments.
 - ii. The Son of God declared, "thy word is truth" (**Joh 17:17**), and the psalmist reiterated, "thy law is the truth" (**Psa 119:142**) and "all thy commandments are truth" (**Psa 119:151**).
 - iii. Thus the reason God's law is called "the word of truth" (**Psa 119:43; Eph 1:13**).
 - iv. Since God's law is the truth, when "we walk after his commandments" (**2Jo 1:6**), we are "walking in truth" (**2Jo 1:4**).
- B. Truth *n.* II. 5. a. Conformity with fact; agreement with reality; accuracy, correctness, verity (of statement or thought).
- i. As Stewart Crane used to say, "truth is an accurate representation of that which is under consideration as it has always related to all other things in the past, is universally so in the present, and constantly so into the infinite future."

- ii. *Truth* is declared in the word of God and is embodied in the person of Jesus Christ who is "the truth" (**Joh 14:6**), and who is "full of grace and truth" (**Joh 1:14**).
 - a. Truth is liberating (**Joh 8:31-32**).
 - b. Truth is necessary to worship God properly (**Joh 4:24**).
 - c. Truth is rejoiced in by those who exhibit true love (**1Co 13:6**).
 - d. Truth is to be acknowledged (**Tit 1:1**).
 - e. Truth must be obeyed (**Gal 3:1**).
 - f. Truth is essential to have the fruit of the Spirit (**Eph 5:9**).
 - g. How important it is to never let truth forsake us.
- C. Mercy *n.* - 1. a. Forbearance and compassion shown by one person to another who is in his power and who has no claim to receive kindness; kind and compassionate treatment in a case where severity is merited or expected.
 - i. *Mercy* is a concept that is taught in the word of God regarding both man's relationship to God and to his fellowman.
 - ii. We are saved, not by our works, but by the mercy of God which He bestows upon whom He will (**Rom 9:15-16**; **Eph 2:4-5**; **Tit 3:5**; **1Pe 1:3**).
 - iii. The scriptures exhort us to have mercy on others if we expect to receive mercy (**Mat 5:7**; **Jam 2:13**).
 - iv. The law of God teaches us that religious sacrifices, whether our bodies (**Rom 12:1**), our money (**Heb 13:16 c/w Php 4:15**), or our praise of God (**Heb 13:15**), are no substitute for showing mercy (**Mat 9:13**).
 - v. We receive mercy temporally by humbly asking for it from God in prayer (**Heb 4:16**).
 - vi. How important it is to never let mercy forsake us.
- D. Having seen the importance of mercy and truth, it should now be evident why we must not let them forsake us.
 - i. Forsake *v.* - 1. *trans.* To deny (an accusation, an alleged fact, etc.). Obs. c. To deny, renounce, or repudiate allegiance to (God, a lord, etc.). 4. To abandon, leave entirely, withdraw from; esp. to withdraw one's presence and help or companionship from; to desert.
 - ii. In order to prevent mercy and truth from renouncing and departing from us, we must bind them about our necks and write them upon the table of our hearts which is done by holding fast to the word of God which reveals, declares, and demands them (**Pro 6:20-21**; **Pro 7:1-3**).
- 4. **Pro 3:4** - "So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man."
 - A. In addition to a long, peaceful life (**Pro 3:2**), there is yet another blessing in store for the man who remembers God's law and keeps His commandments (**Pro 3:1**) and binds mercy and truth about his neck (**Pro 3:3**): he will find favour and good understanding in the eyes of both God and his fellowman.
 - B. *So shalt thou find favour...in the sight of God and man.*
 - i. Favour *n.* - 1. a. Propitious or friendly regard, goodwill, esp. on the part of a superior or a multitude. *to find favour in the eyes of* (orig. a Hebraism): to gain the goodwill of.

- a. Inserting the definition into the verse, we see that the man who keeps God's word and is known for his mercifulness and honesty will find friendly regard and goodwill from men.
 - b. He will be praised by heathen and Christian alike, having "a good report of them which are without" (**1Ti 3:7**) and a "good report of all men, and of the truth itself" (**3Jo 1:12**).
 - c. The young Samuel experienced this, for it was said of him that he "grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men" (**1Sa 2:26**).
 - ii. The Son of God is the preeminent example of a man who lived the first three verses of Proverbs 3, and in turn experienced the promised blessing of verse four.
 - a. The scripture declares that "*grace* and truth came by Jesus Christ" (**Joh 1:17**) who is "full of *grace* and truth" (**Joh 1:14**).
 - b. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that as a child Jesus, being the embodiment of mercy and truth, "increased in wisdom and stature, and in *favour with God and man*" (**Luk 2:52**).
 - iii. Another example of the fulfillment of Pro 3:4 was the early Christians in the Jerusalem church.
 - a. They were full of mercy, so much so that they "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need" (**Act 2:45**).
 - b. As a result, they had "favour with all the people," and also had favour with God, which is evident from the fact that He "added to the church daily such as should be saved" (**Act 2:47**).
 - C. *And good understanding in the sight of God and man.*
 - i. Not only will keeping God's commandments and exhibiting mercy and truth (**Pro 3:1-3**) ensure that a man will find *favour* with God and man, but it will also guarantee that he will find *good understanding* in their sight.
 - ii. Understanding comes from the word of God (**Pro 2:6**), and it is acquired through knowing Him (**Pro 9:10**).
 - iii. When we study the scriptures, we show ourselves approved unto God (**2Ti 2:15**).
 - iv. When we meditate upon them, our profiting will appear to all (**1Ti 4:15**).
 - v. Thus, we find "good understanding in the sight of God and man" (**Pro 3:4**).
 - vi. Gaining understanding, we then find further favour with God and man, as it is written, "good understanding giveth favour" (**Pro 13:15**).
5. **Pro 3:5** - "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."
- A. This may well be one of the most widely known and oft quoted verses in the book of Proverbs.
 - B. *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart.*
 - i. Trust v. - To have faith or confidence; to place reliance; to confide.
 - a. The LORD "knoweth all things" (**1Jo 3:20**) and "his understanding is infinite" (**Psa 147:5**).

- b. Therefore "all [his] commandments are truth" (**Psa 119:151**).
 - c. To place our full faith and confidence in the omnipotent, omniscient God rather than in our own exceedingly limited understanding should go without saying, but such is not the case due to our fallen nature.
- ii. We must trust in God with *all* of our heart.
 - a. The heart is the seat of our emotions (**Pro 15:13**).
 - b. The heart is also the source of our thoughts and intents (**Heb 4:12**).
 - c. Therefore, we must be faithful to God with all of our intellect, will, and emotions.
 - d. We must love God with *all our heart* (**Mat 22:37**).
 - e. We must believe in Jesus with *all our heart* (**Act 8:37**).
 - f. Half-hearted trust is not pleasing to God (**Psa 12:2; Jam 1:5-8**).
 - (i) When it comes to trusting in God, burn your bridges and have no backup plan.
 - (ii) Put your hand to the plow and never look back (**Luk 9:62**).
 - g. This means that there should not be any area of life that we should not trust God in.
 - (i) This means trusting that God is right about everything He says in His word (**Rom 3:4**).
 - (ii) This also means trusting that God will do what He has promised, such as taking care of us and providing for our needs (**Mat 6:25-34; Php 4:19**).
- C. *And lean not unto thine own understanding.*
 - i. Man's understanding and the word of God are often at odds with each other (**1Co 1:19-20, 25**).
 - a. Man by nature chooses the wisdom of the so-called wise over the counsel of "God only wise" (**Rom 16:27**).
 - b. Thus the reason for Solomon's exhortation to trust in God and not in our own ideas, for our "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (**1Co 2:5**).
 - ii. Both rich men and fools alike are wise in their own conceit (**Pro 28:11; Pro 26:5**).
 - a. There is little hope for either of them (**Pro 26:12**).
 - b. The former think too much of their wealth and attainments; the latter don't think enough.
 - c. God pronounces a woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes (**Isa 5:21**).
 - d. Both types of men need to heed the LORD's warning and "be not wise in [their] own eyes" (**Pro 3:7**), trusting in Him with all their hearts and not in their own understanding.
 - iii. All of a man's ways are right in his own eyes (**Pro 21:2**).
 - a. Using his own understanding, a man will make what he thinks is a sound decision.
 - b. His ways are "clean in his own eyes" (**Pro 16:2**).
 - c. By all reasoning, it seems right, but "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (**Pro 16:25**).

- d. Uzza relied on his own understanding and did what seemed like the right thing when he placed his hand on the ark of the covenant to keep it from falling to the ground as David moved it on an ox cart (**2Sa 6:6**).
 - (i) If he would have trusted in the LORD with all his heart and not leaned on his own understanding by leaning on the ark, he would not have died that day (**2Sa 6:7**).
 - (ii) There was a way that seemed right unto Uzza, but the end thereof was the way of death.
- iv. Maybe the situation is not life or death.
 - a. What if, for instance, Christians wisely desire a spouse of like-faith and they have waited on the LORD to provide one for a long time?
 - b. There is a tendency among us to become weak in faith and stop trusting God with all of our heart and begin to lean on our own understanding.
 - c. They may reason that there just aren't any godly, truth-loving, single Christians out there, and since they aren't getting any younger, they decide to marry an unbeliever.
 - d. In such a case, not trusting fully in God to provide their godly desire, but rather leaning unto their own understanding resulted in missing out on a lifelong blessing of a marriage wherein two walk together through life agreed (**Amo 3:3**).
- v. So the next time that you begin to doubt God and His word and think that you have a better way, remember to "trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (**Pro 3:5**).

6. **Pro 3:6** - "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

A. *In all thy ways acknowledge him.*

- i. Here is the result of, and motivation for, trusting in the LORD with all of our hearts and leaning not unto our own understanding: *divine guidance*.
- ii. Having God direct our paths is contingent upon us *acknowledging* Him in *all our ways*.
 - a. Acknowledge v. - 1. To own the knowledge of; to confess; to recognize or admit as true.
 - b. In other words, in all that we think and do, we must recognize God and admit that He is true.
 - c. This brings to mind the words of the apostle Paul who wrote, "yea, let God be true, but every man a liar" (**Rom 3:4**).
- iii. Acknowledging God is recognizing and confessing that His Son Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh (**1Ti 3:16; Joh 1:14**).
 - a. Those who do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Son of God do not acknowledge God, for "whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (**1Jo 2:23**).
 - b. This means that Jews, Muslims, and all other non-Christians have no expectation of God directing their paths.

- iv. Acknowledging God is conceding that His word reigns supreme over every aspect of our lives.
 - a. In order to do so, we must admit that "the ways of the LORD are right" (**Hos 14:9**), and ours are wrong.
 - b. As scripture declares:
 - (i) "The statutes of the LORD are right" (**Psa 19:8**).
 - (ii) "Thy judgments are right" (**Psa 119:75**).
 - (iii) The Lord is "a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he" (**Deu 32:4**).
 - v. After admitting that God and His law are true and right, we must acknowledge that we have sinned against the LORD and have gone our own way (**Isa 53:6; Jer 3:13; Jer 14:20; Psa 32:5; Psa 51:3**).
 - vi. Until we do that, God will not direct our paths, but rather hide His face from us (**Hos 5:15**).
- B. *...and he shall direct thy paths.*
- i. The LORD will guide the steps of the righteous man who acknowledges his need of Him.
 - ii. God promises to instruct, teach, and guide us (**Psa 32:8**) and order our steps (**Psa 37:23**).
 - iii. Too often, Christians plan the course of their lives without any consideration of the LORD's will, boldly declaring what they are *going to do* (**Jam 4:13**).
 - a. But they don't know what tomorrow holds (**Jam 4:14**).
 - b. They ought to instead preface their plans with "if the Lord wills" (**Jam 4:15**).
 - iv. When we acknowledge God in all our ways, He shall direct our paths (**Pro 16:9**).
 - v. The Lord directs the paths of the righteous in the same way that the banks of a river direct the path of the water flowing between them.
 - a. The riverbanks allow the water to flow freely within them, but prevent it from overflowing them.
 - b. So God sets bounds and limits on the decisions and actions of His children, preventing them from taking a course that His will does not permit (**Pro 21:1**).

7. **Pro 3:7** - "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."

- A. *Be not wise in thine own eyes.*
- i. Fools, not sages, think themselves wise.
 - ii. A truly wise man is little in his own sight, whereas the fool is "wise in his own conceit" (**Pro 26:12**).
 - iii. Being wise in one's own eyes is a form of *pride*.
 - iv. Pride *n.* - B. The quality of being proud. I. 1. a. A high or overweening opinion of one's own qualities, attainments, or estate, which gives rise to a feeling and attitude of superiority over and contempt for others; inordinate self-esteem.
 - v. A proud man will never become wise because he thinks he already is.
 - vi. Those who are wise in their own eyes demonstrate such by the following:

- a. Not seeking counsel or asking advice of their elders.
 - b. Doing far more talking than listening in conversations.
 - c. Always ending their sentences with periods rather than question marks.
- vii. Three men come to mind who are often wise in their own eyes: the young man, the formally educated man, and the rich man.
 - a. The young man.
 - (i) The young man is idealistic, thinking the world should work in accordance with his conceptions of reality.
 - (ii) He is confident because of his vigorous youth and his lack of understanding of the hard realities of life.
 - (iii) Therefore, he sees no need to seek counsel from those older and more experienced than he.
 - b. The formally educated man.
 - (i) The formally educated man has letters behind his name that assure him that he is wiser than those who don't.
 - (ii) He paid (borrowed) a small fortune for those letters and spent many years of his life obtaining them.
 - (iii) Therefore, he certainly doesn't need to bother asking for advice from those whom he deems less intelligent than himself.
 - c. The rich man.
 - (i) The rich man equates wealth with wisdom and assumes that anyone that has not the former lacks the latter.
 - (ii) He could not be more wrong according to the scriptures which declare that "the rich man is wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out." (**Pro 28:11**).
- viii. The man who "think[s] himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (**Gal 6:3**).
 - a. Being wise in one's own eyes is meaningless if one is not wise in God's sight (**2Co 10:18**).
 - b. "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain" (**1Co 3:20**).
 - c. He pronounces a "woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight" (**Isa 5:21**).
- ix. Christians are exhorted to "mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits" (**Rom 12:16**).
 - a. David, who was no simpleton, left Solomon a good example of a wise, rich, and powerful man who was humble enough to write: "LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me" (**Psa 131:1**).
 - b. As the old saying goes, "better to keep silent and have men think you a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt."

- c. It is a mark of wisdom to recognize when one is engaged in a discussion of a topic that is too high for him and to thus bow out humbly rather than pressing on proudly.
 - B. *Fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*
 - i. God's antidote to being highminded is to fear Him and depart from evil, which includes the evil of *pride* that God hates (**Pro 16:5**).
 - ii. Departing from evil is only possible when a man fears God and His judgment of it.
 - iii. **Pro 8:13** tells us that "the fear of the LORD is to hate evil," and the first two evils listed are "pride, and arrogancy" which brings us back to being not wise in our own eyes.
 - iv. When a man fears the LORD, he does so in part because of the awe-inspiring, infinite knowledge and wisdom of God (**Psa 139:1-6; Psa 147:5; Rom 11:33-34**).
 - v. Recognizing the limitlessness of the wisdom of God will quickly reveal the utter paltriness of his own, causing him to "be not wise in [his] own eyes."
- 8. **Pro 3:8** - "It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones."
 - A. Being humble and "not wise in thine own eyes" (**Pro 3:7**) is not only good for the soul, but for the body as well.
 - B. Pride, which is the opposite of humility, is detrimental to a man's inward man comprised of his soul and spirit.
 - i. Pride is destructive (**Pro 16:18; Pro 18:12; Pro 29:23**).
 - ii. When a man's spirit is wounded, it takes a toll on his physical health.
 - a. "by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken" (**Pro 15:13**).
 - b. "a broken spirit drieth the bones" (**Pro 17:22**).
 - c. "heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop" (**Pro 12:25**).
 - iii. Thus, working through a broken spirit, pride can *indirectly* cause bodily maladies.
 - a. David experienced this when he sinned against God and was too proud to confess it.
 - b. Only after he acknowledged his sin to God was his health restored (**Psa 32:3-5**).
 - iv. In addition to indirectly causing health trouble through a broken spirit, pride can also *directly* cause bodily affliction and even death through God's judgment of it.
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar's pride caused him to lose his mind and be driven from civilization into the field to grovel around like a beast for seven times over until he was humbled (**Dan 4:28-37**).
 - b. Haman's pride led to his own execution on a seventy-five foot gallows that he built to hang a man that refused to bow down to him (**Est 7:9-10**).
 - C. Conversely, just as pride can cause us physical problems, humility can foster good physical health, which is the crux of the teaching of the verse under consideration.
 - i. Humility will bring a man to honor (**Pro 18:12**) which shall uphold him (**Pro 29:23**).

- ii. The Lord "giveth grace unto the humble" (**Jam 4:6**) and will "exalt [them] in due time" (**1Pe 5:6**).
- iii. Being lifted up and brought to honour will cause a "merry heart" which "maketh a cheerful countenance" (**Pro 15:13**) and "doeth good like a medicine" (**Pro 17:22**).
- iv. Whereas the broken spirit caused by pride "drieth the bones" (**Pro 17:22**), humility is "health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones" (**Pro 3:8**).
- v. Even when the humble man gets sick, his uplifted spirit "will sustain his infirmity" (**Pro 18:14**).
- vi. While the haughty heart of the proud man is heading for destruction (**Pro 18:12**), the "sound heart" of the humble man "is the life of [his] flesh" (**Pro 14:30**).

9. **Pro 3:9** - "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:"

A. *Honour the LORD with thy substance*

- i. Contained in this verse and the next is both a commandment from God and a promise of blessing to those who keep it.
 - a. We are supposed to *honour* God with our *substance*.
 - b. Substance *n.* - 16. a. Possessions, goods, estate; means, wealth. arch. (chiefly as a reminiscence of biblical language). b. With a: An amount of wealth, a fortune; pl. riches, possessions.
 - c. Honour *v.* - 1. *trans.* To do honour to, pay worthy respect to (by some outward action); to worship, perform one's devotions to; to do obeisance or homage to; to celebrate.
 - d. Therefore, a key element of worshiping God is giving a portion of our wealth to Him.
 - e. We live in a nation "whose God is their belly" (**Php 3:19**), whom they honour in the way of the prodigal son who "wasted his *substance* with riotous living" (**Luk 15:13**).
- ii. This verse is an imperative statement, not a suggestion for the people of God.
- iii. The following is something to consider.
 - a. The word of God also commands us to give of our substance to the government in the form of taxes for the service they provide (**Rom 13:6-7**).
 - b. Why is it that some Christians obey the commandment to honour the government with their substance, but refuse, neglect, or forget to honour God with it?
 - (i) Both are commandments from God, but the former is more often obeyed because of the belief that to not do so will result in severe punishment, such as imprisonment or death.
 - (ii) The government is not the only one that promises painful judgment to those who don't give them their due.
 - (iii) God likewise threatens to curse and punish those who don't give Him His due (**Mal 3:8-9**; **Hag 1:9-11**).

- c. Those who pay their taxes but not their God demonstrate that they fear men more than Him, and that they believe the threats of men more than the threats of the LORD.
 - d. Such have their priorities backwards and should "serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire" (**Heb 12:28-29**), lest they end up on the receiving end of His rod.
- B. *Honour the LORD . . . with the firstfruits of all thine increase.*
- i. God is to be honoured with the *firstfruits* of all our increase.
 - a. Firstfruit *n.* - 1. The fruits first gathered in a season; the earliest products of the soil; esp. with reference to the custom of making offerings of these to God or the gods.
 - b. In other words, to give one's firstfruits is to give God a portion of one's income *first* before any other expenses are paid.
 - c. When creating a budget, a Christian should determine what percentage of his income that the LORD should get and make that the *first* line of his budget.
 - d. The remainder of the budget should then be allotted for all other expenses such as savings, taxes, housing, transportation, food, clothing, utilities, education, entertainment, etc.
 - e. Sadly, some Christians budget precisely opposite of God's prescription: they pay all of their expenses first and then give God whatever is left, if there is anything.
 - f. That is called giving God the *leftovers*, not the *firstfruits*.
 - ii. How do we give God our firstfruits when He is in heaven?
 - a. Though God cannot personally be given to in this life, His work in this earth can be.
 - b. When a man gives in support of the LORD's ministers and His house, he is giving unto the LORD (**Num 5:8-10**).
 - c. Under the Old Testament, Israel was supposed to support God's ministers, the priests and Levites, with their firstfruits since they had no inheritance in Israel and were not supposed to be out working in the fields, but rather working in the house of God and encouraging themselves in the word of God (**Deut 18:1-5; Eze 44:30; 2Ch 31:4; Neh 13:10-12**).
 - d. This principle is carried over into the New Testament.
 - (i) God's ministers were to be supported by the congregation under the law of Moses.
 - (ii) In like manner, God's ministers of His churches are likewise to be supported by their church under the New Testament (**1Co 9:6-14**).
 - e. Another way to give to God under the Old Testament was to give to the poor, the widows, and the fatherless (**Deut 26:12-13; Pro 19:17**).
 - f. Likewise under the New Testament are the LORD's people and His ministers responsible to give in support of the poor, widows, and fatherless (**Rom 12:13; Gal 2:9-10; 1Ti 5:16; Jam 1:27**).

- iii. The next question would be how much of one's income is considered the firstfruits?
 - a. Under the law of Moses, the *firstfruits* of one's increase was a tithe, which is a tenth (**2Ch 31:4-5**).
 - b. Giving the firstfruits was proportional giving.
 - (i) If the crop was plentiful, the firstfruits would be plentiful; if the crop was paltry due to a drought, the firstfruits would be paltry.
 - (ii) What about today under the New Testament?
 - (iii) There is no explicit commandment to give ten percent in the New Testament, but it does teach proportional giving: "let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (**1Co 16:2**).
 - (iv) If God has prospered us with much, then we should give more; if God has prospered us with little, then we should give less.
 - c. Without a specified percentage given by God in the New Testament, what proportion of his income should a Christian then give?
 - d. That is up to each man to decide for himself as "he purposeth in his heart" (**2Co 9:7**).
 - e. As for me and my house, we will walk in the steps of our fathers in the faith, Abraham and Jacob, and follow their example of giving 10% of our gross income to the Lord (**Heb 7:1-6; Gen 28:20-22**).

10. **Pro 3:10** - "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

- A. The previous verse gave the commandment; this one gives the reward for obeying it.
 - i. When we honour the LORD with our substance, God will make it to increase, filling our barns with plenty.
 - ii. If we give the firstfruits of all our increase to God, our presses will be overflowing with new wine.
- B. It is not hard for the carnal mind to understand that if seed is taken from the storehouse and sown in the earth it is not wasted, but rather is put to profitable use and will return more than was spent.
 - i. But the reasoning of fallen men would conclude that what is given to God and His work in the earth is lost.
 - ii. Faith, on the other hand, understands that, like the earth, God returns what was given to Him with dividends (**2Co 9:6**).
 - iii. Those that scatter will increase, but those that withhold more than is meet will tend to poverty (**Pro 11:24**).
 - iv. When we give to the poor, we lend to the Lord who repays us generously (**Pro 19:17**).
- C. How does God return gifts that are given to Him?
 - i. If one is a farmer, it's easy to imagine how God could send good weather and sufficient rain to boost the yield of the crop.

- ii. If a Christian works for a corporation, it shouldn't be hard for him to believe that God could move him up the corporate ladder or open up an opportunity for a better job elsewhere (**Psa 75:6-7**).
 - iii. If one is self-employed, it would be no stretch to envision the LORD sending more business prospects his way.
 - iv. If a man is going through hard times, the LORD can always prompt other generous people to give liberally to him in his time of need (**Luk 6:38**).
 - v. Whatever the situation, it would take no effort on the LORD's behalf to prosper the man who faithfully gives unto Him, for "with God nothing shall be impossible" (**Luk 1:37**).
- D. What then holds back Christians from experiencing the blessing of God which comes as a result of giving to Him?
- i. Given the facts from scripture which have been covered so far, I have to conclude that those who don't give their firstfruits to God do so for one of three reasons:
 - a. They don't believe God's promises to bless them if they give to Him and curse them if they don't.
 - b. They hate material wealth, and therefore don't give to the Lord to ensure that He will not bless them financially.
 - c. They are stupid. They believe that God will keep His promises to bless them, but they decide not give to Him anyway.
 - ii. Of these three possibilities, only one is could possibly to true for the vast majority of Christians.
 - a. Very few Christians are stupid enough to not give to God if they believe that He will bless them with abundance for it.
 - b. Almost nobody hates material wealth, and therefore would intentionally *not* give to God to ensure that He does *not* bless them.
 - c. That only leaves one possibility: they simply do not believe what God says.
 - (i) If someone with the means to do so and the character to keep his word promised to give you a guaranteed high return on investment on a portion of your income that you loaned to him, any man that *believed* him (and is not an idiot) would certainly do it.
 - (ii) The only reason for not investing with such a man would be if you did not trust him to keep his word and deliver on the high return he promised.
 - (iii) Therefore, to the extent that a Christian does not give to the Lord his firstfruits, *he is an unbeliever* to that extent.
 - iii. It's impossible to please God without believing that He is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (**Heb 11:6**).
 - iv. Such faithless Christians just don't believe that God will honour His word and prosper them if they give unto Him.
 - v. If they believed God's word, they would certainly give unto Him with a full expectation that the promised blessing would follow.
- E. In the Old Testament, the LORD offered Israel a challenge.

- i. They had not been giving Him their tithes and offerings that were required in those days (**Mal 3:8-9**).
 - ii. God told them to prove Him by bringing in their tithes and then wait and see if they were not overwhelmed with blessings from Him (**Mal 3:10-12**).
- F. God's nature and His faithfulness do not change (**Mal 3:6**).
 - i. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (**Heb 13:8**).
 - ii. If Christians would obey Jesus' commandment and "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [material needs] shall be added unto [them]" (**Mat 6:33**).
 - iii. Israel experienced this very thing in the days of king Hezekiah (**2Ch 31:10**).
 - iv. If a child of God by faith takes God's challenge to Israel and proves Him, he should not be surprised when God makes good on His word and "[his] barns be filled with plenty, and [his] presses shall burst out with new wine."
- G. A caveat
 - i. While God will ultimately bless and prosper those who give to Him, He also from time to time tests our faith (**Jam 1:2-4; Heb 11:17-19**).
 - ii. God put Israel through deprivation to prove them, to see if they would keep His commandments, and to make them remember that it is He who gives wealth (**Deut 8:2-3, 16-18**).
 - iii. Paul said that he had learned how to be abased and how to abound (**Php 4:11-12**).
 - a. I likewise have gone through seasons of abasement and abundance in my life.
 - b. I know how to abound.
 - (i) From the time I graduated high school until I went into the ministry 13 years later, I continually and consistently abounded financially.
 - (ii) I gave the Lord the firstfruits of all my income since the day I was baptized in 2005 (and for a while before that).
 - (iii) The Lord filled my barns with plenty and my presses burst out with new wine during that time.
 - c. I also know how to be abased.
 - (i) Since going into the ministry, I have learned how to be abased.
 - (ii) But even after entering the ministry, I had seasons where I had continual increase for a while.
 - d. Much of the abasement that I have experienced in my life is due to the choices that I have made based on my principles.
 - (i) I obeyed the call to enter the ministry, knowing that it would result in an enormous drop in income (**Pro 13:7**).
 - (ii) I worked low paying part time jobs while in the ministry instead of a high paying full time professional job so that I would have time to do the work of the ministry.
 - (iii) I had people excluded from the church on different occasions knowing that it would significantly diminish my income.

- (iv) There were other decisions I made in my previous church that cost me significantly financially.
- (v) I chose to resign from pastoring my previous church to move down here to pastor this church knowing that it would significantly diminish my income (again).
- (vi) I choose to have my wife stay at home and be a homemaker because of my convictions.
- (vii) I refuse to take any government aid (housing, food, healthcare, etc.) because of my principles.
- (viii) I refuse to get healthcare subsidies (Obamacare/Trumpcare, Medicaid) from the government because of my principles.
- (ix) I choose not to use the VA for my healthcare because of my principles.
- (x) I choose to use Christian Healthcare Ministries instead of health insurance which results in me paying for most of my healthcare out of pocket.
- (xi) These are *my* principles and convictions.
 - 1. I'm not trying to push them on you.
 - 2. I tell you these things because I am supposed to be an example (**1Ti 4:12; 2Ti 3:10-11**).
 - 3. I invite you to consider them and inquire as to why I hold them if you are interested.
- e. Through all of the hard times, I have always given the Lord the firstfruits of all my increase, no matter how bad things were.
- f. Though I have been through difficult financial times on more than one occasion, the Lord has always come through in amazing ways and taken care of me and provided for my needs.
- g. It has been an incredible thing to witness.
- iv. So don't assume that giving to God is like purchasing a winning lottery ticket every time.
- v. There may be times that God will put you through financial hardship, either because of your own foolish choices (**Pro 21:20**), or because He wants to prove your faith.
- vi. But He will ultimately provide for your needs and bless you if you trust Him and give to Him your firstfruits (**Php 4:19; Psalms 37:25; Pro 3:9-10**).

11. **Pro 3:11** - "My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:"

A. *My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD*

- i. Chastening is not a joyous, but a grievous, experience (**Heb 12:11**).
 - a. Chastening *n.* - The action of the verb chasten; disciplinary punishment, chastisement, correction; subduing of excess or intensity.
 - b. Punishment is painful and therefore has the tendency to provoke resentment rather than appreciation from the receiver.

- c. Thus the reason that Solomon instructs us to not *despise* the chastening of the LORD.
 - d. Despise v. - 1. *trans.* To look down upon; to view with contempt; to think scornfully or slightly of.
- ii. A child whose father punishes him for his disobedience will often view that correction with contempt and scorn while his behind is stinging.
 - a. God's children likewise look with disdain upon His discipline while they are suffering it.
 - b. When the child later understands that the chastening of his father was for his profit (**Heb 12:10**), not his destruction, he then gives his father reverence (**Heb 12:9**).
 - c. So it should be with Christians and their Heavenly Father.
 - d. They must realize that God chastens them because He loves them (**Heb 12:6**).
 - e. Jesus warned the church at Laodicea that "as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (**Rev 3:19**).
- iii. If you "endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (**Heb 12:7**).
 - a. A child is not a son, but a bastard, if his father chastens him not (**Heb 12:8**).
 - b. Therefore, enduring chastisement from God is evidence that one is a child of God.
- iv. Though God's correction is not pleasant at the time, it yields "the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (**Heb 12:11**).
 - a. That is the reason to not despise the chastening of the LORD.
 - (i) It is for our happiness, not our hurt.
 - (ii) It's a sign that God loves us, not loathes us.
 - (iii) It yields a life of righteousness, not reproach.
 - b. So the next time you are being chastened by God for your sin or foolish decisions, thank God for the rod (**Job 5:17**).
- v. What form does God's rod take?
 - a. The LORD has numerous methods to punish his disobedient people.
 - (i) God *chastened* Israel by making them wander in the wilderness for 40 years for their unbelief and rebellion.
 - (ii) While in the wilderness, the LORD let them suffer hunger to prove their faithfulness (**Deut 8:2-5**).
 - b. Men are God's hands (**Psa 17:14**).
 - (i) Sometimes He uses rods in their hands to lay stripes upon His children who are in need of it.
 - (ii) In the Davidic covenant, God promised to punish Solomon thusly if he committed iniquity, which promise was also a prophecy of the sufferings of Christ for the sins of the elect which He bore (**2Sa 7:14**).
 - (iii) Jesus Christ was "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (**Isa 53:4**) and it "pleased the LORD to bruise him" (**Isa 53:10**).

- (iv) It was God the Father who laid those stripes on Christ through a scourge in the hands of men (**Luk 22:63-64; Joh 19:1-3**).
- c. God also chastens His children by allowing them to reap what they have sown (**Gal 6:7**).
 - (i) He does so by letting them "eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices" (**Pro 1:31**).
 - (ii) This can be in the form of poverty coming to the sluggard (**Pro 6:9-11**) or alimony and STDs to the adulterer (**Pro 5:10-11**).
 - (iii) This can be in the form of having rebellious and foolish children who were not trained and disciplined properly (**Pro 17:25; Pro 19:13**).
 - (iv) The more grievous the sin, the more severe the punishment.
 - (v) If we are often reprov'd by God and we harden our necks, we can expect sudden destruction without remedy (**Pro 29:1**).
- B. *Neither be weary of his correction.*
 - i. Understanding that God's chastisement is for our good, we should not "be weary of his correction."
 - ii. Nor should we try to avoid it when it is deserved.
 - a. We should rather pray as Jeremiah did that God will "correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing" (**Jer 10:24**).
 - b. We can embrace God's correction while at the same time seeking mercy (**Hab 3:2; Psa 38:1**).
 - iii. Though painful, God's chastening is ultimately for our good, for "when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (**1Co 11:32**).
 - iv. But, even though the correction of the LORD is for our good, it is still painful and can be justly avoided if we judge ourselves, "for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (**1Co 11:31**).

12. **Pro 3:12** - "For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."

A. *For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth.*

- i. One of the ways that God shows us that He loves us is by chastening and correcting us when we sin.
 - a. If God loves you, He corrects you.
 - b. Therefore, if you receive God's correction, you know that He loves you.
 - c. An earthly father will not spank other parents' unruly children (though he may be tempted to).
 - (i) He will only spank his own whom he loves.
 - (ii) Likewise, God doesn't correct the spawn of Satan, but rather only His own children whom He loves.
 - (iii) God doesn't love the wicked (**Psa 5:5**).

- (iv) Therefore, He doesn't chasten them as a father chastens his children.
 - ii. The purpose of God's chastening of His children is for correction.
 - a. Correct v. - 1. *trans.* To set right, amend (a thing); to substitute what is right for the errors or faults in (a writing, etc.). Sometimes, loosely, to point out or mark the errors in, in order to their amendment. 3. To set right, amend (a person); to cure of an error or fault; to admonish or rebuke, or to point out the errors or faults of, in order to amendment. 4. To punish for faults of character or conduct (properly, in order to amendment); to chastise, chasten.
 - b. The Lord may punish worldly men or even kill them for their wickedness, but He doesn't do so for *correction* as He does for his children.
 - c. Paul expounded on this principle in the book of Hebrews (**Heb 12:6-11**).
 - iii. Those who are not chastened and corrected by the Lord are bastards, not sons.
 - a. Korah, who was an unregenerate rebel (**Jud 1:11-13**), was punished by God, but not *corrected* in a fatherly way (**Num 16:32-33**).
 - b. When the wicked are consigned to hell at death and to the lake of fire after the resurrection, they "go away into everlasting punishment" (**Mat 25:46**), and "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (**Rev 20:10**).
 - c. They are not going there for *correction* from a loving God, but for "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (**2Th 1:9**) and to "drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and [they] shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb" (**Rev 14:10**).
 - d. Better to be chastened in this life by a loving Father than to be tormented for all eternity by an angry Judge.
- B. *Even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.*
- i. God corrects His children *even as* (just as) an earthly father corrects his son whom he loves.
 - a. An earthly father who loves his son will not "spareth his rod", but "chasteneth him betimes" (**Pro 13:24**).
 - b. Betimes v. - 1. At an early time, period, or season; early in the year; early in life.
 - c. Therefore, God corrects His children early and "in measure", not leaving them "altogether unpunished", but also not making "a full end" of them (**Jer 30:11**).
 - ii. A father chastens his son while there is hope and will not "spare for his crying" (**Pro 19:18**).
 - a. A good father will not end the punishment when the first tear drops.
 - b. God likewise will not end His chastisement as soon as the pain is first felt, but will continue it until the lesson is learned.

- iii. When a child whose father loves him rebels, he will "beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell" (**Pro 23:14**).
- iv. Our heavenly Father will likewise lay stripes on His children to deliver them from the hell on earth that awaits them if they continue in their sins.
- v. May God be praised that He, just as a good earthly father, chastens and lovingly corrects us to mold us into the obedient and godly children that He would have us to be.

13. **Pro 3:13** - "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding."

- A. The man that finds wisdom and gets understanding is a fortunate man who has found favor with God.
- B. Today we think of a *happy* man as one who is cheerful and joyous.
- C. But when the KJV was translated, *happy* meant "having good 'hap' or fortune; lucky, fortunate; favoured by lot, position, or other external circumstance" (OED).
 - i. When Ruth returned to Israel with her mother-in-law Naomi after both of them had lost their husbands, "her *hap* was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz" (**Rut 2:3**).
 - ii. As the rest of the story goes on to tell, Ruth was quite *fortunate* and *lucky* to have ended up in Boaz's field.
- D. Like Ruth, the man that finds wisdom is a *happy* man.
 - i. Wisdom is found in the word of God (**Pro 2:6**) which the natural man cannot *understand* (**1Co 2:14**), nor can be subject unto (**Rom 8:7**).
 - ii. Furthermore, according to this verse, wisdom is *found*, which implies that it must be sought after from God (**Mat 7:7**).
 - iii. But "there is none that seeketh after God" in his unregenerate state (**Rom 3:11**).
 - iv. In order for the word of God to not be foolishness to a man, God has to first save him from his sins (**1Co 1:18**) and give him a new spirit which can know it (**1Co 2:12**).
 - v. Now here's where the *happy* part comes in.
 - a. God only saves those whom He foreknew, chose, and predestinated to be His children before the world began (**Eph 1:4-5; Rom 8:29-30**).
 - b. Therefore, the man who has the capacity to find wisdom and get understanding is a *happy* (fortunate) man because he was chosen by God and given that ability.
 - c. Solomon's father David described the man whom God chooses as a happy man, saying, "*Blessed* is the man whom thou chooseth, and causest to approach unto thee..." (**Psa 65:4**).
- E. Not only is a man *happy* to have the *ability* to find wisdom and get understanding, but he is *happier* yet when he *acquires* them.
- F. Solomon explains in the next few verses why this is the case.
 - i. Wisdom's merchandise and gain is better than silver and fine gold (**Pro 3:14**).
 - ii. She is more precious than rubies (**Pro 3:15**).
 - iii. She affords a long life accompanied by riches and honor (**Pro 3:16**).

- iv. She gives a pleasant and peaceful existence (**Pro 3:17**).
- v. She is a source of abundant life to those who lay hold upon her (**Pro 3:18**).

14. **Pro 3:14** - "For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

A. *For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver*

- i. In the previous verse, Solomon stated that the man that finds wisdom is *happy* (blessed and fortunate).
- ii. In this verse (**Pro 3:14**) and the following four (**Pro 3:15-18**), he gives several reasons why this is so.
- iii. The first reason why the man who finds wisdom is *happy* is that its merchandise is better than the merchandise of silver.
 - a. Merchandise *n.* - The action or business of buying and selling goods or commodities for profit; the exchange of commodities for other commodities or for money.
 - b. Silver has been a highly sought-after metal for millennia because it is rare, valuable, and useful in a variety of applications.
 - c. Its widespread appeal due to its beauty and utility made it a commodity that could be traded for any other commodity, hence the reason it became money, a universal medium of exchange.
 - d. For these reasons, its *merchandise* surpasses that of most other things on this earth.
- iv. The *merchandise*, or exchange value, of silver is high, but not as lofty as wisdom.
 - a. The same properties that make silver a preferred commodity likewise make wisdom highly desirable.
 - b. Like silver, wisdom is rare, valuable, beautiful, and useful.
 - (i) Wisdom is so rare that when Solomon was looking for a wise man, he lamented the fact that, "one man among a thousand have I found" (**Ecc 7:28**).
 - (ii) Wisdom is so valuable that it is said to be "the principal thing" (**Pro 4:7**).
 - (iii) Principal *adj.* - 1. First or highest in rank or importance; that is at the head of all the rest; of the *greatest* account or *value*; foremost.
 - (iv) Wisdom is as beautiful as fine jewelry (**Pro 25:12**).
 - (v) And finally, wisdom is exceedingly useful, for it guides a man through all of life's decisions, enabling him to choose the best means to the proper ends.
 - c. As Solomon said, it truly is better to get wisdom than silver (**Pro 16:16**).

B. *And the gain thereof than fine gold.*

- i. The second reason that the man who finds wisdom is *happy* is because the gain of wisdom is better than the gain of fine gold.

- ii. Gain *n.* - 1. Booty, prey, spoil. *Obs.* 2. a. Increase of possessions, resources or advantages of any kind, consequent on some action or change of conditions; an instance of this; profit, emolument; opposed to *loss*.
- iii. *Fine* gold is gold that is "of superior quality, choice of its kind; free from foreign or extraneous matter, having no dross or other impurity; clear, pure, refined" (OED).
- iv. Fine gold is one of the most precious metals in the world.
- v. The gain that can be acquired with fine gold is exceedingly high, yet it pales in comparison to the gain that wisdom affords.
 - a. Gold can fill a man's house with possessions; wisdom gives him the sense to resist doing so (**Pro 15:16; Ecc 5:11-12**).
 - b. Gold enables a man to travel the world; wisdom teaches him that time spent in the house of God is far more valuable (**Psa 27:4; Psa 84:10**).
 - c. Gold allows a man to live in pleasures; wisdom teaches him to live in obedience to God (**Ecc 12:13**).
 - d. Gold makes it possible to eat whatever you want; wisdom teaches moderation (**Pro 23:20-21; Php 4:5**).
 - e. Gold makes many friends (**Pro 19:4**); wisdom filters out and excludes most of them (**Pro 13:20; 1Co 15:33**).
- vi. The gain of wisdom is without a doubt far better than that of fine gold, and happy indeed is the man that finds it.

15. **Pro 3:15** - "She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

- A. In **Pro 3:13**, Solomon declared that the man that finds wisdom is happy (fortunate).
- B. In verse 14, he gave two reasons why that is so.
- C. In this verse, he gives two more reasons to prove his case.
- D. *She is more precious than rubies.*
 - i. Rubies are among the most rare and expensive gemstones on earth, costing between \$1000-\$3000 per carat for one of high quality.
 - ii. To this day, rubies are referred to as *precious* (of great price; having a high value; costly - OED) *stones*.
 - iii. As he describes the exceeding value of wisdom, Solomon compares it to increasingly more valuable commodities.
 - iv. In the previous verse he began by comparing wisdom to silver and then to gold.
 - a. Historically gold was worth about 16 times as much as silver.
 - b. Today it is worth about 85 times as much (October, 2019).
 - v. By weight, rubies are currently worth approximately 200 times as much as gold (August, 2018).
 - vi. A believer should now begin to understand the immense value that God places on wisdom.
 - vii. Since wisdom is found in God's word (**Pro 2:6**), how valuable must reading, searching, and meditating in the scriptures be in the eyes of God?
- E. *All the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.*

- i. In the unlikely case that a man has no interest in silver, gold, or rubies, God gives one final comparison that proves the unparalleled value of wisdom.
- ii. *All* of the things that a man desires cannot equal wisdom.
- iii. Wisdom doesn't merely surpass the value of a man's most prized possessions; or even *all* the things that he owns; or greater yet, *all* the things that he *desires*; but rather *all* the things that he *can* desire.
- iv. Take all of the endless things that a man can think of and wish for and add them all together, and they not only are unequal to wisdom, but they are not to be compared to her.
- v. Just as a drop cannot be compared to an ocean, or a candle to a forest fire, so all the priceless things a man can conceive of cannot be compared to wisdom.
- vi. Do you now understand why God said that "Wisdom is the principal (first or highest in rank or importance) thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding" (**Pro 4:7**)?

16. **Pro 3:16** - "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour."

- A. Solomon continues giving the reasons why the man that finds wisdom and gets understanding is *happy* (blessed) (**Pro 3:13**).
- B. Wisdom has both her hands full with blessings that she is ready to give to those who seek her and keep her ways.
- C. *Length of days is in her right hand*;
 - i. The first of wisdom's blessings is *length of days*.
 - ii. Long life comes as a result of remembering God's law and keeping His commandments (**Pro 3:2**).
 - iii. *Length of days* is the more important of the two blessings that wisdom possesses.
 - a. We know this for two reasons.
 - b. First of all, it is mentioned firstly in v.16.
 - c. Secondly, it is in wisdom's *right hand*.
 - (i) The right hand is a symbol of power (**Psa 20:6**) and authority (**1Pe 3:22**).
 - (ii) The right hand is a symbol of God's grace and mercy (**Mat 25:33-34**).
 - (iii) The right hand clearly has preeminence over the left hand in scripture (**Ecc 10:2**).
- D. *and in her left hand riches and honour*.
 - i. Riches and honour would seem to many to be a greater blessing than long life.
 - ii. But the word order and the fact that riches and honour are found in the *left hand* indicate that they are inferior to long life.
 - iii. Nevertheless, riches and honour are blessings from God (**1Ch 29:12**).
 - iv. He bestows them on the faithful (**2Ch 17:3-6**) who seek wisdom (**Pro 8:18**).

17. **Pro 3:17** - "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

- A. *Her ways are ways of pleasantness*,

- i. This is the only place in the Bible where the word *pleasantness* is found.
- ii. Pleasantness *n.* - The quality of being pleasant (in various senses: see the adj.).
- iii. Pleasant *adj.* - 1. Having the quality of giving pleasure; originally synonymous with pleasing, but now used more vaguely: Agreeable to the mind, feelings, or senses; such as one likes.
- iv. Therefore, the ways of wisdom are pleasurable, pleasing, agreeable, and likeable.
- v. In other words, finding wisdom and getting understanding (**Pro 3:13**), will bring *happiness* to one's life.
- vi. When *knowledge* is *pleasant* unto thy soul (**Pro 2:10**), thy *life* shall be *pleasant* (**Pro 2:11, 20-21**).
- vii. When brethren seek wisdom and are in unity, our church will be *pleasant* as well (**Psa 133:1**).

B. *And all her paths are peace.*

- i. All of wisdom's paths are peace.
- ii. If a course of action in your life is not leading to peace, chances are that that path you have chosen is not a wise path.
- iii. Peace *n.* - I. 1. a. Freedom from, or cessation of, war or hostilities; that condition of a nation or community in which it is not at war with another.
- iv. If you are constantly fighting battles with people (spouse, children, parents, bosses, coworkers, teachers, government, neighbors, etc.), then you are not seeking wisdom.
- v. If we work righteousness by living wisely, we will have peaceful lives (**Isa 32:17-18**).
- vi. We should try our best to live peaceably with all men (**Rom 12:18**).
- vii. Seeking wisdom from the word of God will facilitate that.

18. **Pro 3:18** - "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her."

A. *She is a tree of life*

- i. *Wisdom* is the source of life.
 - a. Jesus, the wisdom of God (**1Co 1:24**), came that His sheep may have life and have it more abundantly (**Joh 10:10**).
 - b. Life *n.* - I. The condition or attribute of living or being alive; animate existence. Opposed to *death*. 1. a. Primarily, the condition, quality, or fact of being a living person or animal. d. Animate existence viewed as dependent on sustenance or favourable physical conditions. (For *necessary of life*, *staff of life*, see those words.) Hence, that which is necessary to sustain life; a livelihood, one's living. 5. a. The cause or source of living; the vivifying or animating principle; he who or that which makes or keeps a thing alive (in various senses); 'soul'; 'essence'. Hence (*poet. nonce-use*) = 'life-blood'.
 - c. Food which comes from natural trees is for the maintenance of man's physical life (**Deut 20:19**).

- d. Wisdom that comes from Christ is for the maintenance of man's spiritual life (**Ecc 7:12; Pro 4:22**).
- ii. The "tree of life" in **Pro 3:18** is a reference to the tree of life that God placed in the garden of Eden along side the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (**Gen 2:9**).
 - a. The fruit of the tree of life had the ability to cause Adam and Eve to physically live forever if eaten (**Gen 3:22**).
 - b. There was apparently something contained in that fruit which stopped and reversed the aging and degenerative process which ends in death (**Rev 22:2**).
 - c. The Lord barred Adam and Eve from the tree of life to prevent them from living forever (**Gen 3:24**).
 - d. Those that partake of Christ, the wisdom of God (**1Co 1:24**), have eternal life (**Joh 6:51, 54**).
 - e. Those that overcome this world by faithfully keeping God's commandments will be given access to the tree of life in heaven (**Rev 2:7; Rev 22:14**).
 - f. We have access to a foretaste of that tree of life when we embrace wisdom through the word of God.
- B. *to them that lay hold upon her*:
 - i. Wisdom is only a tree of life to us if we *lay hold upon her* (**Pro 4:13**).
 - ii. Fast *adv.* - 1. a. In a fast manner, so as not to be moved or shaken; *lit.* and *fig.*; firmly, fixedly. Often with *stand, sit, stick*, etc. 2. a. With firm grasp, attachment, or adhesion; so as not to permit of escape or detachment; tightly, securely. Often with *bind, hold*, etc. *lit.* and *fig.* See also *hold v.*
 - iii. Hold *v.* - 1. a. To keep watch over, keep in charge, herd, 'keep' (sheep, etc.); to rule (men). Only in OE. and early ME. *Obs.* 2. a. To keep from getting away; to keep fast, grasp.
 - iv. We must *hold fast* the faithful word as we have been taught (**Tit 1:9; 2Ti 1:13**).
- C. *and happy is every one that retaineth her*.
 - i. We are blessed (happy) when we *retain* wisdom.
 - ii. Retain *v.* - 1. a. To restrain; to hold back, check, or stop; to prevent or hinder. *Obs.* c. To keep in custody or under control; to prevent from departing, issuing, or separating; to hold fixed in some place or position.
 - iii. We will not be blessed if we let it go.
 - iv. We must buy the truth and sell it not (**Pro 23:23**).
 - v. If we *retain* God's words, we shall *live* (**Pro 4:4**).

19. **Pro 3:19** - "The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens."

A. *The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth*

- i. God founded the earth by wisdom in two senses.
 - a. He founded it by Jesus Christ who is *the wisdom of God* (**1Co 1:24**).
 - (i) Wisdom *n.* - 1. c. as one of the manifestations of the divine nature in Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Cor. i. 24, 30, etc.); hence used as

- a title of the second person of the Trinity (*the Wisdom of the Father*); also occas. applied to God or the Trinity.
- (ii) Jesus Christ as the preincarnate Word, the 2nd person of the Trinity, created all things including the earth (**1Jo 5:7; Joh 1:1-3; Eph 3:9**).
 - (iii) By the word of the Lord the heavens and earth were made (**2Pe 3:5**).
- b. God also founded the earth by His wisdom (His wise planning and actions) (**Jer 10:12**).
- (i) Wisdom *n.* - 1. a. Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends; sometimes, less strictly, sound sense, esp. in practical affairs: opp. to *folly*.
 - (ii) In order to create this incredibly complex planet and all life on it, God had to exercise sound judgment when choosing the means to bring it into existence.
- B. *by understanding hath he established the heavens.*
- i. God stretched out the heaven by His understanding (**Jer 51:15**).
 - ii. Understanding *n.* - 1. a. (Without article.) Power or ability to understand; intellect, intelligence. 2. The intellectual faculty as manifested in a particular person or set of persons.
 - iii. Establish *v.* - 1. To render stable or firm. †a. To strengthen by material support (obs.). †b. To ratify, confirm, validate (obs.). 2. a. To fix, settle, institute or ordain permanently, by enactment or agreement.
 - iv. To create the sun, moon, planets, and all of the innumerable stars and then to engineer their courses so that they all stay in their circuits perfectly to provide light, heat, seasons, signs, and calendrical and navigational functions for humanity on earth would take an infinite level of intelligence (**Psa 147:4-5; Isa 40:26**).
20. **Pro 3:20** - "By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew."
- A. *By his knowledge the depths are broken up,*
- i. The *depths* refer to the oceans and seas (**Exo 15:4-5**).
 - ii. Depth *n.* - II. Something that is deep. 7. a. A deep water; a deep part of the sea, or of any body of water. Usually in pl.; now only poetic and rhetorical. b. The great abyss of waters; the deep. *Obs.*
 - iii. God knows how to break up the depths, and the depths are afraid of Him (**Psa 77:16**).
 - iv. God used His knowledge to break open the fountains of the great deep and flood the earth in the days of Noah (**Gen 7:11-12**).
- B. *and the clouds drop down the dew.*
- i. Dew *n.* - 1. a. The moisture deposited in minute drops upon any cool surface by the condensation of the vapour in the atmosphere; formed after a hot day during or towards night, and plentiful in the early morning.
 - ii. The heavens give dew (**Zec 8:12**).

- a. Heaven *n.* - 2. a. By extension (in accordance with Biblical use) the region of the atmosphere in which the clouds float, the winds blow, and the birds fly; as in the more or less poetical expressions, the clouds, winds, breath, fowls of heaven. Rain or dew of heaven, so called as falling (or supposed to fall) from the clouds.
 - b. Dew comes from the moisture in the air.
 - c. The air is the heaven.
 - d. Therefore, dew comes from the heaven.
 - iii. There are clouds of dew (**Isa 18:4**).
 - a. Clouds of dew are what we call *fog*.
 - b. Dew and fog are formed by the same process.
 - c. "Water vapour will condense into droplets depending on the temperature. The temperature at which droplets form is called the dew point. When surface temperature drops, eventually reaching the dew point, atmospheric water vapor condenses to form small droplets on the surface. This process distinguishes dew from those hydrometeors (meteorological occurrences of water), which form directly in air that has cooled to its dew point (typically around condensation nuclei), such as fog or clouds. The thermodynamic principles of formation, however, are the same. Dew is usually formed at night." (*Dew*, [Wikipedia](#), 11-4-2019)
 - d. Since clouds are water vapor in the air, and dew is water vapor in the air that is condensed on the ground, therefore it can be said that "clouds drop down the dew."
 - iv. The clouds drop down the dew because God in His amazing knowledge designed it that way.
21. **Pro 3:21** - "My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:"
- A. *My son, let not them depart from thine eyes:*
- i. The *them* in this verse refers to *wisdom and understanding*.
 - a. Solomon stated in **Pro 3:13** that the man that finds wisdom and understanding is happy (blessed, fortunate), and then he gave the reason for it in **Pro 3:14-18**.
 - b. Solomon then again extolled wisdom and understanding in **Pro 3:19-20** by showing that the Lord used them to create the universe.
 - c. In **Pro 3:21**, Solomon again exhorts his son to lay hold on wisdom and understanding.
 - d. In **Pro 3:22-26** he gives additional benefits and blessings that accrue from getting and retaining wisdom.
 - ii. In order to possess the blessings of wisdom and understanding, we must *let not them depart from our eyes*.
 - iii. There are two ways which we can do this: *physically* and *spiritually*.
 - a. Physically
 - (i) Wisdom and understanding come from the word of God (**Pro 2:6**).

- (ii) If we continually read the scriptures, they will literally remain in the sight of our eyes.
- b. Spiritually
 - (i) Our eyes also represent our understanding (**Eph 1:18**).
 - (ii) Hence the reason that when we understand something, we often say "I see."
 - (iii) By keeping wisdom and understanding in our thoughts and our "mind's eye" we don't let them depart from us.
 - (iv) In other words, we should always be thinking about how to be wise.
- B. *keep sound wisdom and discretion*:
 - i. There are different types of wisdom.
 - a. There is the wisdom of God (**1Co 1:21**) and the wisdom of this world (**1Co 1:20**).
 - b. The wisdom of this world is devilish (**Jam 3:15**).
 - c. The wisdom of God is *sound wisdom*.
 - (i) Sound *adj.* - II. 8. a. In full accordance with fact, reason, or good sense; founded on true or well-established grounds; free from error, fallacy, or logical defect; good, strong, valid.
 - (ii) Wisdom *n.* - 1. a. Capacity of judging rightly in matters relating to life and conduct; soundness of judgement in the choice of means and ends; sometimes, less strictly, sound sense, esp. in practical affairs: opp. to *folly*.
 - d. We must keep sound wisdom, wisdom that is true, good, and free from error if we are to experience the blessing that comes from it.
 - ii. We must also keep *discretion*.
 - a. Discretion *n.* - I. 1. The action of separating or distinguishing, or condition of being distinguished or disjunct; separation, disjunction, distinction. II. 2. The action of discerning or judging; judgement; decision, discrimination. III. 6. Ability to discern or distinguish what is right, befitting, or advisable, esp. as regards one's own conduct or action; the quality of being discreet; discernment; prudence, sagacity, circumspection, sound judgement.
 - b. Discreet *a.* - 1. Showing discernment or judgement in the guidance of one's own speech and action; judicious, prudent, circumspect, cautious; often *esp.* that can be silent when speech would be inconvenient.
 - c. Wisdom enables a man to make sound decisions, and discretion enables him to know when to act and when not to.

22. **Pro 3:22** - "So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck."

- A. *So shall they be life unto thy soul*,
 - i. When kept, wisdom and understanding are life to the soul.
 - ii. They don't give physical life, although they can help to sustain it (**Pro 3:2, 16, 18**).
 - iii. They don't give eternal life to the soul; only God does that (**Joh 10:28**).

- iv. But they do give health and *quality of life* to the soul (**Pro 4:22; Pro 16:22**).
 - a. Living in sin makes one dead while they live (**1Ti 5:6; Rev 3:1**).
 - b. Living in wisdom makes one enjoy the best that life has to offer.
- B. *and grace to thy neck*.
 - i. Wisdom and understanding will make one attractive to others.
 - ii. Grace *n.* - I. Pleasing quality, gracefulness. 1. The quality of producing favourable impressions; attractiveness, charm. Now usually with more restricted application: The attractiveness or charm belonging to elegance of proportions, or (especially) ease and refinement of movement, action, or expression.
 - iii. Wisdom gives a Christian a beautiful neck, spiritually speaking.
 - iv. Her beautiful neck becomes even more attractive when the commandments of God are worn on it as a necklace (**Pro 1:9; Pro 3:1, 3**).
 - v. A wise woman will be far more attractive to a godly man than will a beautiful woman without discretion (**Pro 11:22**).
 - vi. "...how ornamental is Christ and his righteousness to a believer! how lovely is the person that is steady in his principles, and regular in his practices! who stands fast in the truths of the Gospel, and whose conversation is as becomes it!" (John Gill, Pro 3:22)

23. **Pro 3:23** - "Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble."

- A. *Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely*,
 - i. Keeping wisdom, understanding (**Pro 3:13**), and discretion (**Pro 3:21**) continually before our eyes will keep us safe in our Christian walk.
 - a. Walk *v.* - II. *intr.* To journey, move about, esp. on foot. 2. To go from place to place; to journey, wander. 6. *fig.* a. Chiefly in religious use, after Bible examples: To conduct oneself, behave (ill or well, wisely or unwisely). Sometimes with reference to a metaphorical 'path' or 'way'. *to walk with God* (Gen. v. 22), interpreted to mean 'to lead a godly life' (so rendered by Coverdale, after Luther; later versions retain the Heb. phrase), or to have intimate communion with God.
 - b. Safely *adv.* - In a safe manner. 1. Without harm or injury occasioned or received. Often with verbs of *coming*, *going*, *keeping*, and the like, where the adj. might be used (see safe a. 1).
 - ii. Wisdom will guide us in our lives and teach us to steer clear of dangerous situations and people (**Pro 2:10-20**).
 - iii. After we are converted, we should have the wisdom to not walk in the old paths we used to (**Eph 4:17-24; 1Pe 4:3-4**).
- B. *and thy foot shall not stumble*.
 - i. Stumble *v.* - 1. *intr.* To miss one's footing, or trip over an obstacle, in walking or running, so as to fall or be in danger of falling.
 - ii. In other words, wisdom keeps us from falling.
 - iii. When we are walking in wisdom, we are walking in the light of the Lord (**1Jo 1:7**).

- iv. As long as we continue to use the word of God as the light for our path (**Pro 6:23**) we will not stumble in the darkness (**Pro 4:19**) and fall into sin.
24. **Pro 3:24** - "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet."
- A. *When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid:*
 - i. There are a few reasons that possessing wisdom causes us to not be afraid when we lie down.
 - a. Wisdom teaches us to have faith in God which is the antidote to fear (**Psa 56:3-4**).
 - b. Wisdom teaches us to be honest in our dealings (**1Th 4:11-12**) so that we don't have a guilty conscience keeping us awake a night.
 - c. Wisdom teaches us to keep our lives simple so that we are not stressed when we lie down to sleep (**Ecc 5:12**).
 - d. Wisdom teaches us to stay away from dangerous places and people (**Pro 1:10-19**).
 - e. Wisdom teaches us to live within our means so that we don't have money fears keeping us up at night (**Pro 21:20**).
 - ii. When your life is lived according to God's wisdom, you will look forward to going to bed and not rather lamenting "would God it were morning!" (**Deut 28:67**).
 - B. *yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.*
 - i. Wisdom teaches us to work hard (**Rom 12:11**) which makes for sweet sleep (**Ecc 5:12**).
 - ii. God gives his beloved sleep (**Psa 127:2**).
25. **Pro 3:25** - "Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh."
- A. *Be not afraid of sudden fear,*
 - i. Sudden *adj.* - 1. a. Of actions, events, conditions: Happening or coming without warning or premonition; taking place or appearing all at once.
 - ii. Fear *n.* - 1. In OE.: A sudden and terrible event; peril. 2. a. The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil.
 - iii. We must not fear fear.
 - iv. Franklin D. Roosevelt was wrong when he said "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself" in his first inaugural address.
 - v. The Lord is on our side, so we should not fear (**Psa 118:6**).
 - B. *neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.*
 - i. Desolation *n.* - 1. The action of laying waste a land, etc., destroying its people, crops, and buildings, and making it unfit for habitation; utter devastation; an act or occasion of this kind.
 - ii. The desolation of the wicked often happens suddenly (**Pro 6:12-15**).
 - a. God destroyed the earth with a flood suddenly after waiting for 120 years.
 - b. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah suddenly.

- c. Babylon was desolated suddenly (**Isa 47:11**).
 - d. The wicked have *sudden destruction* at the second coming of Christ (**1Th 5:3**).
 - e. God is longsuffering, but once the space of repentance runs out, the wicked will be *destroyed suddenly* (**Pro 29:1**).
 - iii. If we are living wise and godly lives, we need not worry about the sudden desolation of the wicked because the Lord will protect us from it as the next verse states.
26. **Pro 3:26** - "For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken."
- A. *For the LORD shall be thy confidence,*
 - i. Confidence *n.* - 1. The mental attitude of trusting in or relying on a person or thing; firm trust, reliance, faith.
 - ii. The reason we don't need to be afraid of the sudden desolation of the wicked is because our faith and reliance is in God for our safety.
 - iii. We will only *behold* the destruction of the wicked because God is our refuge (**Psa 91:8-9**).
 - iv. Always put your confidence in the Lord and not men or governments (**Psa 118:8-9**).
 - v. Strong confidence is found in fearing God (**Pro 14:26**).
 - B. *and shall keep thy foot from being taken.*
 - i. When our trust is in God, He will deliver us from the snare of the fowler and the noisome pestilence (**Psa 91:2-3**).
 - ii. God will cover us and protect us (**Psa 91:4**).
 - iii. Therefore, we should not be afraid of war or destruction around us (**Psa 91:5-7**).
 - iv. He will keep our foot from being taken or harmed and protect us by His angels (**Psa 91:10-12**).
27. **Pro 3:27** - "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it."
- A. *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due,*
 - i. Due *adj.* - 1. a. That is owing or payable, as an enforceable obligation or debt.
 - ii. This verse is teaching us to pay our debts.
 - a. This can refer to monetary debts that we owe someone.
 - (i) It is *good* to pay off our debts.
 - (ii) We are to owe no man anything (**Rom 13:8**).
 - (iii) *Good* sometimes refers to worldly possessions (**1Jo 3:17**).
 - (iv) If we have borrowed money or other possessions, we should return it as soon as possible.
 - (v) If we owe someone money for work done for us, we should pay him and not delay (**Jer 22:13**).
 - b. This can also refer to non-monetary debts that we owe someone.
 - (i) The only thing we are to owe one another is love (**Rom 13:8**).

- (ii) God requires us to remember the poor (**Gal 2:10; Rom 12:13; Deut 15:7-8**).
 - (iii) We owe it to them because God has commanded us to give to them.
 - (iv) Husbands and wives also owe each other sexual fulfillment (**1Co 7:3-5**).
 - iii. All of these debts should not be withheld from those to whom they are due.
 - B. *when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.*
 - i. If we are able to pay our debts, then we must do so as soon as possible.
 - a. That means that if we owe a sum of money to someone, and we have that amount of money in our bank account, we should pay him in full.
 - b. That means that if we have money saved to buy something we should not take out a loan instead of paying cash for it.
 - c. That means that we should pay someone for work he has done for us as soon as possible.
 - d. If for some reason you cannot pay what you owe, then come up with an agreement with your creditor to pay them off as quickly as possible as you are able.
 - ii. We should do *good* unto all men *as we have opportunity* (**Gal 6:10**).
 - iii. If we have the ability to help someone in need, we should do it.
28. **Pro 3:28** - "Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee."
- A. This verse is a continuation of thought from **Pro 3:27**.
 - B. The wicked borrow and do not repay (**Psa 37:21**).
 - C. If we have the money or the possessions that we have borrowed from someone, we must return them as soon as we are able.
 - D. To keep a borrowed item longer than we need it or longer than we agreed to keep it is tantamount to theft.
 - E. If we owe someone money for work done for us, we should pay him and not delay (**Deut 24:14-15; Mal 3:5**).
 - F. To not pay a man for work that he has done for you at the time agreed upon is theft (**Lev 19:13; Jam 5:4**).
29. **Pro 3:29** - "Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee."
- A. The neighbor that dwells *securely* is living free of worry and care.
 - i. Securely *adv.* - In a secure manner (in various senses). 1. In a manner free from care or apprehension; carelessly; confidently; without care or misgiving.
 - ii. Secure *adj.* - I. Feeling no care or apprehension. 1. Without care, careless; free from care, apprehension or anxiety, or alarm; over-confident.
 - B. He is therefore not on his guard and not prepared for trouble.
 - C. A wicked man would have a temptation to plan evil against such a neighbor because he would be an easy target (**Pro 24:15**).
 - D. Solomon is warning us to not take advantage of careless people.

- E. Let this also be a warning to us to not dwell *securely* (carelessly) because we will be easy targets for robbery, violence, or fraud (**Jdg 18:7 c/w 27-28**).
- F. We should instead be wise and circumspect, paying attention to our surroundings (**Eph 5:14-15**).

30. **Pro 3:30** - "Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm."

- A. This verse is the Bible's version of the nonaggression principle.
- B. We should not initiate violence.
 - i. We should never be the one who "started it."
 - ii. Defending oneself is allowable, but aggressing against someone else is not.
 - iii. This is true of individuals and of nations.
- C. We should live peaceably with all men as much as it is possible to do so (**Rom 12:18**).
- D. We should not insert ourselves into a confrontation that doesn't concern us (**Pro 26:17; 1Pe 4:15**).
- E. Make sure to have a good cause before you begin to strive with someone or you will be brought to shame (**Pro 25:8**).
- F. It is an honor to cease from strife, not to commence it (**Pro 20:3**).

31. **Pro 3:31** - "Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways."

- A. *Envy thou not the oppressor*,
 - i. Oppressor *n.* - 1. One who oppresses; *esp.* one who harasses with unjust or cruel treatment.
 - ii. Oppress *v.* - 1. *trans.* To press injuriously upon or against; to subject to pressure with hurtful or overpowering effect; to press down by force; to crush, trample down, smother, crowd.
 - iii. Stupid men (and women) who have oppressive tendencies often gravitate to government where they can trample down people on a large scale (**Pro 28:16**).
 - iv. Oppressors have power on their side and wield it against the weak (**Ecc 4:1**).
 - v. Often oppressors are wealthy because they take advantage of people and defraud them (**Psa 73:3-8**), but we should never envy their prosperity.
 - vi. We are warned repeatedly in scripture to not envy the wicked (**Psa 37:1; Pro 23:17**).
- B. *and choose none of his ways*.
 - i. Avoid the temptation to choose the ways of the oppressor and desire to be with him (**Pro 24:1**).
 - ii. It may look like they have it good and get away with it, but it will not go well with them forever (**Ecc 8:12-13; Psa 73:12-19**). 36

32. **Pro 3:32** - "For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous."

- A. *For the froward is abomination to the LORD*:
 - i. Frowardness is a grave sin.
 - a. Froward *adj.* - 1. Disposed to go counter to what is demanded or what is reasonable; perverse, difficult to deal with, hard to please;

refractory, ungovernable; galso, in a wider sense, bad, evilly - disposed, 'naughty'. (The opposite of *toward*.)

- b. Abomination *n.* - 1. The feeling or state of mind of combined disgust and hatred; abhorrence, detestation, loathing.
- c. In other words, God hates, abhors, detests, loathes, and is disgusted with those that are ungovernable, difficult to deal with, and are disposed to go counter to what is demanded and reasonable.
- ii. By way of the preposition *for* which connects this verse with Pro 3:31, we see that *oppressors* are *froward* and are an *abomination* to God.
- iii. God hates a froward mouth (**Pro 8:13**).
- iv. Froward people devise mischief continually (**Pro 6:14**).
- v. God will show Himself froward with the froward (**Psa 18:26**).
- vi. The froward man has a life of difficulty ahead of him (**Pro 22:5**).
- vii. These are all further reasons to choose none of the ways of the froward (**Pro 3:31**).
- B. *but his secret is with the righteous.*
 - i. Secret *n.* - 1. Kept from knowledge or observation; hidden, concealed. a. Predicatively (esp. in *to keep secret*): Kept from public knowledge, or from the knowledge of persons specified; not allowed to be known, or only by selected persons.
 - ii. God has hid His wisdom from the wise and prudent and revealed it unto babes (**Mat 11:25-26**).
 - iii. The Lord conceals His truth from the wicked and reveals it to the righteous (**Psa 25:14**).
 - iv. God kept much of the gospel secret for thousands of years until Christ came and revealed it (**Mat 13:35; Rom 16:25**).
 - v. God keeps His secrets hidden from the wicked in plain sight (**Isa 48:16; Joh 18:20**).
 - vi. There are some secret things that belong unto God only and no one else (**Deu 29:29**).

33. **Pro 3:33** - "The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just."

A. *The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked:*

- i. Curse *n.* - 1. a. An utterance consigning, or supposed or intended to consign, (a person or thing) to spiritual and temporal evil, the vengeance of the deity, the blasting of malignant fate, etc. It may be uttered by the deity, or by persons supposed to speak in his name, or to be listened to by him.
- ii. God commanded the Levites to curse the wicked in their own nation (**Deut 27:14-26**).
- iii. God pronounces a curse on the house of those who will not observe His commandments (**Deut 28:15, 19-20**).
- iv. Those that render evil for good will have evil abiding in their house (**Pro 17:13**).
- v. God will overthrow the house of the wicked (**Pro 14:11; Pro 21:12**).

B. *but he blesseth the habitation of the just.*

- i. On the other hand, God blesses the home and lives of the righteous who keep His commandments (**Deut 28:1-14**).
- ii. God's obedient people will dwell in peaceable habitations (**Isa 32:18**).

34. **Pro 3:34** - "Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly."

A. *Surely he scorneth the scorners:*

- i. Scorn v. - 1. *intr.* To speak or behave contemptuously; to use derisive language, jeer.
- ii. Scorner n. - 1. One who scorns, derides, mocks or contemns; esp. one who scoffs at religion.
- iii. God is contemptuous of those that are contemptuous of Him.
 - a. With the froward God shows Himself froward and unsavory (**2Sa 22:27; Psa 18:26**).
 - b. Those that despise Him will God lightly esteem (**1Sa 2:30**).
 - c. When men scorn at God's reproof and disregard His commandments, He mocks them (**Pro 1:22-26**).
- iv. James and Peter quoted this verse and rendered it "God resisteth the proud" (**Jam 4:6; 1Pe 5:5**).
 - a. Scorners are proud people (**Pro 21:24; Psa 123:4**).
 - b. God resists and scorns such sinners who think highly of themselves.

B. *but he giveth grace unto the lowly.*

- i. Whereas God resists and scorns the proud scorners, He gives grace to the lowly and humble (**Pro 3:34 c/w Jam 4:6**).
 - a. Lowly adj. - 1. Humble in feeling or demeanour; not proud or ambitious.
 - b. Humble adj. - 1. Having a low estimate of one's importance, worthiness, or merits; marked by the absence of self-assertion or self-exaltation; lowly: the opposite of *proud*.
 - c. Grace n. - II. Favour. 6. a. Favour, favourable or benignant regard or its manifestation (now only on the part of a superior); favour or goodwill, in contradistinction to right or obligation, as the ground of a concession.
- ii. God shows favour to the those who have a low estimation of their own worthiness and importance.
- iii. God lifts up those that humble themselves (**Jam 4:10; 1Pe 5:6**).
- iv. The path to exaltation is not found in self-promotion and self-centeredness, but in humility and faith in God.

35. **Pro 3:35** - "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools."

A. *The wise shall inherit glory:*

- i. Glory n. - 1. *subjectively*. a. The disposition to claim honour for oneself; boastful spirit. *Obs.* exc. in the combination vainglory. 2. *objectively*. a. Exalted (and, in mod. use, merited) praise, honour, or admiration accorded by common consent to a person or thing; honourable fame, renown.
- ii. When wisdom is exalted she will promote a man (**Pro 4:8**) and give his head a crown of glory (**Pro 4:9**).

- iii. Those who humble themselves will be exalted (have glory) (**Luk 14:11**).
- iv. Godly wise men also have the evidence in their lives that they have eternal glory awaiting them as well (**Rom 8:18**).
- B. *but shame shall be the promotion of fools.*
 - i. Men work to earn promotions.
 - ii. Promotion *n.* - 1. a. Advancement in position; preferment.
 - iii. God gives out promotion (**Psa 75:6-7**).
 - a. God sets up the wise and diligent (**Pro 22:29**).
 - b. Mean *adj.* - II. Inferior in rank or quality. 2. a. Of persons, their rank or station: Undistinguished in position; of low degree; often opposed to noble or gentle.
 - c. God puts down and brings low fools (**1Sa 2:7**).
 - iv. Fools will be promoted to shame.
 - v. Shame *n.* - I. 1. a. The painful emotion arising from the consciousness of something dishonouring, ridiculous, or indecorous in one's own conduct or circumstances (or in those of others whose honour or disgrace one regards as one's own), or of being in a situation which offends one's sense of modesty or decency.
 - vi. Fools earn a shameful promotion because they:
 - a. are lazy (**Pro 10:5**)
 - b. are proud (**Pro 11:2**)
 - c. are wrathful (**Pro 12:16**)
 - d. are wicked and loathsome (**Pro 13:5**)
 - e. refuse instruction and reproof (**Pro 13:18**)
 - f. answer a matter before they hear it (**Pro 18:13**)
 - g. don't honor their parents (**Pro 19:26**)
 - h. are hasty to strive (**Pro 25:8**)

VI. Chapter 4

1. **Pro 4:1** - "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding."
 - A. *Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father,*
 - i. Hear *v.* - 1. a. *intr.* To perceive, or have the sensation of, sound; to possess or exercise the faculty of audition, of which the specific organ is the ear. The proper verb to express this faculty or function. 4. To exercise the auditory function intentionally; to give ear, hearken, listen. b. *trans.* To listen to (a person or thing) with more or less attention or understanding; to give ear to, hearken to; to give audience to. Orig. with dative of the person or thing. to *hear out*, to listen to to the end: see out; *to hear out*: also, to distinguish (the sounds of something heard).
 - ii. Instruction *v.* - 1. The action of instructing or teaching; the imparting of knowledge or skill; education; information.
 - iii. There are three applications of this passage to the lives of Christians.
 - iv. We have three father figures to whose instruction we should listen.
 - a. Our natural father
 - (i) We are the biological children of our natural fathers.

- (ii) It is their job to instruct us (**Eph 6:4; Psa 78:5**).
- (iii) We should take heed to their instruction (**Pro 13:1**).
- b. Our pastoral father
 - (i) Christians are *as it were* the children of their pastor (**1Co 4:14-15; Gal 4:19**).
 - 1. A father teaches his children: so does a pastor.
 - 2. A father comforts his children: so does a pastor (**1Th 2:11**).
 - 3. A father warns, admonishes, and rebukes his children: so does a pastor (**1Co 4:14; 1Th 2:11**).
 - 4. A father bears (at least some) responsibility for the actions of his children: so does a pastor (**Heb 13:17**).
 - 5. A father worries about his children: so does a pastor.
 - 6. A father has to sometimes get his children out of trouble: so does a pastor.
 - 7. A father loves his children more than they know: so does a pastor (**1Th 2:7-8**).
 - (ii) It is his job to instruct them (**Eph 4:11-16; 2Ti 2:25**).
 - (iii) They should take heed to his instruction (**Heb 13:7, 17**).
- c. Our heavenly Father
 - (i) We are the spiritual children of God our Heavenly Father (**Rom 8:16**).
 - (ii) He instructs us through His word (**Psa 32:8; Jer 35:13**).
 - (iii) We should take heed to His instruction (**2Pe 1:19**).

B. *and attend to know understanding.*

- i. Attend v. - I. To direct the ears, mind, energies to anything. 1. To turn one's ear to, listen to.
- ii. Understanding can be known, but it takes effort.
- iii. If we are to understand the things of God, we must direct our ears, mind, and energy to it.
- iv. It requires will, desire, determination, and persistence to acquire it (**Pro 2:1-6**).
- v. If we pay attention to what our earthly father, our pastor, and our Heavenly Father teach us, we will know understanding.

2. **Pro 4:2** - "For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law."

A. *For I give you good doctrine,*

- i. Solomon gave his son good doctrine.
- ii. Doctrine n. - 1. The action of teaching or instructing; instruction; a piece of instruction, a lesson, precept.
- iii. The world gives bad doctrines, such as:
 - a. The doctrines of men (**Mar 7:7**).
 - b. The doctrines of devils (**1Ti 4:1**).
 - c. Strange doctrines (**Heb 13:9**).
 - d. Hypocritical doctrine (**Mat 16:6 c/w Mat 16:12 c/w Luk 12:1**).
 - e. False doctrine (**Eph 4:14; 1Ti 1:3**).

- iv. God's doctrine is good and will nourish us like rain does grass (**Deut 32:1-2**).
 - v. Jesus Christ's authoritative doctrine was astonishing (**Mar 1:22**).
 - vi. Fathers and pastors should follow Solomon's example and give their children good doctrine (**1Ti 4:6; 1Ti 4:13; 1Ti 4:16; Tit 2:1; Tit 2:7**).
- B. *forsake ye not my law*.
- i. Forsake v. - 1. *trans.* To deny (an accusation, an alleged fact, etc.). *Obs.* 2. To decline or refuse (something offered). c. To refuse respect or obedience to (a command, duty, etc.); to disregard. Also, to neglect (to do something). *Obs.* 4. To abandon, leave entirely, withdraw from; esp. to withdraw one's presence and help or companionship from; to desert.
 - ii. Children should not forsake their parents' law (**Pro 1:8**).
 - iii. Children of God should not forsake God's law (**Joh 14:15**).
 - a. The opposite of *forsaking* God's commandments is *keeping* them (**Pro 28:4**).
 - b. Even when things get extremely difficult in life, we must not forsake God's law (**Psa 119:87**).
 - iv. If we keep Christ's law, we will understand His doctrine (**Joh 7:17**).