

# A study of Proverbs

*Seeing things from God's point of view*

## **Teachers**

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# *A study of Proverbs*

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# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 1

### Introduction of Proverbs

**Reading Assignment:  
Chapters 1,30**

*"In the bible, wisdom is always God-oriented and practical. It is not entirely coextensive with knowledge, for a knowledgeable person may be very deficient in wisdom. Wisdom is the right use of one's knowledge, insight, and skill to the glory of God. It originates in the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7; 9:10; cf. Job 28:28; Psa. 111:10). Thus the bible defines wisdom in terms of one's relationship with God rather than formal education or attainments before men (cf. James 3:13-18). Worldly wisdom is knowledge apart from divine revelation and is often God-opposing in nature. True wisdom is the ordering of one's life by God given counsel." (Rubel Shelley, A Book By Book Study of the Old Testament, p.81).*

#### I. Who wrote the book of Proverbs?

- A. Solomon (see 1:1; 10:1; 25:1)
- B. The Wise Men (22:17-24:34).
- C. Agur (30). The name means "gatherer" or "collector".
- D. Lemuel (31). The name means "dedicated unto God" and may have also referred to Solomon (2 Sam. 12:24-25).

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. 1:7*

#### II. Background of Solomon

- A. How did he acquire his wisdom? (1 Kings 3:5-15)
- B. Was he famous for this wisdom? (1 Kings 3:16-28; 4:29-34; 10:1-10, 24-25; cf. Matthew 12:42)
- C. Did he "apply" his wisdom all his life? (1 Kings 11:1-13). Is it possible for someone to have wisdom, yet not use or apply it? Does that detract from the strength of his words of wisdom?
- D. Is a **smart** person necessarily a **wise** person? Explain.
- E. Jesus said, "Indeed a greater than Solomon is here" (Luke 11:31; Matthew 12:42). What does that statement imply about Jesus' relationship to the wisdom of the Old Testament?

#### III. The Book of Proverbs

- A. The word "proverb" is translated from a Hebrew word (mashal) which literally meant, "a comparison, to be similar to, resemble; noting likeness in things unlike." It came to stand for any kind of sage pronouncement. A proverb always intends to express in a few words what well-known truth is.
- B. Different styles by which the Proverbs are constructed:
  - 1. **Equivalents:** This is identical with that - *Pro 14:4 Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean...*
  - 2. **Paradox:** This is not like that - *Pro 25:15 ...a soft tongue will break a bone.*
  - 3. **Similarity:** This is like that - *Pro 25:12 Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reprover to a listening ear.*
  - 4. **Absurdity:** This is contrary to the correct order - *Pro 17:16 Why should a fool have money in his hand to buy wisdom when he has no sense?*
  - 5. **Consequences:** This will cause that to occur - *Pro 26:27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and a stone will come back on him who starts it rolling.*
  - 6. **Relative Value:** This is worth more than that - *Pro 19:22 ... a poor man is better than a liar.*

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## 7. Parallelism

A) **Synonymous:** A statement is made, then made again in different words - *Pro 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.*

B) **Contrasting:** The truth expressed in the first clause is opposite of the second - *Pro 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him.*

C) **Progressive:** The second clause develops the idea expressed in the first - *Pro 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*

## 8. Numerical Riddles: A lot of items that have something in common - *Pro 30:18,19 Three things are too wonderful for me; four I do not understand: the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a virgin.*

A) From the riddles of Agur found in Chapter 30, describe what the “four things” mean from the following verses:

1. 30:11-14:

4. 30:21-23:

2. 30:15-16:

5. 30:24-26:

3. 30:18-19:

6. 30:29-31:

C. It has been suggested that Proverbs 1:1-6 cite the 7 pillars of wisdom, which are the referenced seven pillars of Proverbs 9:1. Explain each and describe how each can contribute to wisdom.

1. Instruction –
2. Understanding –
3. Prudence –
4. Knowledge –
5. Discretion –
6. Learning –
7. Wise Counsel –

### Outline Proverbs with a general description of the following:

*Proverbs 1-9*

*Proverbs 10:1-22:16*

*Proverbs 22:17-24:22*

*Proverbs 25-29*

*Proverbs 30*

*Proverbs 31*

## III. Words of the Wise

*The book of proverbs is not intended to provide us with an academic intelligence of simply knowing, but an applied knowledge exercised through wisdom, providing the listening ear with a foundation for living a fulfilled and Godly life.*

A. For what purpose do our ears serve? (15:31; 18:15; 23:12)

B. What is the value of attaining wisdom? (16:16; 19:9,20; 23:23; 24:3-4,13-14)

C. What dangers exist for those that turn a deaf ear? (15:10,32; 19:27; 29:1)

D. If fear is the beginning of knowledge and of wisdom, then how does it provide a foundation for living?

(16:20; 28:14) -

(19:23) -

(14:26; 29:25) -

(23:17-18) -

E. A theme of Proverbs is that life is restricted to two paths. What are they? (4:10-19; 10:17; 13:13-14; 14:11)

*Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge, 22:17*

# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 2

### “Two Women” The Way of Wisdom or the Way of Folly

**Reading Assignment:  
Chapters 2-9**

*Every individual has a major decision to make about what their personal moral character will be in life. The first 9 chapters personify Wisdom as a woman who is calling out to all who are willing to receive understanding; she is presented in contrast with the adulterous woman who entices to folly. While the wise follow wisdom and the wicked follow folly; the “simple” are left at a crossroad with a choice as to which path to choose, which of the three are you?*

#### I. Wisdom According to the Bible

A. Give a biblical definition of Wisdom.

B. The Call and Value of Wisdom

Read the following verses then answer the questions below. (1:20-33; Ch. 2; Ch. 8)

*Wisdom is the principal thing;  
therefore get wisdom. And in all your  
getting, get understanding. 4:7*

1. How does one find wisdom? What is the price for rejecting wisdom?
2. What is the value placed on wisdom? (also see 3:13-18)
3. How does wisdom keep one secure and protected? (also 3:21-26; 4:1-9)
4. What is God’s relation to wisdom? What does that tell us about wisdom’s importance? (8:22-31; 3:19,20)
5. List at least four things we use to assure all our ways. (4:20-27)

#### II. Folly According to the Bible

A. Give a biblical definition of a Fool.

B. Characteristics of a Fool.

1. What is the mark of a fool? What are some of the dangers inherent in trusting self? (12:15; 28:26)
2. How does the fool respond to instruction? Discipline?(1:7; 15:5; 23:9; 24:7)(12:1; 17:10; 16:22)
3. Why does the fool despise wisdom? (10:8; 12:23; 13:16; 14:33; 18:2,13)
4. List other characteristics of a fool’s nature from the following verses.
  - a. (14:29; 17:24)
  - b. (10:23; 13:19; 14:9)
  - c. (27:22; 26:11)
  - d. (12:23; 13:16)
5. How morally dangerous are fools? (17:12)
6. What is the difference between the fool and the simple? Similarities?

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## III. Comparison of the Two Women

Fill in the blanks below (first line is done for you)

### The Woman of Folly (CH 5-7)

#### A. Identification

1. 5:3 - *Strange woman*
2. 6:24-25 -
3. 7:5,10 -
4. 9:13 -

#### B. Location

1. 7:11-12 -
2. 9:14 -

#### C. Message

1. 5:3 -
2. 6:24 -
3. 7:21 -
4. 9:15 -

#### D. Promises

1. 7:13-20 -
2. 9:16,17 -

#### E. Outcome

1. 5:4,5 -
2. 5:7-13 -
3. 6:26-29 -
4. 6:32 -
5. 7:26-27 -
6. 9:18 -

### The Woman of Proverbs (CH 8-9)

#### A. Identification

1. 8:12-17 - *have prudence, counsel, strength*
2. 8:22-31 -
3. 9:10 -

#### B. Location

1. 8:2-3 -
2. 9:1-2 -

#### C. Message

1. 8:6-8 -
2. 9:3-5 -

#### D. Promises

1. 8:18-21 -
2. 9:6-9 -

#### E. Outcome

1. 8:32-36 -
2. 9:11-12 -

## Thought Questions

1. From the comparison above, in your own words describe how each of these women would dress. What would be their speech? Mannerisms? What kinds of men would be attracted to them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Why is there such a great difference between the wise and the scorner in reaction to reproof? (9:8)

# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 3

### The Nature of God and His Relationship with Man

**Reading Assignment:  
Chapters 14-16**

*The phrase, “the fear of the Lord” appears 14 times in the book of Proverbs and stands as the foundation principle for which we are able to attain a true knowledge and understanding of God and His nature. This knowledge of God then equips us to lead long and obedient lives avoiding the pitfalls and snares that lead to destruction.*

#### I. The Nature of God

- A. How did God prove the value and power of wisdom?  
(3:19-20; 8:22-36; 22:2)
- B. What else can we learn about the nature of God?
  - 1. (19:2; 21:30) -
  - 2. (30:2-4) -
  - 3. (16:1,9,33; 21:1) -

#### II. The Nature of God’s Relationship with Men

- A. What is God’s knowledge of man? See 15:3,11
- B. What is God’s expectation of man?
  - 1. (21:3) -
  - 2. (15:8-9) -
- C. The Wickedness in Men
  - 1. How does God view the wickedness in men? (See 11,20; 15:9)
  - 2. What does “abomination” mean?
  - 3. List those things which are abominable to God from the following verses.
    - a. (6:16-19) -
    - b. (11:1; 20:10) -
    - c. (16:5) -
    - d. (17:15) -
    - e. (21:27) -
    - f. (28:9) -
  - 4. How does God determine the righteous from the wicked? (16:2; 21:2; 17:3; 19:16)
  - 5. What will God do to the wicked?
    - a. (14:11) -
    - b. (10:27-29) -
- D. The Righteousness in Men
  - 1. How will God reward the righteous?
    - a. (3:1-2) -
    - b. (10:22,27) -
    - e. (16:7) -
    - f. (13:21,22) -

*The way of the wicked is an  
abomination to the LORD, but he  
loves him who pursues  
righteousness.15:9*

# A study of Proverbs

## III. The Nature of God's Relationship with The Nations of Men

*A nation's greatness cannot accurately be measured by its wealth, commerce, or size. God will cause it to either stand or fall by the character of its leaders and citizens.*

***Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. 14:34***

### A. Leaders Set the Example for Either Good or Evil.

1. What must a king do to establish his kingdom in righteousness?  
(25:4,5; 16:12) –
2. What do these verses teach us about the stability of a nation?  
(28:2) -  
(28:12,28) -  
(29:2) -  
(29:16) -

### B. Qualities of a Righteous Ruler

4. List the qualities of a righteous ruler from the following verses.
  - a. (17:7; 29:12; 29:14) -
  - b. (28:21; 14:35; 20:26) -
  - c. (16:10; 20:8; 25:2) -
  - d. (20:28) -
  - e. (8:12, 14-16; 28:16) -
5. What wisdom was King Lemuel taught by his mother?
  - a. (31:3) -
  - b. (31:4-5) -
  - c. (31:8-9) -

### C. Righteousness Must Also Be Found in the People of the Land

1. What is expected of every citizen?
  - a. (29:18) -
  - b. (24:21-22) -
  - c. (14:28) –
  - d. (16:15; 14:35; 19:12) -
  - e. (20:2; 19:12; 16:14) -

## Thought Questions

1. A greater knowledge of God and His nature should produce in us a reaction that should lead us please Him. What attributes of God do you see in the book of Proverbs that influence you the most to do His will?
2. We know that God will bring down the wicked and reward the righteous, both individual and nation alike. But what do we do when we are confronted with a wicked teacher? Employer/Supervisor? Government Leader?



# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 4

### The Human Heart – Self Control vs. Pride

*It takes no planting, watering, or cultivating to grow weeds, nor does it take effort to grow worthless character. Careful attention and diligent effort are required for a noble character, this starts with exercising self-control of one's spirit, because disciplined living refines and strengthens character.*

**Reading Assignment:  
Chapters 10-12**

#### I. Necessity of Self-Control

*"The soul of man is the fountainhead of life, and when it is contaminated, so is life. For when the heart is corrupted, the dreams of life are polluted; since all of life stems from this one spring." (Maurice Meredith, Studies In Proverbs, p39)*

*Keep your heart with all diligence,  
for out of it spring the issues of life.  
4:23*

- A. Why does the book Proverbs give so much attention to the heart?
  - a. (4:23) -
  - b. (23:7) -
  - c. (27:19) -
- B. What is the state of the heart of man when left to itself?
  - a. (12:15) -
  - b. (14:12, 14; 16:25) -
  - c. (28:26) -
- C. To whom must we give our hearts?
  - a. (23:26) -
  - b. (3:5-8) -
  - c. (19:21) -

#### II. Achieving Self Control

- A. Self-control comes through Discipline and Instruction (Proverbs 10:8; 15:5,31-32; 23:12) and receives both without arrogantly scorning them. The wise man profits by advice and discipline. From whom does he receive this from?
  - 1. (3:11; 10:17; 16:9; 17:3; 19:3) -
  - 2. (2:1-2; 6:20-22; 7:1-3; 13:1) -
  - 3. (12:1; cf. 9:7-9; 15:10,32; 29:1) -
- B. Self-control comes through Self-Restraint (Proverbs 16:32; 25:28). The one who restrains himself is the mightiest person alive! What are examples of self-restraint?
  - 1. (4:14-17,20-27; 23:1-7,17; 24:1) -
  - 2. (13:3, 15:28, 16:23, 20:5, 21:23) -
- C. Does the man under control think or act first (Proverbs 20:5; 23:19)?
- D. What is the greatest human display of strength (Proverbs 16:32; 25:28)?
- E. Is the wise man one who never makes mistakes or one who profits from his mistakes?
- F. What quality does the wise man possess which enables him to listen and profit from advice and reproof (Proverbs 15:31-33)?

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## III. Pride – The Enemy of Self-Control

*Pride ignores sound reason, it doesn't want to be controlled or be restrained. Pride is unable to look outwardly to God or others; it seeks only to fulfill its own lusts. The first step to self-control is to look to the Master Builder and embrace humility for it is the cornerstone for wisdom and honor.*

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 3:5-7*

### A. How does God view pride?

1. (3:5-7) -
2. (8:13; 15:33; 22:4) -
3. (16:5; 6:16-19; 29:23) -

### B. How does pride manifest itself?

1. (18:12; 21:4; 16:18) -
2. (21:24) -
3. (27:2; 20:6; 17:19; cf. 25:14) -

### C. What are the consequences of a prideful heart?

1. (11:2; 25:27) -
2. (13:10; 28:25) -
3. (15:25; 16:18-19; 18:12) -

### D. Humility is Essential to Overcome Pride and Receive Wisdom

1. The wise person learns that true honor comes from others and is earned through humble service. That honor is retained by not disappointing those from whom it comes. (3:5-7; 29:23)
2. Read the words of Agur (30:1-17)
  - a. What has brought on his weariness? (1-4)
  - b. What two things did he ask for? What is his hope? (5-9)
  - c. What does he say about the proud? Why? (10-17)

### E. Thought Questions

1. Why does the proud man scoff at others?
2. Why can't pride admit that it is wrong?
3. Does pride receive more pleasure from having what it wants of from having more than the next person?

# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 5

### The Human Heart – Ruling Our Spirit

*The tragedy of the modern world is that man is the master of so many things, yet has not learned to master himself. In the broadest sense, self-control describes the mastery of appetites... Guided by Godly wisdom and knowledge, the wise man disciplines his appetites and makes them his servant rather than his master. (Thomas L. Seals, Proverbs-Wisdom For All Ages, pp. 108-109).*

**Reading Assignment:  
Chapters 16-19**

This lesson is intended to be an extension of the previous lesson exploring the specific attitudes that can undermine our efforts to receive instruction for good decision making; exploring specific ways we can overcome these emotional snares.

#### I. Attitudes That Bring Sorrow

- A. Anger plays an important role in motivating us to respond to our current circumstances. The abuse comes when we ignore its intended purpose and unleash its destructive effects.
  1. What is the result of one who does not rule over his own spirit?
    - a. (25:28) -
    - b. (19:19) -
  2. What is the effect of one unleashing his anger?
    - a. (29:11; 12:16) -
    - b. (14:17; 29:20) -
    - c. (15:18; 30:33; 29:22) -
    - d. (12:18; 27:3) -
    - e. (18:19; 27:15-16) -
  3. How does one bring his anger into subjection?
    - a. (14:29)
    - b. (17:27-28; 21:23)
    - c. (19:11)
  4. Sometimes our actions provoke anger in others. What are ways we can defuse it in others?
    - a. (15:1,18,28; 25:15) -
    - b. (21:14) -
- B. Anger left uncontrolled leads to Hatred, and like anger, it plays an important role in our lives. We are to “hate” every evil way as God hates, but it too can be misused to serve our own desires and lusts if left unchecked.
  1. Read 26:20-28. How does hatred manifest itself? What does it do to others?
  2. What happens to the one who harbors hatred in his/her heart? (26:27; 17:5; 24:17-18) -
  3. What is the proper response towards a contentious person? (25:21-22) How would we do this?
- C. What are other attitudes that bring sorrow to the heart?
  1. (18:13-14) -
  2. (18:1-3) -

*He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city. 16:32*

# A study of Proverbs

## II. Sorrow Leads to a Broken Spirit - (Depression)

When we live without restraint of our emotional faculties we can feel the effect of our folly draining the very life from our own bodies without any hope of rescue (17:22). Proverbs places folly as the root cause of our depression. We must “keep our hearts with all diligence” if we are to overcome it (4:23).

*A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, But by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. 15:13*

- A. People can become so exasperated they give up.
  - 1. What good are they able to do for themselves? (18:14)
  - 2. What are others able to do for them? (14:10; 25:20)
- B. What feeds this broken spirit?
  - 1. (29:25; 28:1)
  - 2. (12:25)
  - 3. (15:13, 15)

## III. A Merry Heart is Like Good Medicine (17:22)

The first step to picking up the pieces and providing help to your bones is by committing your ways to the Lord, “for with God all things are possible”.

- A. What perspective of our lives should we possess? What will be the outcome?
  - 1. (16:1-3) -
  - 2. (29:25) -
  - 3. (23:26) -
  - 4. (28:26) -
  - 5. (16:20) -
- B. What does sound wisdom and discretion do for the one who embraces them? (3:21-26) Also see (16:21-24)
- C. What brings comfort to the sick of heart? (13:12, 19)
- D. What can a sound heart do? (14:30; 15:15, 30)
- E. What can others do? (27:9)
- F. What do the following verses teach us about happiness?
  - 1. (17:1) -
  - 2. (14:21) -
  - 3. (28:14) -
  - 4. (29:18) -

## Thought Questions

- 1. List reasons why it becomes so natural for us to “lash out” at others, especially those we admit we love the most?
- 2. We all have faced sorrow at some point in our lives. What things were employed to help you overcome?

# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 6

### The Human Heart – Ruling Our Tongue

**Reading Assignment:**  
Chapters 13, 25, 26

*Proverbs teaches that in order to build character we must start with the condition of the heart. So Proverbs 27:19 rightly says, “As in water face reflects face, So a man’s heart reveals the man”. There is no greater barometer of the heart than the tongue. It has been said that the eyes are the window to the soul. If this is true then the tongue is the open door that allows any and all to walk in and search out all there is to see, even what can’t be seen from the window!*

#### I. The Tongue has the power to give death

- A. Proverbs 4:23 says, “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” If from the heart comes life; is it possible that it can bring forth death? (See 18:21)
1. What is the result of a tongue without restraint?
    - a. (10:19)
    - b. (18:6-7)
    - c. (12:13)
  2. Read 6:16-19. Out of the seven things God hates, which three involve the tongue?
    - 
    - 
    -
    - a. What do the following verses say regarding lying?
      1. (10:18; 26:24-26, 28)
      2. (12:22)
      3. (12:19; 20:17)
    - b. What are some motivations for lying?
      1. (3:27-28)
      2. (26:18-19)
      3. (11:1; 20:10; 21:6)
  3. How does the book of Proverbs define Flattery? How do you distinguish this from honest praise?
    1. (26:28; 29:5; 28:23)
    2. (6:24; 7:21)
  4. How does one behave when sowing discord? (6:12-15)
  5. What does discord look like?

(18:6-7; 22:10)

(19:13; 21:9, 19; 27:15)

(25:23)

(13:10; 28:25)

(26:17)
  6. Proverbs teaches that a “Talebearer” is a whisperer, slanderer and a Gossip. What is their purpose?

(17:9; 11:13)

(16:27-30; 26:20-22)

(11:9; 25:9-10)
  7. What about cursing?

(20:20)

(30:10-11)

*Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit. 18:21*

# A study of Proverbs

## II. The Tongue has the power to give life

*The tongue is both motivated and directed by the thoughts of the heart. If the tongue can be destructive from an evil heart, then it is most certainly true that the tongue can be constructive from a righteous heart.. (18:20)*

*A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit. 15:4*

### A. Life is given when the truth is taught

1. What are the benefits of a wholesome tongue?
  - a. (15:4)
  - b. (4:5-7; 20-22)
  - c. (11:30)

### B. Life is given when reproving wrong

1. In most cases we would prefer to avoid it, why rebuke?
  - a. (27:5)
  - b. (28:23)
  - c. (9:8; 17:10)
2. Why is it important that we reprove our children?
  - a. (19:18)
  - b. (29:17)

### C. Proverbs 25:11 says, “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.” Properly spoken, the right words can be as morally beautiful and suitable as the most attractive jewelry.

1. **How** we speak will affect how it is received. What is suggested by the following verses?
  - a. (15:1)
  - b. (10:20-21)
  - c. (16:24)
  - d. (31:26)
2. **When** to say something is just as important as what you say. When should we speak?
  - a. (15:23, 28)
  - b. (12:25)
  - c. (29:20)
  - d. (18:13)
3. **What** is said should reflect forethought. In what ways can this be done?
  - a. (17:27)
  - b. (12:25)
  - c. (29:20)
  - d. (24:24-25)
  - e. (26:4-5)

### D. We are all vulnerable to folly and if left unchecked it may become known through the use of our tongue. Wisdom calls us to guard our mouth and in so doing we keep our soul from troubles. (21:23)

1. What are the benefits of a guarded tongue?
  - a. (13:2-3)
  - b. (21:23)
  - c. (17:27-28)
  - d. (26:20-28)

*Whoever guards his mouth and tongue Keeps his soul from troubles. 21:23*

## Thought Questions

1. Is it possible to do as much harm with the truth as can with a lie? Explain.
2. How can reproof (which seems negative) be described as doing good to another?

# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 7

### The Folly of Laziness

*Laziness is mentioned at least 30 times in the book of Proverbs, with good reason, because it is simply a symptom to a much greater problem, namely folly. Out of all the attributes of the fool mentioned, the sluggard is the most ridiculous of them all. It is a wonder why some proverbs have the appearance of humor in them. Though we may laugh at them, they stand as stern warnings to those that would take the path of the sluggard. God created man to work with his hands and through those hands, teach the value of hard work.*

**Reading Assignment:  
Chapters 10, 24, 26**

#### I. Marks of a Sluggard

- A. God rested on the 7<sup>th</sup> day from his labors when He created the world. We learn from the bible that God has provided rest from our own labors. How does the sluggard abuse this privilege?
  - 1. (6:9-11)
  - 2. (26:14)
  - 3. (19:15)
  - 4. (20:13)
- B. What hinders a lazy man from his labors?
  - 1. (13:4; 14:23)
  - 2. (19:24; 26:15)
  - 3. (24:30-34)
- C. What does the sluggard say about his laziness?
  - 1. (20:4)
  - 2. (22:13; 26:13)
  - 3. (26:16; 12:11)
- D. What is the quality of the sluggard's work?
  - 1. (18:9; cf. 24:31)
  - 2. (12:27)

*The lazy man says, "There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion is in the streets!" As a door turns on its hinges, So does the lazy man on his bed. The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; It wearies him to bring it back to his mouth. The lazy man is wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can answer sensibly. 26:13-16*

#### II. The Inevitable Fruits of Laziness

- A. The consequences of laziness are numerous in the book of Proverbs. From each group of verses, identify what the outcome will be for the sloth.
  - 1. (10:4; 6:9-11)
  - 2. (15:19; 21:25)
  - 3. (12:24)
  - 4. (10:26)
  - 5. (10:5)
- B. From the list above, can we identify a slothful person today? Where would you see it?
- C. Is the sluggard one who lacks ability or does he lack the motivation?

# A study of Proverbs

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## III. Overcoming Laziness

*We live in an ever increasing society of “entitlements”. It is the belief that we are “owed” something in return for our contributions to society or because of our state of affairs (our bad luck), we require aid. Government unfortunately help, by indoctrinating us into believing in the slogan; “shared responsibility – shared prosperity”, drawing our attention away from personal responsibility that leads to personal wealth that then should be shared willingly through a benevolent spirit(31:20).*

***Go to the ant, you sluggard!  
Consider her ways and be wise. 6:6***

- A. What are the virtues of the Diligent?  
(6:6-8)  
(16:26)
- B. What are the benefits of a good work ethic?  
(10:4,5)  
(12:11; 28:19)  
(13:4, 11)  
(10:16; 27:23-27)  
(22:29)

## Thought Questions

1. Since the Lord desires Christians to be benevolent to the poor (*Pro 19:17 He who has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, And He will pay back what he has given*), why should one not provide for those who are poor because of laziness? (*See 2 Thess. 3:10*)
  
2. What lesson is implied in the ant’s having no chief or overseer (6:6-8)?



# A study of Proverbs

## Lesson 8

### How to Handle Money

*Both wealth and poverty are measured by the amount of money one may possess, this fact will never change. The book of proverbs teaches how the wise man obtains money and the manner in which he will use it. Though money is the great divider of class and social status, God sees one as no better than the other in terms of material wealth, rather true wealth is found in obtaining wisdom and the exercise of it.*

**Reading Assignment:  
Chapters 28-30**

*The rich and the poor have this in common, The LORD is the maker of them all. 22:2*

#### I. Wealth and Poverty

- A. No matter what type of government, culture or society there will always be differing degrees of wealth, even among the extreme poor and rich.
  - 1. How are the rich and poor viewed?
    - a. (10:15; 18:11)
    - b. (14:20; 19:4,6-7)
    - c. (22:7; 18:23)
  - 2. Define poor.
- B. Some things will never change; Jesus said we would have the poor with us always.
  - 1. Today political circles suggest that the poor only have others to blame for their misfortune; that the successes of others come from the labors of the poor. Where does proverbs place other possible sources for their poverty?
    - a. (22:16; 30:14; 28:3)
    - b. (10:4; 20:13)
    - c. (21:17; 23:21)
    - d. (13:18; 21:20)
    - e. (12:11; 28:19)

#### II. Avoiding Poverty

- A. How can one avoid poverty? How does this compare with current economic views?
  - 1. (10:4,5; 13:11; 12:27; 21:5)
  - 2. (27:23-27; 12:11)
  - 3. (28:20-22)
- B. What are good practices to managing money?
  - 1. (21:6)
  - 2. (22:16; 22-23; 28:8)
  - 3. (6:1-5; 22:26-27)
  - 4. (22:7)

#### III. The Use of Wealth

- A. Our wealth and prosperity may come as a blessing from heritage or hard work, yet the responsibility for its use remains the same.
  - 1. We have seen some advantages to possessing wealth. Are there any dangers?
    - a. (18:11; 28:11)
    - b. (11:26-28; 13:7; 15:27)
    - c. (23:4-5)

# A study of Proverbs

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2. How should we use our wealth?
  - a. (3:9,10; 19:17; 29:7)
  - b. (14:31; 17:5)

## III. True Wealth

- A. Wealth has its place in this life and can be a great instrument for righteousness if governed by wisdom. However, It should be our goal to obtain those riches that reach beyond the grave; that carry an eternal weight!
  1. Proverbs have plenty to say about things worth more than the riches in this life. What are they?
    - a. (3:13-16; 8:18-21)
    - b. (15:16)
    - c. (22:1)
    - d. (28:6; 19:1)
    - e. (19:22)
    - f. (16:8,19)
  2. What are we to leave to our grandchildren? (13:21-22)
  3. What two things should we pray for concerning wealth? (30:7-9)

*Two things I request of You  
(Deprive me not before I die):  
Remove falsehood and lies far  
from me; Give me neither poverty  
nor riches— Feed me with the  
food allotted to me; Lest I be full  
and deny You, And say, "Who is  
the LORD?" Or lest I be poor and  
steal, and profane the name of  
my God. Pro 30:7-9*

## Thought Questions

1. Mat 6:24 says, "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon". Should we borrow money or take out credit in light of 22:7; 6:1-5? Explain
2. How can one make himself rich through greed, vanity, and selfishness, yet still have nothing worthwhile (13:7,11)?