

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 07 June 2020.....Proverbs 01.....Chartered Waters
- 2) 14 June.....Proverbs 03:1-18.....Direction Offered
- 3) 21 June.....Proverbs 03:19-35.....Compassion Demonstrated
- 4) 28 June.....Proverbs 04.....The Choice
- 5) 05 July.....Proverbs 05.....Following God's Design
- 6) 12 July.....Proverbs 08-09.....Pursuing Wisdom
- 7) 19 July.....Proverbs 15.....Living Wisely
- 8) **26 July.....Proverbs 15-16.....Pleasing God**
- 9) 02 August.....Proverbs 23.....Staying Sober
- 10) 09 August.....Proverbs 29.....Accepting Discipline
- 11) 16 August.....Proverbs 31.....Finding Honor
- 12) 23 August.....Song of Songs 1-5.....Relational Foundations
- 13) 30 August.....Song of Songs 5-8.....Relational Investment

INTRODUCTION

- In these 2 chapters, we see more common-sense axioms, including some that stretch the imagination, such as, "*Great wealth is in the house of the righteous (Prov 15:6).*" **Wonder what the widow with only 2 mites to her name would have to say about that passage?**
- The 66 verses in these 2 chapters can be subjectively grouped into 10 broad categories, and sorted by the number of verses for each:

1. Tongue (14 vvs)	2. God (10 vvs)	3. Wisdom (8 vvs)	4. Wealth (8 vvs)	5. Wicked vs Righteous (6vvs)
6. Reproof (5 vvs)	7. Wicked (5 vvs)	8. Righteous (4 vvs)	9. Govt (3vvs)	10. Health (3 vvs)

Comments on Proverbs 15-16

Passages on the Tongue

15:01. A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

15:02. The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools spouts folly.

15:04. A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but perversion in it crushes the spirit.

15:07. The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but the hearts of fools are not so.

15:23. A man has joy in an apt answer, and how delightful is a timely word!

15:26. Evil plans are an abomination to the lord, but pleasant words are pure.

15:28. The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

16:01. The plans of the heart belong to man, the answer of the tongue is from the lord.

16:13. Righteous lips are the delight of kings, and he who speaks right is loved.

16:21. The wise in heart will be called understanding, and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.

16:23. The heart of the wise instructs his mouth and adds persuasiveness to his lips.

16:24. Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

16:27. A worthless man digs up evil, while his words are like scorching fire.

16:28. A perverse man spreads strife, and a slanderer separates intimate friends.

Additional Comments on the Tongue

- More than 80 passages on the Tongue throughout the Bible; Over 25 in Proverbs when you consider derivations (e.g., speaks, lips, mouth, words, etc.). So, these 2 chapters address matters of the tongue 2x more than the rest of proverbs. It must be important
- James summarized it well – and he spoke to believers: "How can both Praises and Curses come out of the same mouth? It ought not to be"..... **James 3:10**
- Truly, whoever can control their tongue is mature in their faith **James 3:2**
- Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?

Passages on God and His Dealings with the Epitome of His Creation – MAN

15:03. The eyes of the lord are in every place, watching the evil and the good.

15:08. The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

15:11. Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the lord, how much more the hearts of men!

15:29. The lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

16:02. All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the lord weighs the motives.

16:03. Commit your works to the lord and your plans will be established.

16:04. God has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil.

16:11. A just balance and scale belong to God; all the weights of the bag are his concern.

16:33. The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the lord.

Additional Comments on the God's Dealings with MAN

- 15:3 & 16:2. Can Satan read minds like God can? Yes No Don't Know
- Consider this: Our hearts (i.e., our minds, thoughts, true character) are known only by God since it is part of His divine attributes..... **Ps 139:1-4; John 2:23-25**
- Satan can't read our minds, but he can monitor our eye movements and our checkbook, and tell where our heart is each and every day

Comments on Proverbs 15-16

- 16:04. God has made the wicked for the day of evil
 - ♦ Does this mean God made some (i.e., the non-elect) to be destined for Hell?
 - ♦ If that were true, the non-elect would have an excuse before God..... **Rom 1:20**
 - ♦ A better perspective is those who choose to be wicked are destined for Hell
 - ♦ Recall **John 5:40**, where Jesus told some Jews (who were not all Israel [**Rom 9:6**], so they were non-elect and destined for Hell) that He was willing to give them eternal life, but they were unwilling to come to Him on His terms. Therefore, they sealed their own fate. If someone doesn't want God, there is only one destination for them – that is HELL. God will draw or entice people to consider living for Him, but He will not force anyone to get saved against their will.

16:33. A Few Words on Casting Lots, Rolling Dice, & Laying Down Fleeces

- Such practices seem bizarre to us, similar to flipping a coin. BUT the Bible does state the "casting of lots is in God's hands" (**Prov 16:33**), and "the lot puts an end to contention" (**Prov 18:18**)
 - ♦ The Urim and Thummim (sacred lots) – were stones tossed to determine God's leading (similar to rolling dice). These items had a strong cultural image for the Jews since God often conveyed his will to the Jews through these elements
 - ♦ BUT, they were reserved for the Levitical Priests
- Other elements used to "inquire of the Lord"
 - ♦ Ephod (Priestly garment made of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine gold-twined linen, worn between the tunic and the breastplate, and which held the Urim and Thummim).....**Ex 28:6-12; 1Sam 30:7-8**
 - ♦ The Ark's Mercy Seat**Ex 25:22**
 - ♦ Gideon's use of a fleece**Judges 6:36-40**
- Is God still using such practices today?**NO**
- ♦ Remember, the faithless seek signs & wonders**Mat 12:39; John 4:48**
- Since God conveys His will to us in more subtle ways today (**Heb 1:1-2**) through His Son (or His Word), then "laying down a fleece" involves a providential answer and not something that breaks the laws of physics or the laws of nature
- If we lack wisdom, then ask for it. This includes asking for confirmation of God's leading. But know this – the answer will be a subjective, providential answer
 - ♦ For example: "Lord, please confirm you are leading me into full time service?" The answer won't involve the Sun standing still, but it might involve a providential answer in receiving financial support, or a door of opportunity finally opens up for consideration.

Passages on Wisdom

15:18. A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute.

15:22. Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed

15:24. The path of life leads upward for the wise that he may keep away from Hell below.

15:33. The fear of the lord is the instruction for wisdom, before honor comes humility.

16:09. The mind of man plans his way, but the lord directs his steps

16:14. The fury of a king is like messengers of death, but a wise man will appease it.

16:25. There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

16:31. A gray head is a crown of glory; it is found in the way of righteousness.

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

Additional Comments on Aspects of Wisdom

- 15:24. "The path of life leads upward for the wise..."
 - ♦ Therefore, we should not be on a downward spiral but on an upward trajectory getting "brighter and brighter" (**Prov 4:18**) as we go from "grace to grace" (**John 1:16**) and from "faith to faith" (**Rom 1:17**) and from "glory to glory" (**2Cor 3:18**).
- 16:09 & 16:25. Do we have a contradiction with these 2 passages?
 - ♦ Not if we alter our assumptions slightly. Assume 16:09 deals with a believer and assume 16:25 deals with a non-believer
 - ♦ 16:09 would then essentially read, "The mind of a 'believer' plans his way, but God directs his steps"; and 16:25 would read, "There is a way which seems right to an 'unbeliever,' but its end is the way of death"
- Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?



"O Great King Solomon, is there any way you can reach into the depths of your wisdom to explain the infield fly rule to us?"

Comments on Proverbs 15-16
Passages on Wealth
15:06. Great wealth is in the house of the righteous, trouble is in the income of the wicked.
15:16. Better is a little with the fear of the lord than great treasure and turmoil with it.
15:17. Better is a dish of vegetables where love is than a fattened ox served with hatred.
15:27. He who profits illicitly troubles his own house, but he who hates bribes will live.
16:08. Better is a little with righteousness than great income with injustice.
16:16. How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver.
16:19. It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide spoil with the proud.
16:26. A worker's appetite works for him, for his hunger urges him on.
Additional Comments on Wealth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost half of the Lord's parables (17 out of 38) are about Money • Money is talked about more in the Bible than Heaven or Hell • Only the topic of Love exceeds that of money in the NT • Out of 31,101 Bible verses, 2,172 (~7%) deal directly with wealth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But there are only 272 verses on believing; 371 verses on prayer; and 714 verses on loving (1/3 as many as money) • More than 10% of all wealth verses are in Proverbs (~250 verses) • Obviously, God Considers Money an Important Topic • BUT recognize the following when it comes to Money, Wealth, Riches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must watch out for GREED or covetousness for God puts it in the same category as idolatry, immorality, & blasphemy: (Ex 18:21; Ps 119:36; Pr 21:26; Ecc 5:10-12; Jer 8:10; Mr 7:20-23; Lk 12:15; Rom 1:29; Col 3:5; Eph 5:3-5; 1 Cor 6:10; 1 Tim 6:10; Heb 13:5) • Prosperity on earth is not guaranteed (Pr 27:24), but Peace & Contentment are (Phil 4:7-13, Isa 55:2) • "It is more blessed to give than to receive".....Acts 20:35 • God is a God of percentages – He blesses proportionally to one's ability to give, but not always materially (Prov 11:31, Rom 11:35). Some 30x, some 60x, some 100xMat 13:23 • What is the source of all our problems? 1Tim 6:10; Jms 4:1 • Where is our true wealth retained?.....Ephesians 1:3 • THEREFORE, we need to be more focused on the things of God (Heavenly-minded) instead of so earthly focused..... John 6:27 • And what should be our true desire? God or money?.....Ps 73:25 • We even need to treasure God's Word above everythingPr 7:2 • So, how should we look at Proverbs 15:6? <input type="checkbox"/> Absolutely true for all believers? <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbially true! <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely true for me! <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely Not true for me! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also realize this: Wealth in this passage does not necessarily mean Money. It is contrasted with "troubled income" of the wicked. Therefore, the wealth or increase or strength of the righteous comes without trouble/anxiety/fear. • Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?
Passages on Comparison of the Wicked and Righteous
15:09. The way of the wicked is an abomination to God, but He loves one who pursues righteousness.
15:14. The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge, the mouth of fools feeds on folly.
15:19. The way of the lazy is as a hedge of thorns, the path of the upright is a highway.
15:20. A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother.
15:21. Folly is joy to him who lacks sense, but a man of understanding walks straight.
15:25. God will tear down the house of the proud, but He will establish the widow.
Additional Comments on the Wicked vs the Righteous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On one hand King David said he never saw the righteous forsaken or go hungry (Ps 37:25), yet his son, Solomon, painted a totally different picture, for he said, "there are righteous men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the wicked, and, there are evil men to whom it happens according to the deeds of the righteous" (Ecc 7:15; 8:14). IOW, in a sinful world, the righteous sometimes do get what the wicked deserve, and the wicked sometimes get what the righteous deserve. • As the Psalmist said, "I was envious when I saw the prosperity of the wicked, they have life so easy, their riches increase; for I, a righteous man, have been plagued and punished every morning. This was painful for me until I visited God in His sanctuary, then I understood their end.".....Psalm 73 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, keep things in perspective. The righteous win in the end. • Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?
Passages on Reproof
15:05. A fool rejects his father's discipline, but he who regards reproof is sensible.
15:12. A scoffer does not love one who reproves him, he will not go to the wise.
15:31. He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.
15:32. He who neglects discipline despises himself, but he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.
16:22. Understanding is a fountain of life to one who has it, but discipline of fools is folly
Additional Comments on Reproof
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember, if you want to be wise, then hang around the wise Prov 13:20 • Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?

Comments on Proverbs 15-16
Passages on the Wicked
15:10. Grave punishment is for him who forsakes the way; he who hates reproof will die.
16:05. Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the lord; assuredly, he will not be unpunished.
16:18. Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.
16:29. A man of violence entices his neighbor and leads him in a way that is not good.
16:30. He who winks his eyes does so to devise perverse things; he who compresses his lips brings evil to pass. [IOW, don't be a flirt]
Additional Comments on the Wicked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is amazing how much time the wicked spend on devising ways to be wicked. They forego sleep till they can make someone stumble Pro 4:16; Micah 2:1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If only the Righteous would spend as much time thinking of ways to be righteous, and ways to serve God and their neighbors.....Mat 10;16 • Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?
Passages on the Righteous
16:06. By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the lord one keeps away from evil.
16:07. When a man's ways are pleasing to the lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. [Was this true for Jesus?]
16:17. The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; he who watches his way preserves his life.
16:20. He who gives attention to the word will find good, and blessed is he who trusts in the lord.
Additional Comments on the Righteous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus did everything right, yet his enemies (other religious leaders) sought His life. Again, a passage like 16:7, is proverbial. It is a general truth, but not absolute. • Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?
Passages on Government
16:10. A divine decision is in the lips of the king; his mouth should not err in judgment.
16:12. It is an abomination for kings to commit wicked acts, for a throne is established on righteousness.
16:15. In the light of a king's face is life, and his favor is like a cloud with the spring rain.
Additional Comments on Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even the foundation of God's kingdom/throne is Righteousness and Justice, Lovingkindness and Truth.....Ps 89:14; 92:2 • Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?
Passages on Health
15:13. A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.
15:15. All the days of the afflicted are bad, but a cheerful heart has a continual feast.
15:30. Bright eyes gladden the heart; good news puts fat on the bones.
Additional Comments on Biblical Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perfect Health is defined as "the slowest possible rate at which one can die" • Which passages stand out the most for you? Other thoughts or insights?

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- It is said Solomon wrote 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs (1Kings 4:32). The book of Proverbs only consists of 915 verses, barely a 1/3rd of what he wrote.
- But, God gave us all the best ones we need to ponder how to successfully travers the life He has given to each of us. PTL

NEXT WEEK: Proverbs 23. How should we influence friends, family, and society in an era of rampant addictions, especially to alcohol? Should we extol total abstinence or moderation?

