

Proverbs 12

(New International Version)

1Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid. **2**A good man obtains favor from the Lord, but the Lord condemns a crafty man. **3**A man cannot be established through wickedness, but the righteous cannot be uprooted. **4**A wife of noble character is her husband's crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones. **5**The plans of the righteous are just, but the advice of the wicked is deceitful. **6**The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, but the speech of the upright rescues them. **7**Wicked men are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous stands firm. **8**A man is praised according to his wisdom, but men with warped minds are despised. **9**Better to be a nobody and yet have a servant than pretend to be somebody and have no food. **10**A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel. **11**He who works his land will have abundant food, but he who chases fantasies lacks judgment. **12**The wicked desire the plunder of evil men, but the root of the righteous flourishes. **13**An evil man is trapped by his sinful talk, but a righteous man escapes trouble. **14**From the fruit of his lips a man is filled with good things as surely as the work of his hands rewards him. **15**The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice. **16**A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult. **17**A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies. **18**Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. **19**Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment. **20**There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace. **21**No harm befalls the righteous, but the wicked have their fill of trouble. **22**The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful. **23**A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself, but the heart of fools blurts out folly. **24**Diligent hands will rule, but laziness ends in slave labor. **25**An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up. **26**A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. **27**The lazy man does not roast his game, but the diligent man prizes his possessions. **28**In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality.

THEME: Wisdom For All People (Chapters 10-24)

PURPOSE: Solomon wanted to impart wisdom to all people, regardless of their age, sex, or position in society. These short, wise sayings give us practical wisdom for daily living. We should study them diligently and integrate them into our life.

OUTLINE:

I. CORRECTION (13:1) : He accepts his parents' discipline.

II. CONTROL (13:2-4): Work hard and prosper; control your tongue and have a long life.

III. CONSEQUENCES (13:5-25): The godly hate lies, work hard for their money, and are rewarded with respect. The wicked ruin their lives with their tongues, get wealth quickly and lose it, and their lives are snuffed out quickly.

PROVERBS 13:3

You have not mastered self-control if you do not control what you say. Words can cut and destroy. James recognized this truth when he stated, 'The tongue is a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do' (James 3:5). If you want to be self-controlled, begin with your tongue. Stop and think before you react or speak. If you can control this small but powerful member, you can control the rest of your body.

PROVERBS 13:6

Godly living safeguards your life. Every choice for good sets into motion other opportunities for good. Evil choices follow the same pattern, but in the opposite direction. Each decision you make to obey God's Word will bring a greater sense of order to your life, while each decision to disobey will bring confusion and destruction. The right choices you make reflect your integrity. Obedience brings the greatest safeguard and security.

PROVERBS 13:10

'I was wrong' or 'I need advice' are difficult phrases to utter because they require humility. Pride is an ingredient in every quarrel. It stirs up conflict and divides people. Humility, by contrast, heals. Guard against pride. If you find yourself constantly arguing, examine your life for pride. Be open to the advice of others, ask for help when you need it, and be willing to admit your mistakes.

PROVERBS 13:13

God created us, knows us, and loves us. It only makes sense, then, to listen to his instructions and do what he says. The Bible is his unfailing word to us. It is like an owner's manual for a car. If you obey God's instructions, you will run right and find his kind of power to live. If you ignore them, you will have breakdowns, accidents, and failures.

PROVERBS 13:17

In Solomon's day, a king had to rely on messengers for information about his country. These messengers had to be trustworthy. Inaccurate information could lead to bloodshed. Reliable communication is still vital. If the message received is different from the message sent, marriages, businesses, and diplomatic relations can all break down. It is important to choose your words well and to avoid reacting until you clearly understand what the other person means.

PROVERBS 13:19

Whether a dream come true is good or bad depends on the nature of the dream or desire. It is pleasant to achieve worthwhile goals, but not all goals are worth pursuing. When you set your heart on something, you may lose your ability to assess it objectively. With your desire blinding your judgment, you may proceed with an unwise relationship, a wasteful purchase, or a poorly conceived plan. Faithfulness is a virtue, but stubbornness is not.

PROVERBS 13:20

The old saying "A rotten apple spoils the barrel" is often applied to friendships, and with good reason. Our friends and associates affect us, sometimes profoundly. Be careful whom you choose as your closest friends. Spend time with people you want to be like because you and your friends will surely grow to resemble each other.

PROVERBS 13:20

When most people need advice, they go to their friends first because friends accept them and usually agree with them. But that is why they may not be able to help them with difficult problems. Our friends are so much like us that they may not have any answers we haven't already heard. Instead, we should seek out older and wiser people to advise us. Wise people have experienced a lot in life and have succeeded. They are not afraid to tell the truth. Who are the wise, godly people who can warn you of the pitfalls ahead?

PROVERBS 13:23

The poor are often victims of an unjust society. A poor man's soil may be good, but unjust laws may rob him of his own produce. This proverb does not take poverty lightly or wink at injustice; it simply describes what often occurs. We should do what we can to fight injustice of every sort. Our efforts may seem inadequate; but it is comforting to know that in the end God's justice will prevail.

PROVERBS 13:24

It is not easy for a loving parent to discipline a child, but it is necessary. The greatest responsibility that God gives parents is the nurture and guidance of their children. Lack of discipline puts parents' love in question because it shows a lack of concern for the character development of their children. Disciplining children averts long-range disaster. Without correction, children grow up with no clear understanding of right and wrong and with little direction to their lives. Don't be afraid to discipline your children. It is an act of love. Remember, however, that your efforts cannot make your children wise; they can only encourage your children to seek God's wisdom above all else!