

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

Bible Study Notes Book of Proverbs—Proverbs 20

10/17/12

Wisdom instructs on avoiding drunkenness, sloth, and a contentious spirit

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. DO NOT BE LED ASTRAY BY DRINK (20:1) .

II. DO NOT ROUSE THE KING'S ANGER (20:2-8): His judgment is always just.

III. III. DO NOT HAVE DOUBLE STANDARDS (20:9-13): The Lord despises them. You need to work and not be lazy. Be pure in all your conduct.

IV. IV. WATCH OUT FOR BAD BARGAINS (20:14-18): Do not accept a guarantee for the debt of a stranger without collateral.

V. V. DO NOT GOSSIP OR HOLD GRUDGES (20:19-25): "It is the LORD who directs our steps."

VI. DO NOT TOLERATE WICKEDNESS (20:26-30): A wise king knows how to handle the wicked. "The LORD's searchlight penetrates the human spirit, exposing every hidden motive."

Proverbs 20

(New International Version)

(Verses 1) DO NOT BE LED ASTRAY BY DRINK

¹ Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.

(Verses 2-8) DO NOT ROUSE THE KING'S ANGER: His judgment is always just.

A king's wrath strikes terror like the roar of a lion; those who anger him forfeit their lives. ³ It is to one's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel. ⁴ Sluggards do not plow in season; so at harvest time they look but find nothing. ⁵ The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has

insight draws them out. ⁶ Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful person who can find? ⁷ The righteous lead blameless lives; blessed are their children after them. ⁸ When a king sits on his throne to judge, he winnows out all evil with his eyes.

PROVERBS 20:3

A person who is truly confident of his or her strength does not need to parade it. A truly brave person does not look for chances to prove it. A resourceful woman can find a way out of a fight. A man of endurance will avoid retaliating. Foolish people find it impossible to avoid strife. Men and women of character can. What kind of person are you?

PROVERBS 20:4

You've heard similar warnings: If you don't study, you'll fail the test; if you don't save, you won't have money when you need it. God wants us to anticipate future needs and prepare for them. We can't expect him to come to our rescue when we cause our own problems through lack of planning and action. He provides for us, but he also expects us to be responsible.

(Verses 9-13): DO NOT HAVE DOUBLE STANDARDS: The Lord despises them. You need to work and not be lazy. Be pure in all your conduct.

⁹Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"? ¹⁰ Differing weights and differing measures—the LORD detests them both. ¹¹ Even small children are known by their actions, so is their conduct really pure and upright? ¹² Ears that hear and eyes that see—the LORD has made them both. ¹³ Do not love sleep or you will grow poor; stay awake and you will have food to spare.

PROVERBS 20:9

No one is without sin. As soon as we confess our sin and repent, sinful thoughts and actions begin to creep back into our life. We all need ongoing cleansing, moment by moment. Thank God he provides forgiveness by his mercy when we ask for it. Make confession and repentance a regular part of your talks with God. Rely on him moment by moment for the cleansing you need.

(Verses 14-18) WATCH OUT FOR BAD BARGAINS: Do not accept a guarantee for the debt of a stranger without collateral.

¹⁴ "It's no good, it's no good!" says the buyer—then goes off and boasts about the purchase.¹⁵ Gold there is, and rubies in abundance, but lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel. ¹⁶ Take the garment of one who puts up security for a stranger; hold it in pledge if it is done for an outsider. ¹⁷ Food gained by fraud tastes sweet, but one ends up with a mouth full of gravel. ¹⁸ Plans are established by seeking advice; so if you wage war, obtain guidance.

(Verses 19-25): DO NOT GOSSIP OR HOLD GRUDGES (20:19-25): "It is the LORD who directs our steps."

¹⁹ A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid anyone who talks too much. ²⁰ If someone curses their father or mother, their lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness. ²¹ An inheritance claimed too soon will not be blessed at the end. ²² Do not say, "I'll pay you back for this wrong!" Wait for the LORD, and he will avenge you. ²³ The LORD detests differing weights, and dishonest scales do not please him. ²⁴ A person's steps are directed by the LORD. How then can anyone understand their own way? ²⁵ It is a trap to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider one's vows.

PROVERBS 20:23

"Dishonest scales" refers to the loaded scales a merchant might use in order to cheat customers. Dishonesty is a difficult sin to avoid. It is easy to cheat if we think no one is looking. But dishonesty affects the very core of a person. It makes him untrustworthy and untrusting. It eventually makes him unable to know himself or relate to others. Don't take dishonesty lightly. Even the smallest portion of dishonesty contains enough of the poison of deceit to kill your spiritual life. If there is any dishonesty in your life, tell God about it now.

PROVERBS 20:24

We are often confused by the events around us. Some things we will never understand until years later when we look back and see how God was working. This proverb counsels us to not worry if we don't understand everything as it happens. Instead, we should trust that God knows what he's doing, even if his timing or design is not clear to us. See Psalm 37:23 for a reassuring promise of God's direction in your life.

PROVERBS 20:25

This proverb points out the danger of making a vow rashly and then reconsidering it. God takes vows seriously and requires that they be carried out (Deuteronomy 23:21-23). We often have good intentions when making a vow because we want to show God that we are determined to please him. Jesus, however, says it is better not to make promises to God because he knows how difficult they are to keep (Matthew 5:33-37). If you still feel it is important to make a vow, make sure that you weigh the consequences of breaking that vow

(Verses 26-30): DO NOT TOLERATE WICKEDNESS (20:26-30): A wise king knows how to handle the wicked. "The LORD's searchlight penetrates the human spirit, exposing every hidden motive." ²⁶ **A wise king winnows out the wicked; he drives the threshing wheel over them.** ²⁷ **The human spirit is the lamp of the LORD that sheds light on one's inmost being.** ²⁸ **Love and faithfulness keep a king safe; through love his throne is made secure.** ²⁹ **The glory of young men is their strength, gray hair the splendor of the old.** ³⁰ **Blows and wounds scrub away evil, and beatings purge the inmost being.**

Honesty and Dishonesty	
Proverbs tells us plainly that God despises all forms of dishonesty. Not only does God hate dishonesty, but we are told that it works against us—others no longer trust us, and we cannot even enjoy our dishonest gains. It is wiser to be honest because "the godly escape such trouble" (12:13).	
Others' Opinions	
Leaders value those who speak honestly	16:13
Most people will appreciate truth in the end more than flattery	28:23
Quality of Life	
The godly person's plans are just	12:5
Truthful witnesses do not lie; false witnesses breathe lies	14:5
Truthful witnesses save lives	14:25
The children of the righteous are blessed	20:7
Short-Term Results	
Ill-gotten gain has no lasting value	10:2
The righteous are rescued from trouble	11:8
The evil are trapped by their own words	12:13
Fraudulent gain is sweet for a while	20:17
Long-Term Results	
Good people are guided by their honesty	11:3
Truthful lips endure	12:19
Riches gained quickly don't last	20:21
Riches gained dishonestly don't last	21:6
The honest are kept safe	28:18
God's Opinion	
God delights in honesty	11:1

