

**A TOPICAL STUDY
OF THE
PROVERBS**

- Obtaining Wisdom
- Avoiding Sin
- Friendships
- Wealth
- Worship
- Anger
- The Tongue
- Slothfulness
- The Family
- The Fool
- Cheerfulness

THE OBTAINING OF WISDOM TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: Read Proverbs 1:20-33. To whom is the call of wisdom (1:4-5)? To the simple, the young, the wise, and the man of understanding. No matter how old or young, no matter how experienced, it is only the fool who will not seek and listen to wisdom. Obtaining wisdom is like obtaining humility: when one thinks he has attained it, he has lost it.

THE BENEFITS OF WISDOM

(Prov 13:15) Good understanding gains favor, But the way of the unfaithful is hard.

(Prov 19:16) He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, But he who is careless of his ways will die.

(Prov 15:24) The way of life winds upward for the wise, That he may turn away from hell [the grave] below.

(Prov 18:10-11) The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe. {11} The rich man's wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own esteem.

(Prov 16:16) How much better to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.

(Prov 24:5-6) A wise man is strong, Yes, a man of knowledge increases strength; {6} For by wise counsel you will wage your own war, And in a multitude of counselors there is safety.

(Prov 24:7) Wisdom is too lofty for a fool; He does not open his mouth in the gate [in the assembly at the gate he has nothing to say].

THE MEANS OF OBTAINING WISDOM

Wisdom is not attained by casual behavior--

(Prov 11:27) He who earnestly seeks good finds favor, But trouble will come to him who seeks evil.

(Prov 12:1) Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid.

(Prov 24:13-14) My son, eat honey because it is good, And the honeycomb which is sweet to your taste; {14} So shall the knowledge of wisdom be [sweet] to your soul; If you have found it, there is a prospect [future hope], And your hope will not be cut off.

(Prov 20:12) The hearing ear and the seeing eye [ears that hear and eyes that see], The LORD has made them both.

(Prov 22:17-18) Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your heart to my knowledge; {18} For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; Let them all be fixed [ready] upon your lips,

To obtain wisdom we must have the ability of unbiased self-examination--

(Prov 14:8) The wisdom of the prudent is to understand [give thought to] his way, But the folly of fools is deceit.

(Prov 14:15-16) The simple believes every word, But the prudent considers well his steps. {16} A wise man fears and departs from evil, But a fool rages and is self-confident [is hotheaded and reckless].

(Prov 21:12) The righteous *God* wisely considers the house of the wicked, Overthrowing the wicked for their wickedness. [ASV: The righteous man considereth the house of the wicked, How the wicked are overthrown to their ruin.]

(Prov 23:23) Buy the truth, and do not sell it, Also wisdom and instruction and understanding.

THE PROCESS AND RESULT OF SPURNING WISDOM

The pride of a fool will not allow him to learn--

(Prov 14:6) A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it, But knowledge is easy to him who understands.

(Prov 12:15) The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise [a wise man listens to advice].

(Prov 13:1) A wise son heeds his father's instruction, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

(Prov 15:22) Without counsel, plans go awry [fail], But in the multitude of counselors they are established.

(Prov 18:1-2) A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment. {2} A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart.

Being a fool does not always simply mean stubborn rebellion--

(Prov 21:16) A man who wanders from the way of understanding Will rest in the assembly of the dead.

(Prov 22:3) A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, But the simple pass on [keep going] and are punished [suffer for it].

The end result of rejecting wisdom--

(Prov 1:28-31) "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me. {29} Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD, {30} They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke. {31} Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, And be filled to the full with their own fancies.

AVOIDING SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: Jesus prayed, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." We cannot pray this prayer and then expect God to answer when we have not followed His prescriptions for avoiding and overcoming sin. The following proverbs will give us God's directions for finding the way of escape in avoiding sin and the evil it brings.

WE WILL REAP WHAT WE SOW:

(Prov 17:12) Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, Rather than a fool in his folly.

(Prov 22:8) He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, And the rod of his anger will fail [be destroyed].

WE MUST AVOID BEING SELF-CONFIDENT:

(Prov 16:2) All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits [motives].

(Prov 14:15-16) The simple believes every word, But the prudent considers well his steps. {16} A wise man fears and departs from evil, But a fool rages and is self-confident.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING GUARD OVER OUR MINDS:

(Prov 23:26-28) My son, give me your heart, And let your eyes observe my ways. {27} For a harlot is a deep pit, And a seductress [wayward wife] is a narrow well. {28} She also lies in wait as for a victim, And increases the unfaithful among men.

(Prov 24:8-9) He who plots to do evil will be called a schemer. {9} The devising of foolishness is sin, And the scoffer is an abomination to men.

(Prov 27:19) As in water face reflects face, So a man's heart reveals the man.

BE WILLING TO CHANGE WHEN CORRECTED:

(Prov 18:13) He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

Beware of the flatterer--

(Prov 27:6) Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. [The kisses of an enemy may be profuse, but faithful are the wounds of a friend.]

(Prov 28:23) He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward Than he who flatters with the tongue.

Do not have a "servant's" mind--

(Prov 29:19) A servant will not be corrected by mere words; For though he understands, he will not respond.

Responding to correction--

(Prov 27:21) The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, And a man is valued [tested] by what others say of [praise] him.

(Prov 29:15) The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

DANGERS AND BENEFITS OF FRIENDSHIPS TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: Read **Proverbs 1:10-19**. This passage at the very beginning of the book summarizes the whole story of dangerous friendships. The kind of companions we maintain will make or break us. The kind of companions we have reveal who we are and what is in our heart. Whatever my best friends are interested in, is usually my interests and betrays the direction of my life.

EVIL COMPANIONS CORRUPT:

(Prov 12:26) The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.

(Prov 13:20) He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

(Prov 18:24) A man who has friends must himself be friendly [A man of many companions may come to ruin], But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

(Prov 16:18-19) Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall. {19} Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, Than to divide the spoil with the proud.

(Prov 24:1-2) Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them; {2} For their heart devises violence, And their lips talk of troublemaking.

(Prov 23:19-21) Hear, my son, and be wise; And guide your heart in the way. {20} Do not mix with winebibbers, Or with gluttonous eaters of meat; {21} For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags.

THE BENEFITS OF GOOD COMPANIONS:

(Prov 17:17) A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.

(Prov 27:10) Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, Nor go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.

(Prov 18:1) A man who isolates himself [an unfriendly man] seeks his own desire; He rages against all wise judgment.

(Prov 27:9) Ointment and perfume delight the heart, And the sweetness of a man's friend gives delight by hearty counsel [the pleasantness of one's friend springs from his earnest counsel].

(Prov 27:17) As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

(Prov 20:29) The glory of young men is their strength, And the splendor of old men is their gray head.

(Prov 13:20) He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

WAYS OF MAINTAINING GODLY COMPANIONS:

(Prov 18:19) A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle.

(Prov 25:8-10) Do not go hastily to court; For what will you do in the end, When your neighbor has put you to shame? {9} Debate your case with your neighbor, And do not disclose the secret to another; {10} Lest he who hears it expose your shame, And your reputation be ruined.

(Prov 25:17) Seldom set foot in your neighbor's house, Lest he become weary of you and hate you.

(Prov 27:14) He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, It will be counted a curse to him.

WEALTH AND ITS EMPTY PROMISES TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: The advertising industry attempts to persuade us that material possessions will bring joy and fulfillment. The idea that happiness is to be attained through limitless material acquisition is preached continuously by every form of media. Money and possessions, like many things God has placed in our control, is good when used the way God intended it. But Satan attempts to use what God intended for good as an object of idolatry which denies us both contentment and spirituality. The following proverbs will help us avoid the pitfalls of materialism.

THE DISAPPOINTMENT AND LIMITATIONS OF WEALTH:

(Prov 11:4) Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.

(Prov 11:28) He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will flourish like foliage.

(Prov 23:5) Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.

(Prov 19:4) Wealth makes many friends, But the poor is separated from his friend.

(Prov 20:15) There is gold and a multitude of rubies, But the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

(Ecc 5:10) He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver: nor he who loves abundance with increase. This also is vanity. (11) When goods increase, they increase who eat them; so what profit have the owners except to see them with their eyes.?

(Ecc 5:12) The sleep of the laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not permit him to sleep.

THE LACK OF PROFIT IN WEALTH GAINED DISHONESTLY:

(Prov 13:11) Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, But he who gathers by labor [little by little] will increase [makes it grow].

(Prov 13:7) There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; And one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches.

(Prov 15:6) In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble [but the income of the wicked brings them trouble].

(Prov 16:8) Better is a little with righteousness, Than vast revenues without justice.

(Prov 21:6) Getting treasures by a lying tongue is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.

(Prov 28:22) A man with an evil eye [a stingy man] hastens after riches, And does not consider that poverty will come upon him.

THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF THE LOVE OF MONEY:

(Prov 27:20) Hell and Destruction are never full; So the eyes of man are never satisfied.

(Prov 30:15-16) The leech has two daughters; Give and Give! There are three things that are never satisfied, Four never say, "Enough!": {16} The grave, The barren womb, The earth that is not satisfied with water; And the fire never says, "Enough!"

(Prov 23:17-18) Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day; {18} For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off.

(Prov 23:4-5) Do not overwork to be rich; Because of your own understanding, cease! {5} Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.

THE SURPASSING VALUE OF CONTENTMENT:

(Prov 18:10-11) The name of the LORD is a strong tower; The righteous run to it and are safe. {11} The rich man's wealth is his strong city, And like a high wall in his own esteem [they imagine it an unscalable wall].

(Prov 27:8) Like a bird that wanders [strays] from its nest is a man who wanders [strays] from his place [home].

(Prov 21:17) He who loves pleasure will be a poor man; He who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

(Prov 25:16) Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, Lest you be filled with it and vomit.

(Prov 15:16-17) Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, Than great treasure with trouble. {17} Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, Than a fatted calf with hatred.

(Prov 17:1) Better is a dry morsel with quietness, Than a house full of feasting with strife.

In your quiet moments:

After studying these proverbs, what are some of the things you believe you need to change in your life?

SINCERE WORSHIP TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: Read **Romans 12:1**. This passage shows that our lives are to be offered as a living sacrifice which is our *reasonable* worship. The word "reasonable" implies a worship that is generated from the inward or reasoning part of man. The word is also translated as "sincere," and thus a worship that is truly "in spirit" (**John 4:24**). There is never a time that I am allowed to "turn off" sincere worship. Just as the offering of the burnt offering symbolized, I am to offer my life to God from the inside out. The following proverbs will help us in this effort.

THE EVIL OF AN INSINCERE HEART:

(Prov 15:8-9) The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But the prayer of the upright is His delight. {9} The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But He loves him who follows righteousness.

(Prov 21:27) The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination; How much more when he brings it with wicked intent!

(Prov 15:26) The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD, But the words of the pure are pleasant.

(Prov 21:15) It is a joy for the just to do justice, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.

(Prov 28:13) He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

(Prov 28:9) One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.

HOW TO HAVE A SINCERE HEART: Live in the presence of God--

(Prov 15:3) The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good.

(Prov 15:11) Hell and Destruction are before the LORD; So how much more the hearts of the sons of men.

(Prov 16:3) Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established [and your plans will succeed].

(Prov 16:2) All the ways of a man are pure [innocent] in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits [motives].

(Prov 17:3) The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests the hearts.

We must train our conscience according to His word--

(Prov 20:27) The spirit of a man is the lamp of the LORD, Searching all the inner depths of his heart {The lamp of the Lord searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being}.

(Prov 30:5-6) Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. {6} Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.

In order to make correction--

(Prov 30:32-33) If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, Or if you have devised evil, put your hand on your mouth. {33} For as the churning of milk produces butter, And wringing the nose produces blood, So the forcing of wrath produces strife.

CONTROLLING ANGER TOPICAL PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: In San Francisco in 1979, a civil servant named Dan White resigned his seat on the city's board of supervisors. Shortly thereafter he changed his mind, but he was too late: Mayor George Moscone had decided to give the job to someone else. White took his snub-nosed revolver, climbed in through the window of City Hall, and pumped nine bullets into Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk, who had been one of White's outspoken opponents (and who was a homosexual whom White disliked). White's lawyers argued that his excessive consumption of junk food (Twinkies) had caused his "diminished mental capacity", leaving him unable to premeditate anything, much less murder. The jury agreed. White was convicted of voluntary manslaughter and given a maximum sentence of seven years and eight months in jail.

Is it true that there are times in our lives in which we are just "out of control?" When anger "overcomes" us, can we take some of the blame off by claiming "diminished mental capacity"? The Proverbs will answer these and other vital questions concerning the sin of human anger.

THE RESULTS OF NOT CONTROLLING ANGER:

(Prov 10:12) Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

(Prov 14:16-17) A wise man fears and departs from evil, But a fool rages and is self-confident.
{17} A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of wicked intentions is hated.

The effects of a person's anger on those around him--

(Prov 12:18) There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword [Reckless words are like a sword], But the tongue of the wise promotes health.

(Prov 22:24-25) Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go,
{25} Lest you learn his ways And set a snare for your soul.

(Prov 25:23) The north wind brings forth rain, And a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.

(Prov 27:3) A stone is heavy and sand is weighty, But a fool's wrath [provocation] is heavier than both of them.

(Prov 27:4) Wrath is cruel and anger a torrent, But who is able to stand before jealousy?

Where does a person learn uncontrolled anger?--

(Prov 19:18-19) Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction. {19} A man of great wrath will suffer punishment; For if you rescue him, you will have to do it again.

What does uncontrolled anger say about a person's life?--

(Prov 25:28) Whoever has no rule over his own spirit [lacks self-control] is like a city broken down, without walls.

(Prov 29:20) Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

THE BENEFITS OF A CONTROLLED SPIRIT

(Prov 16:32) He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty [a warrior], And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

(Prov 15:23) A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, And a word spoken in due season [a timely word], how good it is!

(Prov 21:23) Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.

HOW TO RESTRAIN ANGER:

(Prov 15:1-2) A soft [gentle] answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. {2} The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

(Prov 15:18) A wrathful man stirs up strife [dissension], But he who is slow to anger allays [calms] contention [a quarrel].

(Prov 17:14) The beginning of strife is like releasing water; Therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts. [Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.]

(Prov 20:3) It is honorable for a man to stop striving, Since any fool can start a quarrel.

(Prov 26:2) Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, So a curse without cause shall not alight.

(Prov 30:32-33) If you have been foolish in exalting yourself, Or if you have devised evil, put your hand on your mouth. {33} For as the churning of milk produces butter, And wringing the nose produces blood, So the forcing of wrath produces strife.

New Testament texts that apply--

(Eph 4:31) Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

(James 1:19-20) So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; {20} for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

(Col 3:8) But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

THE GOOD AND BAD OF THE TONGUE TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: James 3 teaches us that the tongue is like a rudder that controls our whole life. Further, the tongue is like a small flame that can set a whole forest on fire. Therefore, the tongue is very powerful, affecting not only our own lives, but the lives of those around us. By our tongue we can heal and by our tongue we can wound deeply. Jesus said that by our words we would be justified and by our words we would be condemned (**Matthew 12:37**). It is therefore eternally important that we give special heed to the proverbs on the tongue.

THE DESTRUCTIVE NATURE OF THE TONGUE:

(Prov 18:6-8) A fool's lips enter into contention, And his mouth calls for blows. {7} A fool's mouth is his destruction [undoing], And his lips are the snare of his soul. {8} The words of a talebearer [gossip] are like tasty trifles [choice morsels], And they go down into the inmost body.

(Prov 20:19) He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; Therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips.

(Prov 26:20-22) Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. {21} As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife. {22} The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body.

(Prov 10:19) In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise.

(Prov 16:27-28) An ungodly man digs up [plots] evil, And it is on his lips like a burning [scorching] fire. {28} A perverse man sows strife, And a whisperer [a gossip] separates the best of friends.

(Prov 26:27) Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, And he who rolls a stone will have it roll back on him.

(Prov 17:14) The beginning of strife is like releasing water [breaching a dam]; Therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts.

THE BENEFITS OF THE TONGUE IN CONTRAST TO ITS DESTRUCTIVENESS:

(Prov 10:20) The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; The heart of the wicked is worth little.

(Prov 10:31-32) The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, But the perverse tongue will be cut out. {32} The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable [fitting], But the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.

(Prov 11:9) The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, But through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.

(Prov 11:11-13) By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, But it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked. {12} He who is devoid of wisdom despises [derides] his neighbor, But a man of understanding holds his peace [tongue]. {13} A talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

(Prov 15:1-2) A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. {2} The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

(Prov 15:4) A wholesome tongue [The tongue that brings healing] is a tree of life, But perverseness in it [a deceitful tongue] breaks the spirit.

(Prov 18:4) The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; The [But the] wellspring [fountain] of wisdom is a flowing [bubbling] brook.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEING TOO QUICK TO SPEAK:

(Prov 15:28) The heart of the righteous studies how to answer [weighs its answers], But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

(Prov 17:27-28) He who has knowledge spares his words, And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. {28} Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; When he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.

(Prov 18:13) He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

(Prov 21:23) Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles.

(Prov 25:8-9) Do not go hastily to court; For what will you do in the end, When your neighbor has put you to shame? {9} Debate your case with your neighbor, And do not disclose the secret to another;

(Prov 29:11) A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back. [A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.]

(Prov 29:20) Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

THE DANGER OF LYING LIPS:

(Prov 12:22) Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.

(Prov 12:17-19) He who speaks truth declares righteousness, But a false witness, deceit. {18} There is one who speaks [reckless words are] like the piercings of a sword, But the tongue of the wise promotes health [brings healing]. {19} The truthful lip shall be established forever, But a lying tongue is but for a moment.

(Prov 17:4) An evildoer gives heed [listens] to false lips; A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful [malicious] tongue.

(Prov 20:25) It is a snare for a man to devote rashly something as holy, And afterward to reconsider his vows. [It is a trap for a man to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider his vows.]

(Prov 28:23) He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward than he who flatters with the tongue.

(Prov 29:5) A man who flatters his neighbor Spreads a net for his feet.

LAZINESS TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: In **Titus 2:14** Paul stated that God has purified a people "zealous for good works." And again in **Titus 3:14**, "Let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful." From the very beginning of time God has always expected His people to be busy and productive. Though the following proverbs will warn mainly of one's inactivity in his personal life with his home and his business, many applications should be made to our spiritual life and our work for the Lord as members of His body.

THE WAY THE SLUGGARD THINKS:

(Prov 12:11) He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, But he who follows frivolity [chases fantasies] is devoid of understanding [lacks judgment].

(Prov 14:23) In all labor there is profit, But idle chatter leads only to poverty. [All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.]

(Prov 13:4) The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich. [The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.]

(The LXX translates, "In desires every idle man is occupied, but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.")

(Prov 21:25-26) The desire [craving] of the lazy man kills him, For his hands refuse to labor. {26} He covets greedily all day long, But the righteous gives and does not spare.

(Prov 12:27) The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting, But diligence is man's precious possession [but the diligent man prizes his possessions].

(Prov 26:13-16) The lazy man says, "There is a lion in the road! A fierce lion is in the streets!" {14} As a door turns on its hinges, So does the lazy man on his bed. {15} The lazy man buries his hand in the bowl; It wearies him to bring it back to his mouth. {16} The lazy man is wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can answer sensibly.

THE SLUGGARD AND HIS JOB:

(Prov 10:26) As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So is the lazy man to those who send him.

(Prov 18:9) He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great destroyer.

(Prov 12:24) The hand of the diligent will rule, But the lazy man will be put to forced [slave] labor.

THE RESULT OF BEING A SLUGGARD:

(Prov 15:19) The way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, But the way of the upright is a highway.

(Prov 19:7) All the brothers of the poor hate him; How much more do his friends go far from him! He may pursue them with words, yet they abandon him.

(Prov 19:15) Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, And an idle person will suffer hunger.

(Prov 24:30-34) I went by the field of the lazy man, And by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding; {31} And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; Its surface was covered with nettles; Its stone wall was broken down. {32} When I saw it, I considered it well; I looked on it and received instruction: {33} A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest; {34} So shall your poverty come like a prowler, And your need [scarcity] like an armed man.

(Prov 30:15) The leech has two daughters; Give and Give! There are three things that are never satisfied, Four never say, "Enough!":

THE REMEDY FOR SLOTHFULNESS:

(Prov 20:13) Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty; Open your eyes, and you will be satisfied with bread.

(Prov 27:23-27) Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, And attend to your herds; {24} For riches are not forever, Nor does a crown endure to all generations. {25} When the hay is removed, and the tender grass shows itself, And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in, {26} The lambs will provide your clothing, And the goats the price of a field; {27} You shall have enough goats' milk for your food, For the food of your household, And the nourishment of your maidservants.

(Prov 16:26) The person who labors, labors for himself [The laborer's appetite works for him], For his hungry mouth drives him on.

(Prov 6:6-11) Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, {7} Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, {8} Provides her supplies in the summer, And gathers her food in the harvest. {9} How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? {10} A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep; {11} So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.

FAMILY/HOME RELATIONSHIPS TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: There are probably few areas of our lives that are more written about and discussed than our family/home relationships. Everyone seems to have an opinion. Even the "experts" cannot find agreement on the proper course. For the Christian, the knowledge of the experts are only worthwhile when God's word has been used as a foundation or when their advice reflects godly instruction. The Proverbs offer us unique insights into God's wisdom on the home. We need to both trust and heed these instructions.

THE PARENT/CHILD RELATIONSHIP:

(Prov 10:1) The Proverbs of Solomon: A wise son makes a glad [brings joy to his] father, But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.

(Prov 13:1) A wise son heeds his father's instruction, But a scoffer [mockers] does not listen to rebuke.

(Prov 15:20) A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.

(Prov 17:21) He who begets a scoffer does so to his sorrow, And the father of a fool has no joy.

(Prov 17:2) A wise servant will rule over a son who causes shame, And will share an inheritance among the brothers.

(Prov 20:20) Whoever curses his father or his mother, His lamp will be put out in deep darkness.

(Prov 23:24-25) The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who begets a wise child will delight in him. {25} Let your father and your mother be glad, And let her who bore you rejoice.

As pertains mainly to the parent--

(Prov 11:29-30) He who troubles his own house [family] will inherit the wind, And the fool will be servant to the wise of heart. {30} The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.

(Prov 22:6) Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

(Prov 29:17) Correct [discipline] your son, and he will give you rest [peace]; Yes, he will give delight to your soul.

(Prov 29:15) The rod [rod of correction] and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

(Prov 13:24) He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly [is careful to discipline him].

(Prov 19:18) Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction. [Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.]

(Prov 22:15) Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him.

(Prov 23:13-14) Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat [punish] him with a rod, he will not die. {14} You shall beat [punish] him with a rod, And deliver his soul from hell.

PRIORITIES IN THE HOME: As pertains to the woman--

(Prov 14:1) The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.

(Prov 19:13-14) A foolish son is the ruin of his father, And the contentions of a wife [a quarrelsome wife] are a continual dripping. {14} Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers [parents], But a prudent wife is from the LORD.

(Prov 21:9) Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop [roof], Than in a house shared with a contentious [quarrelsome] woman. (Prov 21:19) Better to dwell in the wilderness [desert], Than with a contentious and angry [quarrelsome and ill-tempered] woman.

(Prov 11:16) A gracious [kindhearted] woman retains honor, But ruthless men retain [gain only] riches.

(Prov 11:22) As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, So is a lovely woman who lacks discretion.

(Prov 31:10-31) Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. {11} The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain. {12} She does him good and not evil All the days of her life. {13} She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands. {14} She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar. {15} She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants. {16} She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard. {17} She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms. {18} She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night. {19} She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle. {20} She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy. {21} She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household is clothed with scarlet. {22} She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple. {23} Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land. {24} She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants. {25} Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come. {26} She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness. {27} She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness. {28} Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her: {29} "Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all." {30} Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. {31} Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.

As pertains to the man--

(Prov 4:1-3) Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; {2} For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law. {3} When I was my father's son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother, he also taught me and said to me...

(Prov 4:10-11) Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, And the years of your life will be many. {11} I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths.

(Prov 31:28-31) Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her: {29} "Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all." {30} Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised. {31} Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.

As pertains to priorities in general--

(Prov 15:16-17) Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, Than great treasure with trouble. {17} Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, Than a fatted calf with hatred.

(Prov 30:7-9) Two things I request of You (Deprive me not before I die): {8} Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food allotted to me [my daily bread]; {9} 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.

THE FOOL AND SCOFFER TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: There is no book in the Bible that says more about the fool than the book of Proverbs. These words at times so accurately describe our actions that it is frightening. The real danger is that when we act the fool or when we scoff at wisdom and knowledge, the result is devastating to our lives and will seriously affect the lives of those around us. Jesus said that foolishness was a sin (**Mark 7:22**). We must listen to these proverbs and learn!

THE CHARACTER OF THE SCOFFER: HATING CORRECTION:

(Prov 10:17) He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, But he who refuses [ignores] correction goes astray.

(Prov 12:1) Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, But he who hates correction is stupid.

(Prov 12:15) The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.

(Prov 13:13) He who despises the word [scorns instruction] will be destroyed, But he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.

(Prov 13:19) A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul, But it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.

(Prov 15:12) A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, Nor will he go to the wise.

(Prov 17:10) Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool.

(Prov 27:22) Though you grind a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.

THE WICKED WAYS OF THE FOOL:

(Prov 10:23) To do evil is like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom. [A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct, but a man of understanding delights in wisdom.]

(Prov 13:16) Every prudent man acts with knowledge, But a fool lays open [exposes] his folly.

(Prov 14:7) Go from the presence of a foolish man, When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.

(Prov 14:12) There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

(Prov 14:15) The simple believes every word [anything], But the prudent considers well his steps.

(Prov 17:16) Why is there in the hand of a fool the purchase price of wisdom, Since he has no heart for it? [Of what use is money in the hand of a fool, since he has no desire to get wisdom.]

(Prov 18:2) A fool has no delight in understanding, But in expressing his own heart.

(Prov 26:3-12) A whip for the horse, A bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the fool's back.

{4} Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

{5} Answer a fool according to his folly, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

{6} He who sends a message by the hand of a fool cuts off his own feet and drinks violence.

{7} Like the legs of the lame that hang limp is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

{8} Like one who binds a stone in a sling is he who gives honor to a fool.

{9} Like a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

{10} The great God who formed everything gives the fool his hire and the transgressor his wages.

{11} As a dog returns to his own vomit, So a fool repeats his folly.

{12} Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

THE END OF THE SCOFFER/FOOL:

(Prov 10:21) The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of wisdom.

(Prov 11:7) When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, And the hope of the unjust perishes [all he expected from his power comes to nothing].

(Prov 13:15) Good understanding gains favor, But the way of the unfaithful is hard.

(Prov 15:10) Harsh discipline is for him who forsakes the way, And he who hates correction will die.

(Prov 17:12) Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, Rather than a fool in his folly.

POSITIVE, CHEERFUL ATTITUDES TOPICAL STUDY OF PROVERBS

INTRODUCTION: The New Testament is filled with passages encouraging us to "rejoice in the Lord." But at the same time the scriptures continually speak of the trials that a Christian is destined to endure. The Proverbs give us an interesting glimpse into the means by which the child of God can suffer and yet still maintain an attitude that will provide him with the joy that God expects of us.

THE BENEFITS OF CHEERFULNESS CONTRASTED WITH DEPRESSION:

(Prov 17:22) A merry heart does good, like medicine, But a broken spirit dries the bones.

(Prov 18:14) The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, But who can bear a broken spirit?

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

(Prov 15:15) All the days of the afflicted are evil, But he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast.

(Prov 15:30) The light of the eyes [a cheerful look] rejoices the heart, And a good report makes the bones healthy.

THE BENEFIT OF ONE'S CHEERFULNESS TO OTHERS:

(Prov 12:25) Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad.

(Prov 15:23) A man has joy by the answer of his mouth [by giving an apt reply], And a word spoken in due season, how good it is!

TRUE JOY COMES FROM WITHIN AND IS NOT NECESSARILY JUSTIFIED BY OUTWARD APPEARANCES:

(Prov 14:10) The heart knows its own bitterness, And a stranger does not share its joy. [Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy.]

(Prov 14:13) Even in laughter the heart may sorrow, And the end of mirth may be grief.

(Prov 14:30) A sound heart is life to the body, But envy is rottenness to the bones. [A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.]

New Testament passages to consider:

(Phil 4:4-7) Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! {5} Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. {6} Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; {7} and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

(1 Pet 5:7) casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

(Phil 1:15-18) Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from good will: {16} The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; {17} but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. {18} What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

(Rom 8:18-19) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. {19} For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.