

1. The main topic of proverbs is still "Wisdom". My subtopic for this lesson is about understanding the way life works. Many of the proverbs teach us things about how life works and even how nonbelievers act. The reason those proverbs are given is to say in effect, "This is the way the world acts, but if you compare this to other proverbs, it is not the way God wants us to act!"
 - a) For example, we have proverbs about how foolish people act, but we are not to be fools.
 - b) Verse 1 is about how an unfriendly man pursues selfish acts. That may be a truth about life, but it is not how Christians are supposed to act. God calls us to work as a team in ways that ultimately benefit God.
 - c) There is a proverb coming up about gossip and how the words of gossip are "tasty" to the hearer. Again, it doesn't make it right, the proverb is just describing what is the most common reaction for people to listen to gossip!
 - d) Just so you know, this lesson is not all negative proverbs. The proverbs appear to be going back and forth between how we should act and how the "world" acts.
 - e) We're going to have proverbs about how rich and poor people act in life. The proverbs have nothing to do with whether or not saved people can have material possessions.
 - i) What is important for the believer is the attitude we have toward the material benefits we have in life and how we use those resources.
 - f) I can go on from there with both good and bad examples in these two chapters. With that introductory comment stated, let's get started.
2. Verse 1: An unfriendly man pursues selfish ends; he defies all sound judgment.
 - a) Verse 1 is describing a person who only cares about him or herself. They have no interest in the affairs of others unless the others are helping them.
 - b) The second part says this type of person "defies all sound judgment". The point is this type of person has no interest in helping or caring for others. All this person cares about is him or herself and that's it. This is the first of many "negative examples" in this lesson.
3. Verse 2: A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions.
 - a) Foolish people are not silent. They like to air out their opinions. However, they have no interest in learning from others, especially those who care about God.
 - b) A biblical definition of a fool is one who has no interest in God and what God cares about it. A foolish person may have great understanding of their job or things of this world. The proverb is not saying a foolish person is stupid, just purposely naive toward God.
 - c) May God help us to control our tongues and not speak every thought that pops in our head!
4. Verse 3: When wickedness comes, so does contempt, and with shame comes disgrace.
 - a) People who don't care about God will usually, sooner or later, get involved with some sort of wickedness. God does not allow "neutrality" toward Him. People either draw closer to Him or further from Him in their lives. When one spends a lifetime turning from God, it eventually leads to wicked actions.
 - i) With such wickedness comes contempt for God and His laws. That's one of the points of this proverb.
 - b) The idea of "shame" is again, speaking of a person who has no interest in God. They will be disgraced, at the least on judgment day, and often "shamed" in this lifetime.
5. Verse 4: The words of a man's mouth are deep waters, but the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.
 - a) The point of this proverb is that almost all people like to air their opinions. True "wisdom" spoken is not nearly as loud (i.e., as prevalent) as "people just speaking". The point is that one can find wisdom in people's speech, but it is not nearly as often as "people just speaking what they think".

- b) To find wisdom in words, one has to listen carefully to what people say and compare those words against God's.
- 6. Verse 5: It is not good to be partial to the wicked or to deprive the innocent of justice.
 - a) This is similar to some of the proverbs from the last lesson. The point is in judgment situations, we are to do our best to not condemn the innocent of justice and not be partial to the wicked. The point is about judging all people fairly.
 - b) So why is this proverb here? It is surrounded by a bunch of proverbs that mostly deal with bad behavior of others. One of the signs of "bad behavior" is how people get treated in courtroom and judgment situations. I believe that is why this proverb is here.
- 7. Verse 6: A fool's lips bring him strife, and his mouth invites a beating. ⁷ A fool's mouth is his undoing, and his lips are a snare to his soul.
 - a) A "sign" of a fool is based on how people react to what that fool says. If the words of a fool cause many people to want to hit him or her, it is a sign that person is a fool.
 - b) Another point is the words of a fool are often their "undoing". Their plans against God and against other people are often "undone" by what they say. Their words are a snare to their own soul when it comes to salvation.
 - c) If a fool is sharing their plans with another fool, odds are neither one's plans come to pass as both want to do it their way and not share their glory with another person.
- 8. Verse 8: The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts.
 - a) This verse is not saying gossip is a good thing. It is saying that people "relishing" listening to gossip and the words are digested by others.
 - b) Gossip is never considered a good thing in the bible. When we hear gossip about others, the wise thing is to ignore it. When we hear stories of others, the correct thing is to approach the source and find out if its true and not go spreading gossip to others.
- 9. Verse 9: One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys.
 - a) The point is these two types of people work well together. One who slacks in his or her work, then "teams well", with the type of person who wants to destroy others.
 - b) The idea of a "destroyer" is a person who not only rebels against what is good, but tries to destroy what is good. These two types of bad people work hand in hand with each other.
- 10. Verse 10: The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.
 - a) In this chapter, we are having verse after verse dealing with negative traits. The exception so far is Verse 10. A reason for having this verse here is, is to teach the wise person where to run when evil people are around us and doing their evil deeds.
 - b) In other words, when the wicked are planning schemes against God-fearing people, the God-fearing should seek God and run to Him! Does that mean running to church? Sometimes yes. Other times it could be running home. The point is not so much a physical place but a "mental place" where one can seek God's comfort and guidance when there is "wickedness" all around.
 - c) If there are "evil things" around you and you're not sure what to do, that's a good time for prayer to God. He will usually give some sort of answer and help in such situations.
- 11. Verse 11: The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it an unscalable wall.
 - a) We're now back to proverbs about non-God fearing people.
 - b) The point of this proverb is that wealthy people have a false sense of security about their wealth. They think they can build a "safety wall" between themselves and society with their wealth. The proverb is not condemning wealth all to itself. It is condemning the idea of using wealth to separate one self from the world.
 - i) The false idea is "one can be untouchable" with enough wealth. In reality, that never works. Thieves can go after anyone at anytime. Further, they think their wealth isolates themselves from whatever is happening in the world around them.

12. Verse 12: Before his downfall a man's heart is proud, but humility comes before honor.
- a) Now we're back to comparing a good verses a bad person. Whenever you watch the downfall of another, you can be sure, "a proud heart" comes prior to that downfall.
 - b) At the same time, "humility" is necessary prior to honor, from God's perspective.
 - c) The simple point of this proverb is what happens to us in life is usually based on one's attitude at the time. The world around us can be seen as good or bad at any given moment. A lot of what happens to us, both good and bad depends on our attitude at any given moment and how we perceive the world around us.
13. Verse 13: He who answers before listening-- that is his folly and his shame.
- a) This is describing a person or a situation where one is not really interested in listening to the problems of another, but only in expressing one's own opinion.
 - b) This proverb is saying that having such an attitude is both a man's folly and his shame. The idea of "folly" and "shame" is that such selfishness is not pleasing to God.
14. Verse 14: A man's spirit sustains him in sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?
- a) The point of this proverb is that if a man has a healthy spirit, it will sustain him during times of sickness. If the spirit is "crushed", then no one can bear with that person.
 - b) All people get sick and even injured at times. If one has a healthy fear of God and a good outlook toward life, one's spirit will sustain them through such times. When such times come, not only do we need a good spirit, but we need to be around others that have a good spirit as well.
 - c) If one has a "crushed spirit", (i.e., a very strong negative outlook), then it becomes harder to bear through tough times.
15. Verse 15: The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out.
- a) The point is wise people try to seek out good knowledge. It can come from studying the bible directly, or by listening to good advice from others.
 - b) The point is those who are wise don't just "spew out whatever they think", they go out to seek and apply good advice to their lives.
16. Verse 16: A gift opens the way for the giver and ushers him into the presence of the great.
- a) Sometimes, in order to get into the presence of a great person, one has to, or at the least should bring some sort of gift. In many cultures, this "gift" is the compensation for getting advice.
 - b) If a good "advice giver" is as good as advertised, then his or her time is limited. A person with a gift to offer may be chosen to be in their presence over someone else who doesn't have such a gift.
 - c) This proverb is not saying gifts are necessary to get into the presence of the great, but simply that in some cultures and situations, having a gift will help a person get to where or who they want to go to. This is another proverb on how "life works" and does not necessary have anything to do with how God calls us to behave.
17. Verse 17: The first to present his case seems right, till another comes forward and questions him.
- a) The problem with "courtroom settings" is often, the first person on the stand appears to be right, at least until others come forward and question them.
 - b) The point of this proverb is that we are not to blindly trust everyone's word but we should question people and do our best to discern the truth.
18. Verse 18: Casting the lot settles disputes and keeps strong opponents apart.
- a) Sometimes there are disputes where both sides are claiming to be right and there is no verbal way of telling which side is lying. The point is there are ways of settling things when the courtroom doesn't work.
 - b) One ancient traditional way is by casting lots. This is where all the parties involved agree to some sort of contest to see who is right or "who gets the prize". "Casting lots" is an ancient game played to settle disputes when nothing else worked.

- c) There are "modern variations" of this as well. The parties can agree to some sort of contest in order to divvy up the prize or settle an argument. The key is to get the parties involved to agree to the rules of the contest. Once that is done, the rest is "downhill".
 - i) The goal is all about getting the case resolved. The method is secondary.
- 19. Verse 19: An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel.
 - a) A "brother" can refer to a literal brother or just someone close to us. The point is the offended brother is often more unyielding than some thing like a fortified city.
 - b) The big question is what does one do in this situation? Sometimes we can let time heal such wounds. Other times require compromise. Because the brother is offended, we may have to compromise more than we like. Sometimes we even have to fully yield the situation over to God to heal.
- 20. Verse 20: From the fruit of his mouth a man's stomach is filled; with the harvest from his lips he is satisfied.
 - a) What this proverb is trying to get across is sometimes saying the right words in a situation are as satisfying to the brain as good food is to the stomach. This proverb is a reminder about learning to say the right thing in any given situation. It is as important to the mind as good food is to the stomach.
- 21. Verse 21: The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.
 - a) Here is another verse that compares what we say in life to what we eat. The idea is what we say with our tongue can have the power of life and death (speaking both figuratively and literally). The idea is those who speak wisely with their tongue will benefit from it the same way people benefit from a good meal.
 - b) A great quick prayer some time is simply asking God what to say in a given situation. ☺
- 22. Verse 22: He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD.
 - a) The concept of marriage goes back to the Garden of Eden and is ordained by God. The idea here is a good wife makes for a good marriage. A good wife is a benefit to a man and his life. The proverb can be expanded to be read by either sex.
 - b) The point is a good marriage is God ordained and generally speaking, it is good for a man to be married and benefit from that marriage.
 - c) So why is this proverb here? We've been talking about using one's tongue wisely and being careful about offended brothers. All of a sudden, the topic switches to marriage. I believe the "connection" is many young single men think having a wife is a burden in dealing with life and they fail to see it as a blessing.
 - i) Another aspect is to stop and think, "Who do we spend the most time arguing with?" The answer is usually our spouse. The underlying point of this proverb is to see our wives as a blessing, especially during the difficult moments of marriage when we are arguing.
 - ii) The great lesson for any marriage is to remember it is not the job of the husband to fix the wife and vice versa. That's God's problem and not ours. Our job is to love our spouses just as they are. If there is an issue, give it to God, and not the spouse.
- 23. Verse 23: A poor man pleads for mercy, but a rich man answers harshly.
 - a) The point of this proverb is sometimes one's social status becomes obvious in the tone of our voices. This proverb is describing a situation where the poor man is begging for mercy from the rich man, but the rich man is answering harshly. This proverb is not commenting on who is right or wrong, but just commenting on the way life works sometimes. This is another proverb giving an example of how life works.

24. Verse 24: A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.
- a) The point of this proverb is that usually it is better to have a few good friends than to have lots of companions with no one we are really close to. When life gets difficult, it is better to have a close friend who sticks by us than a bunch of "companions" who go back to their own business during such rough times.
 - b) The underlying point of this proverb is that it is not the number of friends we have in life that matter, but the "quality" of our friends.
 - c) The older I get, the more I appreciate having a handful of good friends who I can always talk to if I need to. Hopefully I'm there for them as well. I'll also argue that if one is married, it is still good to have one or a few close friends of the same sex. Yes, one's spouse can be a close friend, but it's also important to have friends of the same sex.
25. Chapter 19, Verse 1: Better a poor man whose walk is blameless than a fool whose lips are perverse.
- a) Here is another "one thing is better than the other" comparison. This verse is not saying it is a good thing to be poor. It is saying it is better to be poor and have a good reputation before God than one who has money, but is considered foolish by what he or she says.
 - b) The idea of "perverse lips" is one who constantly says things that are offensive to God!
26. Verse 2: It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way.
- a) Having zeal for an issue may be a good thing. The point is to acquire good knowledge about a situation before having zeal for it. Almost everybody who has zeal over an issue they think they know well. The key is to be able to understand both sides, or all sides of an issue before claiming one's view is correct.
 - b) A similar idea is to be "hasty" in thinking one understands what God wants of us and "miss the way" to get to heaven. Along the same line, one can be hasty in thinking, "I understand what God wants from me in this situation". The point is God is calling us to think something through before we take sides on any given issue.
27. Verse 3: A man's own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the LORD.
- a) All of us know people who appear to be heading to hell as they don't care about pleasing God with their lives. This verse is again speaking of the type of person who essentially ignores God all of their life and just focus on their own interest of the moment.
 - b) The harder aspect of this verse is to turn inward: Think about all the wasted times of our lives when we turned away from God. May God help us to remember such times, especially when we turn from Him so we act better when the next time roles around!
28. Verse 4: Wealth brings many friends, but a poor man's friend deserts him.
- a) Here's another one of those proverbs that simply state, "this is the way life works". People are attracted to others who have money, if for no other reason than just to hear their success or in hopes of having a bit of that wealth.
 - b) When one has a very poor friend, that person becomes a burden to support. It is "common" for people to desert that poor person, if for no other reason, then they no longer have to financial support them.
 - c) This verse is not talking about the widow or say, some child. It is about someone who can work, but is either lazy or misfortunately or simply untrained for work.
 - d) We'll comment some more on this principal in Verse 7, coming up.
29. Verse 5: A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will not go free.
- a) The terms "false witness" and "pours out lies" are similar terms. The biblical concept of a false witness is one who lies on the witness stand.
 - b) The idea of one who pours out lies is mainly referring to a courtroom type of setting. The idea is a person who speaks lies a lot should be punished.

- c) The underlying point of this proverb gets back to the idea that God wants "truth telling" in courtroom situations. God wants the guilty to be punished and for witnesses to tell the truth in court types of situations.
 - d) This may sound obvious, but anyone who has ever spent time in a courtroom learns quickly about half truths being told by witnesses. The biblical concept of truth-telling includes the idea of not saying anything misleading.
30. Verse 6: Many curry favor with a ruler, and everyone is the friend of a man who gives gifts.
- a) Here's two examples of the type of person, most people want a positive relationship with.
 - b) If we get a chance to meet a ruler face to face, most people want to get on his or her good side regardless of our personally feelings about them. Because they are in power, we don't want to be punished by them and want their favor.
 - c) A related idea is wanting to be friends with someone known for bearing gifts toward others. The motivation is we covet such gifts.
 - d) Remember that many of the proverbs are simply about the way life works. This proverb is one of those examples. This proverb is not claiming it is more biblical to covet the favor of a ruler or one that bears gifts, it is "just the way life works".
 - e) OK, if this is true, what is the God fearing man or woman supposed to do with this verse?
 - i) For starters, when we are in the presents of rulers, remember that "everyone" is trying to get on this person's good side. While we may have to respect those in charge, we are still to judge them by God's standards, and not man's standards.
 - ii) The same applies to someone with the reputation for bearing gifts. It may be tempting to be their friend for the gifts, but we are to judge their behavior as best we can by God's standards of right and wrong and not the world's standards.
31. Verse 7: A poor man is shunned by all his relatives-- how much more do his friends avoid him! Though he pursues them with pleading, they are nowhere to be found.
- a) This verse is similar to Verse 4 of this chapter. The idea is one who is poor is shunned by his or her relatives and their friends. Verse 4 only mentioned "friends". Verse 7 expands the concept to include relatives.
 - b) The assumption behind this proverb is the poor man is too lazy to get a job and work and is getting his food off of begging from others.
 - c) I've also seen this proverb come true for people who were making a good living and then get into financial trouble. They quickly get shunned by others around them.
 - d) Remember this proverb is not saying it is right to leave them alone, it is saying, "this is the way life works for such people." God still calls on us to help the poor as much as possible and be considerate to others.
32. Verse 8: He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who cherishes understanding prospers.
- a) Here's a proverb that ties well to the early chapters. One of the basic ideas of "wisdom" is to get good godly knowledge for one's life. The idea is in order to prosper in life in a way that is pleasing to God, first we need to understand what is right and wrong.
 - b) The next step is once we understand what is right or wrong for any situation, is to actually apply it to our lives! That is what "Godly wisdom" is all about. The text is saying whoever loves "Godly wisdom" will prosper in life!
 - c) So why have that proverb here and now? Well for starters, lets go back to the last couple of proverbs: One was about being in the presence of rulers and those who give gifts. The message to those who care about God is for us to first judge them by their relationship with God and care about their status or gift giving ability second.
 - i) The same applies to the last proverb about helping the poor. The idea is we are to live by God's standards and not our own. It doesn't mean one ignores one's own family to help others, but when possible to reach out financially to help others.
 - ii) My personal view is that this proverb is listed here to remind us what is pleasing to God in comparison to what is pleasing to the world!

33. Verse 9: A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will perish.
- a) Verse 5 said, "A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will not go free." So why have such a similar proverb, four verses later?
 - b) Verse 9 is essentially saying the same thing, but it is going one step further. Verse 9 is saying such a person who lives a life full of lies will be eternally punished.
 - c) This proverb has two big implications: The first is, if we as a society do not punish such a person, God will. The second implication is that if this person does not change, they are going to hell. Obviously, being sent to hell is much more than being a liar. The point is a sign one is going down the wrong path in life is when one is a habitual liar.
 - d) Now think about this proverb in context of the last one: The last one was about trying to do what is right as much as possible and always be seeking Godly wisdom. That previous proverb is around two proverbs warning against being a false witness.
 - i) The point is, if one is not sure what is "good verses bad behavior", it is simply a matter of going through some of the surrounding proverbs to find out!
34. Verse 10: It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury-- how much worse for a slave to rule over princes!
- a) Both halves of this proverb are describing things that are not appropriate. This proverb is not saying these things don't happen, just that they are not appropriate.
 - b) The first is a "fool to live a life of luxury". Most people who have lived a while know at least one "non-Godly" person who lives a luxuries life. God allows this for some reason and often, we never know that reason. All we can do is pray for people's salvation. The point of the first half of this proverb is such "luxury" is wasted on such a person as all they care about is material things and not God.
 - c) The second half is describing someone not trained to be a ruler put in charge over one who is trained for such a position. A modern equivalent would be an employee telling the boss how to run the business. This proverb is not so much condoning slavery as stating "this is the way life works". Being a prince is far more than being born in the right family. It is about being properly trained for leadership and that is the point of the second half of the proverb. This proverb is not saying that slaves don't rise to power sometimes. The point is sometimes the wrong people are put in charge!
35. Verse 11: A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.
- a) One advantage of learning Godly wisdom is that it makes us more patience in our dealings with others. The idea is if we can accept the idea of God forgiving our sins, then we should also accept the idea of forgiving the sins of others.
 - b) This has to be balanced with the proverbs about "not letting the guilty go free". The point here is there are times for leniency. If we ask God to forgive us of our sins, then it is also appropriate to forgive others when they hurt us. This is separate from the concept of justice and punishing one for the sake of society.
 - c) Sometimes we can spiritually grow by simply overlooking an unintended offense or if someone just says the wrong thing to us. We are not perfect and we should not expect others to be perfect in our presence. That is the idea behind this proverb.
36. Verse 12: A king's rage is like the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass.
- a) Here's a topic brought up in previous chapters: The idea is that one wants to act well in the presence of a king. If that king is angry about something, he can take it out on us just because we happen to be there at the wrong time. The same is true for the king's favor. We can be blessed for just being there at the right time or just saying the right thing at the right time.
 - b) This verse is not encouraging us to say, lie in a king's presence, just to remember that our life can be in their hands at certain times. Today one can apply this verse to others in power including judges. God calls on us to respect the offices of leadership. We may like or not like the person in charge, but we are to respect the office and act accordingly.

- c) The point here is simply to remember the person in power is in charge whether we like it or not and to act respectfully in their presence.
37. Verse 13: A foolish son is his father's ruin, and a quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping.
- a) This verse is giving two examples that can bring harm to a man's life. One is a foolish son and the other is a quarrelsome wife.
 - b) Let's start with the first one: A godly father wants to see his children turn out well and learn to respect God in all that they do. If a son turns out to be a fool in life, in many ways it is the "ruin" of the father: It is the sense that years of hard work have been wasted, let alone one's family name.
 - c) The second negative is a "quarrelsome wife". Let me start by saying one can reverse this and condemn the man as much as the woman in any given argument. The point of this half of the proverb is the danger of having a marriage where one spends more time arguing than getting along. (Thank God my marriage does not fit this description.)
 - i) All couples have fights at some moments. This proverb is condemning the type of marriage where the couple is spending more time fighting than trying to get along. All people are different and often it takes effort to make a marriage work. The proverb is condemning those situations where couples would just rather argue than try to work it out.
 - d) The underlying point of this proverb is both a foolish son and quarrelsome wife are both bad for a man to have.
38. Verse 14: Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the LORD.
- a) Well, right after a proverb on a bad marriage, comes one on a good marriage.
 - b) The main point of this proverb is that one can inherit houses and wealth from one's parents, but God is "behind" picking a prudent wife for a man.
 - i) Marriages were often arranged by one's parents in that time era. Today, most people pick their own wives and husbands. The point is men don't know how their wives will turn out when they first get married.
 - ii) A quick prayer for all of us married people to learn to love our spouses just as they are and not try to fix them. This is a constant thing we all have to remember! ☺
 - c) God is "behind the scenes" working out one's marriage for the best if we are willing to let Him be in charge! One of the secrets of having a great wife is for guys to "give her to God". In other words, we don't try to fix them but simply love them for what they are and realize "God is in charge of our wives and not us". I guarantee having that attitude makes for a better marriage and prudent wife.
 - i) The reverse is true as well! For women, the secret of having a good husband is turning them over to God and not trying to fix them yourself!
39. Verse 15: Laziness brings on deep sleep, and the shiftless man goes hungry.
- a) The idea of the first half of this proverb is a lazy person may sleep well, but is still hungry for a lack of food. The second half is very similar. A "shiftless" man is one who is lazy.
 - b) The point is the person who is too lazy to work may sleep well, but still suffers from hunger as they won't work to support themselves.
 - c) What about the person who inherited stuff, but is too lazy to go work or make a difference in the world? I let God worry about that type of person. In the end, such an inheritance is wasted. The point of this proverb is about one who doesn't have any food or doesn't have much food, but they are too lazy to do anything about it.
40. Verse 16: He who obeys instructions guards his life, but he who is contemptuous of his ways will die.
- a) This verse refers to eternal life and death. The idea is a person who obeys God's instructions is on the path to eternal life. The person who doesn't care about pleasing God will die and go to hell.

- b) I was wondering if this verse means that those who are displeasing to God die at a younger age. I don't see this as being true in real life. That is why I apply this to "eternal life" and not this life time.
 - c) Remember this is a "continual process". God is constantly working on us to obey Him. It doesn't mean one can lose one's salvation if one has made a commitment to Jesus. What it means is we constantly have to watch our behavior and see if it is pleasing to God.
41. Verse 17: He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.
- a) This verse is a wonderful promise by God. When we financially help the poor, God in some way, pays us back. It may be a pay back in this lifetime or in the next one. The point is God does not ignore it when we help those who financially need help.
 - b) Think about this proverb in contrast to the earlier ones about how "The relatives and friends of the poor run away from the poor". God is showing how He wants His people to act in comparison to the way the "world" acts toward the poor.
 - c) People don't want to help the poor, fearing there won't be enough left for themselves. Here God is saying, "Help the poor and I'll take care of your needs".
42. Verse 18: Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.
- a) One reason children go down the wrong path in life is parents want to be "friends" with their children as a priority over raising them right. A parent's primary responsibility is to be a parent first. One can be a friend to one's children after they are grown.
 - b) This verse is stating the importance of disciplining one's children when it is appropriate.
 - c) All children act badly at times. It is one thing to pray for them to turn out right. It is another to take action and do something about it, which strongly includes disciplining one's children to do the right thing.
43. Verse 19: A hot-tempered man must pay the penalty; if you rescue him, you will have to do it again.
- a) The point of this proverb is that if one is helping someone get out of a situation due to their bad temper, you are not really helping them, because their bad temper will get them in trouble again.
 - b) Let's suppose the person you are helping is a close relative. This hot tempered person got into a fight and you are bring them home. In a sense, you are not helping them, because their problem still exists. Offering them "real help" would be to take them to some sort of anger management meeting.
44. Verse 20: Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.
- a) This is similar to a proverb given earlier in the chapter (Verse 8). The essential idea is that in order to grow wise, one has to listen and accept good instruction.
 - b) Proverbs gives us reminders of this obvious point by now in the middle of the more negative proverbs. The whole book of Proverbs is essentially about doing the right thing in life. Every now and then we need a reminder of the importance of seeking good knowledge in order to grow in Godly wisdom.
45. Verse 21: Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.
- a) This proverb is saying that men (and women) make plans. In the end, God's will prevails over the plans of mankind. The verse is oriented toward the nonbeliever by saying in effect, God will win in the end.
 - b) For the believer, when we do go astray, God finds ways to overrule our own plans and drive us back to Him!
46. Verse 22: What a man desires is unfailing love; better to be poor than a liar.
- a) The point is men and women "desire" kindness in life (to both receive it and give it). Tying the first and second half together, the point is, it is better to be honest and poor than it is be a liar.

47. Verse 23: The fear of the LORD leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble.
- The "fear of the Lord" is one of the main themes of the book. The general idea is to be aware that God holds us accountable in all that we do. God does not expect perfection, but He does expect us to "try our best" and then confess our sin when we mess up.
 - The point of this proverb is if one lives a life pleasing to God, it eventually leads to eternal life. The other point is if one is not breaking any laws, one does not have to have any sort of fear of being arrested.
48. Verse 24: The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he will not even bring it back to his mouth!
- This verse is giving an example of "extreme laziness". The point is this person is so lazy, they put their hand on the plate to eat, but are then too lazy to bring their hands back to their mouth again.
 - Many years ago, a friend of mine used to joke about one of her friends who was actually "pretty close" to this state! I don't think the proverb is meant to be taken that literally. The point is one can get so lazy in life they don't care about "much at all anymore".
49. Verse 25: Flog a mocker, and the simple will learn prudence; rebuke a discerning man, and he will gain knowledge.
- This is a proverb about the amount of effort it takes with different types of people:
 - If one applies a whip to a person who mocks all the time, at the "best" they will learn to have some prudence in life, if for no other reason than to avoid another whipping.
 - If we give a simple rebuke to a wise man, that person will gain knowledge.
 - I will argue the wise man is less likely to repeat his mistake than the mocker who just got whipped. A wise person is one who is willing to learn from their mistakes.
50. Verse 26: He who robs his father and drives out his mother is a son who brings shame and disgrace.
- Kids who mistreat their parents bring "shame and disgrace" on themselves.
 - This proverb is not about young children who misbehave as much as it is about grown children abusing their parents in some way. You can just picture some bad son thinking I'm entitled to my inheritance now and I will drive my parents out from their home.
 - A similar bad thought might be driving one's elderly mom out of one's house by saying, "I'm tired of having to take care of her".
 - The point of this is about grown kids bringing shame to their parents about the way the kids turned out in life!
51. Verse 27: Stop listening to instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.
- Here's one of the main points of the book of Proverbs again, only this time it is stated in the negative: If one stops listening to God's instructions, then one is straying from God's word and His will for one's life.
 - One can also read this proverb as from a loving father to his son.
 - Notice this proverb comes right after the bad son that robs his mother and father. I believe it is very intentional to have one follow the other.
52. Verse 28: A corrupt witness mocks at justice, and the mouth of the wicked gulps down evil.
- A corrupt witness by definition doesn't want justice. The implication is the witness and his or her wicked companions want to continue their wicked lifestyle as long as possible. They are even happy to see innocent people be punished so they can continue their lifestyle.
 - The second half of this proverb is a similar concept: The idea is those who are wicked want to continue in that lifestyle and have no desire to change for the better.
 - This proverb takes us back to the issue of "this is how life works" and this is a perfect example as such.

53. Verse 29: Penalties are prepared for mockers, and beatings for the backs of fools.
- a) Neither a mocker nor a fool care about pleasing God. A "mockers" is one who for example, makes sarcastic comments when confronted about the issue of pleasing God. A fool is by definition, one who doesn't care about pleasing God.
 - b) The point is such a person is going to suffer for eternity in hell whether they realize it or not. Often, they also suffer in this lifetime as well, which is the idea behind the penalties and the beatings.
 - c) This final verse is another example of something no Christian should have to deal with. This leads us back to the topic that many of the proverbs simply explain how life works. One way is those who don't care about God will suffer one day. They may not suffer in this lifetime, but this lifetime may be the only pleasure they ever know.
54. Let's pray: Father, thank you for both the positive and negative lessons learned in the proverbs of these two chapters. Help us to properly apply them to our lives. Help us to live a life pleasing to you in all that we do. Help us to "welcome" both your blessings and your discipline in our lives. Guide us through these lessons and through our lives. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.