

SENIOR OUTREACH & NURTURE

A MINISTRY OF THE LUTHERAN
HOME ASSOCIATION



Bible study: Proverbs, Session 6 (Proverbs 22, 23 & 24)

Opening Prayer: Too often, we put our own concerns and priorities above your will and work, O Lord. Rid us of selfishness, and fill us with the zeal to keep you first in our lives. To this end, bless our study of your Word. Amen.

Opening Hymn

O God, My Faithful God CW 459

O God, my faithful God, O Fountain ever flowing,
Who good and perfect gifts In mercy are bestowing,
Give me a healthy frame, And may I have within
A conscience free from blame, A soul unhurt by sin.

Grant me the strength to do With ready heart and willing
Whatever you command, My calling here fulfilling,
That I do what I should While trusting you to bless
The outcome for my good, For you must give success.

Keep me from saying things That later need recalling;
Grant that no idle words May from my lips be falling,
But then, when in my place I must and ought to speak,
My words grant pow'r and grace Lest I offend the weak.

Lord, let me win my foes With kindly words and actions,
And let me find good friends For counsel and correction.
Help me, as you have taught, To love both great and small
And by your Spirit's might To live in peace with all.

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Proverbs 22:1-16

¹ *A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.*

² *Rich and poor have this in common: The LORD is the Maker of them all.*

³ *A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.*

⁴ *Humility and the fear of the LORD bring wealth and honor and life.*

⁵ *In the paths of the wicked lie thorns and snares, but he who guards his soul stays far from them.*

⁶ *Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*

⁷ *The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*

⁸ *He who sows wickedness reaps trouble, and the rod of his fury will be destroyed.*

⁹ *A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.*

¹⁰ *Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended.*

¹¹ *He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious will have the king for his friend.*

¹² *The eyes of the LORD keep watch over knowledge, but he frustrates the words of the unfaithful.*

¹³ *The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside!" or, "I will be murdered in the streets!"*

¹⁴ *The mouth of an adulteress is a deep pit; he who is under the LORD'S wrath will fall into it.*

¹⁵ *Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.*

¹⁶ *He who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and he who gives gifts to the rich—both come to poverty.*

1. Why should the rich not despise the poor? (verse 2) What are some of the dangers in doing this? How do verses 1 and 16 apply to this?
2. Why do "humility" and "fear of the LORD" make good partners? (verse 4)?
3. Verse 6 is probably the most quoted verse in the book of Proverbs. How do these words encourage parents?
4. According to verse 7, what should you try to avoid?
5. Why does a "sluggard" say the preposterous things mentioned in verse 13? Why do people do that? What does this indicate about a person?

Proverbs 22:17-29—Sayings of the Wise

¹⁷ *Pay attention and listen to the sayings of the wise; apply your heart to what I teach, ¹⁸ for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart and have all of them ready on your lips. ¹⁹ So that your trust may be in the LORD, I teach you today, even you. ²⁰ Have I not written thirty sayings for you, sayings of counsel and knowledge, ²¹ teaching you true and reliable words, so that you can give sound answers to him who sent you? ²² Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, ²³ for the LORD will take up their case and will plunder those who plunder them. ²⁴ Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, ²⁵ or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared. ²⁶ Do not be a man who strikes hands in pledge or puts up security for debts; ²⁷ if you lack the means to pay, your very bed will be snatched from under you.*

²⁸ Do not move an ancient boundary stone set up by your forefathers. ²⁹ Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men.

1. What warning do verses 17-21 give?
2. Why are verses 22 and 23 good advice?
3. How do verses 24-27 apply to us?
4. Why the warning in verse 28? What is the effect of moving that stone?
5. Can you think of some examples from Scripture where the advice in verse 29 proved true?

Proverbs 23

¹ When you sit to dine with a ruler, note well what is before you, ² and put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony. ³ Do not crave his delicacies, for that food is deceptive. ⁴ Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint. ⁵ Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle. ⁶ Do not eat the food of a stingy man, do not crave his delicacies; ⁷ for he is the kind of man who is always thinking about the cost. "Eat and drink," he says to you, but his heart is not with you. ⁸ You will vomit up the little you have eaten and will have wasted your compliments. ⁹ Do not speak to a fool, for he will scorn the wisdom of your words. ¹⁰ Do not move an ancient boundary stone or encroach on the fields of the fatherless, ¹¹ for their Defender is strong; he will take up their case against you. ¹² Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge. ¹³ Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. ¹⁴ Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death. ¹⁵ My son, if your heart is wise, then my heart will be glad; ¹⁶ my inmost being will rejoice when your lips speak what is right. ¹⁷ Do not let your heart envy sinners, but always be zealous for the fear of the LORD. ¹⁸ There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off. ¹⁹ Listen, my son, and be wise, and keep your heart on the right path. ²⁰ Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat, ²¹ for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags. ²² Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. ²³ Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding. ²⁴ The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise

son delights in him. ²⁵ May your father and mother be glad; may she who gave you birth rejoice! ²⁶ My son, give me your heart and let your eyes keep to my ways, ²⁷ for a prostitute is a deep pit and a wayward wife is a narrow well. ²⁸ Like a bandit she lies in wait, and multiplies the unfaithful among men. ²⁹ Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? ³⁰ Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. ³¹ Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! ³² In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper. ³³ Your eyes will see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things. ³⁴ You will be like one sleeping on the high seas, lying on top of the rigging. ³⁵ "They hit me," you will say, "but I'm not hurt! They beat me, but I don't feel it! When will I wake up so I can find another drink?"

1. What might a naïve person begin to think when invited to dinner by someone important? (verses 1-3) Why should this person be careful? What further advice do verses 6-8 add?
2. In verses 4 and 5, why is wealth or riches such a poor goal to have in life?
3. A child who is being spanked might scream bloody murder, but Solomon assures parents that their child "will not die." (verse 13) But how might failing to punish a child in an appropriate way actually lead to the child's death, both physically and spiritually? (verse 14) What aspect of discipline do verses 15 and 16 add?
4. Solomon describes a pure heart in verse 17. What contrast does Solomon make? What gives a person a pure heart?
5. What makes parents proud of their children? (verses 22-25)
6. Verses 19-21, 29-35 addresses alcoholism. What pointed advice is Solomon giving us?

Proverbs 24

¹ Do not envy wicked men, do not desire their company; ² for their hearts plot violence, and their lips talk about making trouble. ³ By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; ⁴ through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. ⁵ A wise man has great power, and a man of knowledge increases strength; ⁶ for waging war you need guidance, and for victory many advisers. ⁷ Wisdom is too high for a fool; in the assembly at the gate he has nothing to say. ⁸ He who plots evil will be known as a schemer. ⁹ The schemes of folly are sin, and men detest a mocker. ¹⁰ If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength! ¹¹ Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. ¹² If you say, "But we knew nothing about this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay each person according to what he has done? ¹³ Eat honey, my son, for it is good; honey from the comb is sweet to your taste. ¹⁴ Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off. ¹⁵ Do not lie in wait like an outlaw against a righteous man's house, do not raid his dwelling place; ¹⁶ for though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again, but the wicked are brought down by calamity. ¹⁷ Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, ¹⁸ or the LORD will see and disapprove and turn his wrath away from him. ¹⁹ Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of the wicked, ²⁰ for the evil man has no future hope, and the lamp of the wicked will be snuffed out. ²¹ Fear the LORD and the king, my son, and do not join with the rebellious, ²² for those two will send sudden destruction upon them, and who knows what calamities they can bring?

Further Sayings of the Wise

²³ These also are sayings of the wise: To show partiality in judging is not good: ²⁴ Whoever says to the guilty, "You are innocent"—peoples will curse him and nations denounce him. ²⁵ But it will go well with those who convict the guilty, and rich blessing will come upon them. ²⁶ An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips. ²⁷ Finish your outdoor work and get your fields ready; after that, build your house. ²⁸ Do not testify against your neighbor without cause, or use your lips to deceive. ²⁹ Do not say, "I'll do to him as he has done to me; I'll pay that man back for what he did." ³⁰ I went past the field of the sluggard, past the vineyard of the man who lacks judgment; ³¹ thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. ³² I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw: ³³ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— ³⁴ and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.

1. What might cause someone to envy sinners? Why is it foolish to do that?
2. What kind of "house" might wisdom build besides a physical dwelling? What kind of treasures will fill the "rooms of the house"?
3. What makes a wise man so powerful?

4. What warning do verses 11 and 12 give?

5. What profound truth is Solomon expressing in verse 26?

6. How does verse 27 fit in with this encouragement to building a house of wisdom?

Closing Hymn

O Word of God Incarnate CW 279

O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky,
We praise you for the radiance That from the hallowed page,
A lantern to our footsteps, Shines on from age to age.

The Church from you, dear Master, Received the gift divine,
And still that light is lifted O'er all the earth to shine.
It is the chart and compass That, all life's journey through,
Mid mists and rocks and quicksands Still guides, O Christ, to you.

Oh, make your Church, dear Savior, A lamp of burnished gold
To bear before the nations Your true light, as of old.
Oh, teach your wand'ring pilgrims By this their path to trace
Till, clouds and darkness ended, They see you face to face.

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Closing Prayer:

Give us, O Lord, steadfast hearts, which no unworthy affection may drag downward; give us unconquered hearts, which no tribulation can wear out; give us upright hearts, which no unworthy purpose may tempt aside. Bestow on us, O Lord and our God, understanding to know you, diligence to seek you, wisdom to find you, and a faithfulness that will finally embrace you; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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