

Proverbs 13, Sep 15, 2024 -Men's Monday Morning Bible Study

Overview:

Chapter 13 has several repeated themes that we've examined before including but not limited to: our words (v2,3,5), work ethic (v11, v18, 23). Let's read each of these.

Commentary:

Today, I want to focus on two or three topics: words(v3), associates (v20), and Parenting (1, 14, 22, & 24)

V3 is particularly poignant and harkens to our discussion last week of 12:16, 18, & 23. Don't be rash or quick to speak. James 1:19 says, "be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger." Prov 13:3: guar your mouth. Be careful what you say. Someone who is always talking (who's mouth is open wide) comes to ruin. Shut up. There is a time to speak and a time to listen.

V20 is the first verse outside of John 3:16 that I ever memorized. It was at VBS when I was a kid. IDK what age and I'm sure they were trying to get us to be careful who we made friends with.

It is a truism that the quality and direction of one's life is determined to a great extent to who he associates with. 1Cor 15:33 "Bad company corrupts good morals." Prov 18:24 says "One who has unreliable friends will come to ruin, but there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother." We've talked about this before. Pick your friends, don't let them pick you. This is one of the things we instilled in our kids. Don't go with the crowd or get sucked into the world. Know what you believe and what's important. For us, we distilled that into the eight "F"s: Faith, Family, Friends, Forward Movement, Fitness, Finance, Freedom and Fun. We are looking for likeminded people or PLUs (people like us) to associate with and do life with. These are our people with similar values. We need to be selective about who we spend our time with and who we allow into our lives. Truly, we will become like those we hang around. The quality of our lives will be affected by our friends. This is another reason I pray specifically for my friends and my kids friends on Wednesdays.

Speaking of parenting, let us now turn our attention to that topic as it's discussed in our passage today. V1 tells of the wisdom of a son receiving his father's instruction whereas

it is foolish to dismiss his rebuke. This is true with girls too. The teenage, exasperated eye roll followed by the sing song “dauuud” is unacceptable. That is an attitude that must be disciplined out. It should not be tolerated. The world is teaching your kids that your instruction is out of date and irrelevant. The system is promoting the most asinine ideas known to man concerning gender, sexuality, finance, sociology and almost every other topic. You must become the primary influencer of your children. If you keep them in public school, this will be an uphill battle. It will be somewhat easier if you do private or home school but you will still need to address this attitude. So, the first lesson that kids need to learn is that they need to be teachable, with an open heart and head.

Secondly, we need to remember the outcome of good teaching. This gives us the reasoning behind what we do. It helps us with the “why?” question. V14 says that the instruction of the wise is a fountain of life turning aside from the snares of death. You are saving your kids from destruction and the pain of sin. You are standing in the gap as the emissary of God to shepherd their souls. You are God’s man in the house battling the evil one by instructing and shaping the minds of your children. A godly father is God’s representative showing the path of life and righteousness.

Even secular psychology recognizes the negative effects of fatherlessness. Suicide, teenage pregnancy, mental illness and incarceration are drastically increased in children who grow up without a dad. It’s no wonder why. When the man of God is not present, the protection is removed.

Be sure your instruction is intentional. Know the lessons you want to teach. For us it was: 1) Love God, 2) Think for yourself, 3) Take care of your business, 4) so that you can help those who cannot help themselves. Other catch phrases included: “YOU are responsible for you” & “five minutes early is ten minutes late”. The “you are responsible” showed up in multiple areas such as personal hygiene (particularly brushing teeth), getting themselves up in the morning, doing homework, and laundry.

V24 says that if you don’t discipline your kids, you hate them. Of course, there is such a thing as excessive discipline and abuse but more times than not, what we see in our culture today is a complete lack of discipline. People let their kids run amok all over the place. I can remember multiple instances of teenagers becoming aware of the truth that discipline equals love when it was absent from their lives. They had parents that let them do whatever they wanted and they intuitively understood that meant their parents

didn't care enough about them to warn them about danger. It was a hard lesson to watch.

What is love? It is not simple affection that wanes. It is a firm commitment to do what is best for someone whatever the cost. Disciplining your kids is hard. Sometimes it is not fun, but it is necessary for their flourishing. You are literally saving them from death.

Teaching your kids to love discipline (self-discipline) is one of the greatest gifts you can give your children. Mental, spiritual, psychological and physical toughness, prowess and skill are probably the most important things a dad can impart to his children. Helping them curb their appetites and leading their hearts is invaluable. It starts with them learning how to say no to themselves and then redirecting their passions to things that are rightly ordered. They must start with being able to make themselves do things the don't want to do and being able to say "no" to themselves.

If you do this, if you give them these lessons, you will have given them the keys to life. V22 says that a wise man leaves an inheritance for his grandchildren. Surely this includes matters of finance and I would commend this to you to be a matter of prayer and effort. However, the greatest legacy is one of godliness and faithfulness to the LORD. Teach your children to "honor their father and mother" so that it will indeed "go well with them in the land" (Ex 20; Dt5). Teach them well. Give them an identity that goes with your name. "This is who we are. This is what we do." Are phrases that they should hear.

Things like church involvement are non-negotiables.

Leave a legacy. Leave an inheritance.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we commit ourselves to You new and afresh today. We invite Your Spirit to lead and teach us. Find us faithful servants. In Jesus' name, Amen.