

Proverbs 17, Oct 28, 2024 -Men's Monday Morning Bible Study

Overview:

Perspective “better”, sons, relationships, godly perspective & laughter are all topics to be examined in Prov 17.

Commentary:

V1 “Better” cf 16:8; 16:16; 16:19

Having a little financially with calmness is to be preferred over having a lot with conflict and discord. Peace is better than money.

Sons (v2; 6; 21; 25)

V2 Sons can forfeit their inheritance by being foolish. They can be replaced by surrogates. This is not only right but preferable to everyone. No one likes a spoiled rich kid. Everyone loves a hard working underdog (slave).

V6 Old men love to talk about their grandchildren. They make him proud. Likewise, boys naturally look up to and admire their dads. The common saying among young boys “my dad can beat up your dad” is appropriate and good.

The implication is twofold: raise up godly sons who produce godly grandsons. Have a legacy of faithfulness. Secondly, be a respectable and admirable man. Don't forfeit your inheritance as one with influence by letting them down.

V21 Sons have the ability to make their parents proud or disappointed, glad or regretful. Another way of thinking about this is to say that our sin, and conversely our faithfulness, doesn't just affect us. Our decisions impact others around us and they impact those closest to us most.

V25 Sons have the ability to cause grief, anger and disappointment to their parents. It is a deeply painful wound for parents to endure. Again, raise solid, faithful children, and be

a faithful man yourself, honoring your father and mother by your authentic faith and perseverance.

If your parents are still alive, visit and contact them on a regular basis. Restore a broken relationship if possible. Remember the fifth commandment and do not disrespect them even if you disagree. Don't be a fool. Be wise and be a man that they would be proud of.

Rebuke and wisdom (v10)

The rebuke for wise men is taken seriously even though it is less severe than one hundred strikes. Obviously, the strikes are more physically painful. The difference is the one receiving the correction.

Cf Prov 9:8 "Do not reprove a scoffer, lest he hate you, reprove a wise man and he will love you."

Bribery (v8; v23)

Bribery is essentially injustice. It can be effective (v8). It is also evil.

V17 "A friend loves at all times and a brother is born for adversity."

Ideally, your brother should be one of your closest friends. However, many times because of foolishness, the relationship is distant or even severed. Cf 18:24 Sometimes friendships replace brotherhood because of shared values. This is my story. I do not have literal brothers. You guys are my brothers not only because we have the same Father, but because we have the same values. We have the same priorities and goals. PLUs. We want to associate with "people like us."

YHWH (v3; 15)

V3 -God tests men's hearts. See James 1:2-4 (again). Difficulty is the crucible for character building. God is more concerned with our character than he is with our circumstances. James tells us to consider it joy that God is forming us. This is an act of

faith and something completely foreign to the natural man who only looks at the present and only values the temporal.

V15 -God hates injustice. Calling evil good and good evil.

Isaiah 5:20-25:

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness, Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes And understanding in their own sight! 22 Woe to those who are mighty men in drinking wine And valiant men in mixing strong drink, 23 Who declare the wicked righteous for a bribe, And remove the righteous standing of the ones who are righteous! 24 Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble And dry grass collapses into the flame, So their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust; For they have rejected the law of Yahweh of hosts And the word of the Holy One of Israel they have spurned. 25 On this account, the anger of Yahweh has burned against His people, And He has stretched out His hand against them and struck them down. And the mountains trembled, and their corpses lay like refuse in the middle of the streets. For all this His anger is not turned back, But His hand is still stretched out.”

What common themes in Is 5 do you see with Prov 17?

Perversion of good and evil, being wise in one’s own eyes, overindulgence in alcohol, bribery, & tongue.

What does he say has happened when this type of behavior is “normal”?

They have rejected God.

What is the outcome? Judgement.

Memorable: v12 & v22

V12 “Let a man meet a she-bear robbed of her cubs rather than a fool in his folly.”

The risk of being mauled by a momma bear is less than associating with a fool. Avoid contact with fools. Stay away from where they congregate and separate yourself from their presence with prejudice. Employ the Irish goodbye when encountered by fools. Keep your distance and disassociate yourself with idiots.

V22 Laughter is therapeutic. It is healing. It is also the first thing to go in a marriage that is on the rocks. Find a way to lighten things up when there is conflict. Direct it towards yourself if possible. Smile. Make yourself do it for the sake of your bride.

Gladness, light heartedness, is healing. This applies to all relationships.

Conversely, a broken, crushed, downtrodden attitude creates fragile relationships and is burdensome. The drying up of the bones is similar to the euphemism for depression, apathy and burn out.

Learn to have an appropriate sense of humor.

Closing Prayer:

Father, help us to walk in faithfulness and wisdom. Let us be men of respectability and truth. Let us indeed be the kind of men who you delight in. May we be men who understand the times and circumstances we find ourselves in. Give us perspective and faith when going through difficulty. We invite Your Spirit to lead and teach us. In Jesus' name, Amen.