

Proverbs 27, Jan 13, 2025 -Men's Monday Morning Bible Study

Review:

Proverbs 24:17-18 says, "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; lest the LORD see it, and it displease Him, and He turn away His wrath from him".

Overview:

10 commands: half positive; half negative. V2 has three commands.

Four (maybe 5) verses about friendship (5? 6; 9-10; 17). One very famous.

Five verses about resources and planning (23-27)

Commentary:

Humility:

V1 Command not to boast about tomorrow... or what you will accomplish or have. James 4:13-17 says almost the same thing but in an extended way. We have noted the overlap with the book of James several times before.

V2 One positive command and two negatives. Let someone else praise you. Do not "toot your own horn." Don't be a braggard. Don't always be drawing attention to yourself.

Stewardship

V23-27 have to do with planning and resource management. These verses apply to the modern concept of finance and investment. Budgeting and making money are the starting point. Make good money. Spend it well. Take care of your resources. Know where your money is going. Avoid get rich quick schemes. Put back for tomorrow. Have adequate insurance and plan for the future. Know how investments work and what a good return is. Understand compound interest and the difference between buy and hold value investing and capital appreciation investing are. Know that trading is different from

investing. Know how oil and gas deals work. Understand the tax code and how to benefit from it and avoid being unnecessarily penalized by it. O/G deals in general and drilling deals specifically have wonderful tax benefits. Real estate is another category that is incentivized by the government from a tax perspective.

See Bahnsen's economic study online for a crash course. The Intelligent Investor is a great book. There are many resources like Rich Dad Poor Dad and many others. Be careful about who you listen to. There are more sharks than most think.

Friendship

V5 is to be taken in the context of a relationship. The contrast in the verse is between reproof and love; open and hidden. Being a straightforward type of guy is better than pleasantries. Furthermore, it is desirable to have those kinds of interactions with people rather than pleasant opposition. Be straightforward and align oneself with straightforward people.

This concept is greatly needed in our culture today that elevates how something is said over what is said. This is an effeminate and unwise course of action. The efficiency of language and transparency of motive are what is called for.

V6 "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy." This verse again has a contrast similar to v5. Faithful and deceitful are contrasted as are friends and enemies and wounds and kisses. Everyone wants pleasurable interactions with people but what is more beneficial is challenging ones. Particularly, friends who love enough to rebuke rather than flatter. True friends, in this respect, are contrasted with sycophants (butt kissers, flatterers, bootlicking brownosers).

We want to be good friends and choose good friends. Be a man that calls other men upward and onward. Do not be afraid of conflict (more on that in a moment).

V9 The relationship of a friend is not limited to stern rebuke but also wise counsel. Input from a trusted friend is very beneficial. It is pleasing and helpful. Seek it out. Be one who gives and gets wise counsel from wise men.

V10 has two commands: "Do not forsake your friend, or your father's friend, and do not come to your brother's house in the day of disaster, better is one who dwells near than a brother far away"

This is one of the more lengthy verses in proverbs. It has two parts. First, the command to be loyal, longsuffering, and steadfast both with your own friends and with those of your father. Being a fair-weather friend is prohibited. Being with people should be costly and mutual.

Second, proximity and relationships trump familial ties. Most of us have experienced this because of the transientness of our culture. Most of us do not even live close to our immediate family. Especially in that environment, having like minded friends in close proximity, whom in our NT world we actually call brothers, are better than actual brothers. This is something to be observed and invested in.

V17 is one of the best known of all the Proverbs: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man another." This verse describes the nature of personal progress. It takes one person challenging the other and the relationship is mutually beneficial. Both are sharpened. Both are more effective at life. We all know the benefits of using a sharp knife over a dull one, whether it is cleaning and butchering animals or working in the field. Having a sharp cutting instrument is highly advantageous.

Here the sharpness has to do with the effectiveness of the men themselves. Notice also the means by which this effectiveness occurs. It takes friction. Metal must rub against metal. There is heat and sparks. There will be conflict and unpleasantness.

If men want to be better, relational conflict is inevitable. It is something to be embraced not avoided. Seek out men that make you better. Be the kind of man who makes those around him better. One of my prayers is that God would make us king makers.

It is a known phenomenon in the NFL (which I have no regard for but makes the point), that great coaches create other great coaches. They also create great players, crafting them into superstar athletes. This can also be seen in teachers. Many a professor has created an exceptional pupil.

However, these relationships are more mentoring. While the verse certainly applies to this type of relationship, it is probably more explicitly applicable to peers and friends. This is what I call friendship with direction. The truth is that all friendship has direction even if the direction is in a circle, actually going no where other than down hill. I know guys who are friends just because they like sports or some hobby. This is not what this verse is about. It is about friends challenging one another to be better, to get better, and doesn't give up.

These are the types of friends men should have. If you get one or two, you'll be ahead of most of society. We at MRC are seeking to build an army of these men. All of us moving in the same direction. Everyone pulling together, setting aside personal preferences and embracing the mission of God to build His kingdom. We swallow our pride and accept correction as well as man up and give it when a brother needs it. We love him enough to keep him out of the ditch.

V14 is the camp verse. Don't be a jerk, especially in the morning. If you're a morning guy that just wakes up happy... don't. There are plenty of verses smacking the lazy sluggard for not getting up early. This is one of the few flip sides. Go easy in the am.

Conclusion:

Be humble. Be wise with God's resources. Have and be a good friend.

Closing Prayer:

Father, thank You for Your word and the wisdom it provides. Help us to understand and obey it. Make us men of wisdom full of grace and truth. Help us to not think more of ourselves than we ought. Make us wise and faithful with the resources you entrust to us. Make us mighty men, pulling in the same direction for the cause of Christ. For Him and His covenant... for a thousand years by the work of the Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.