

# Proverbs

## Proverbs 27

1. Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth.
  - a. Boasting comes from a mindset of arrogant self-reliance, pride, and conceit. To boast about tomorrow is to brag about what you will do as if you know for certain you will be able to do it.
  - b. This kind of boasting ignores the reality (1) that each day is in God's hands (*under His control and direction*), (2) that your health, strength, necessary resources, and circumstances are at least partially dependent on God's gracious involvement, (3) that other people's choices and behavior (*over which you have no control*) can sometimes be a hindrance to what you intend to do, and (4) that sincere Christianity includes the day-by-day acknowledgment of these realities along with submission to and dependence on God's will.
  - c. **James 4:13-16**, Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." [14] Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. [15] Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." [16] But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.
2. Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.
  - a. Self-praise is self-serving. It comes from pride and is a verbal expression of conceit. It serves no purpose other than to lift yourself up while implying others are less or beneath you. Self-praise works against the building of godly character and loving behavior by feeding the ungodly character traits of pride, conceit, and selfishness.
  - b. Therefore, to feed the godly qualities of humility and love, resist every urge or temptation to praise yourself. If praise is to be given, let it come from someone other than yourself.
3. A stone is heavy and the sand weighty, But the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them.
  - a. "The provocation of a fool" can be applied in **two directions**:

- i. The provocation (*frustration, exasperation, anger*) poured out on others by a fool (*which is most often expressed without concern for who it hurts or the harm it does*).
    - ii. The provocation (*frustration, exasperation, anger*) that you feel as a result of having to deal with a fool.
  - b. Both outcomes are heavy, painful burdens for those who are either on the receiving end of a fool's anger, or who have to endure a fool's choices and behavior.
  - c. **Sirach 22:15** (*SIGH rahk*) (NJB) Sand and salt and a lump of iron are a lighter burden than a dolt (*one who acts foolishly*).
  - d. **Sirach 22:13** (NJB) Do not waste many words on the stupid, do not go near a dolt. Beware of him, or you will have trouble and be soiled by contact with him; keep away from him, and you will have peace of mind and not be exasperated by his folly.
  - e. **Principle:** Living with, or regularly having to deal with, or having to endure family, job or other life-affecting decisions made by a fool is one of the heavier burdens to bear.
4. Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, But who can stand before jealousy?
- a. There is a jealousy that is ungodly and unhealthy, and there is a jealousy that is reasonable and like unto God's jealousy – as talked about in the scriptures (**Exodus 20:5; Zechariah 8:2; James 4:5**).
  - b. The reasonable, God kind of jealousy is a response to someone interfering with or competing with you for the affections, love, and allegiance of your spouse and/or children. Such interfering or competing is wrong and deserves a strong response – such as jealousy.
  - c. It is easier to appease or find a resolution with someone in a rage or someone who is angry with you than someone who is jealous over something you have done – whether the jealousy is the ungodly kind or the reasonable, God-like kind.
  - d. **Proverbs 6:34-35**, For jealousy enrages a man, and he will not spare in the day of vengeance. [35] He will not accept any ransom, nor will he be satisfied though you give many gifts.
5. Better is open rebuke Than love that is concealed.
- a. It is better to be openly, honestly, and clearly reprov'd or admonish'd by a loved one, fellow believer, friend, boss, or even an enemy, than to be loved by someone who will not honestly confront you about your bad, unloving, deceptive, verbally abusive, relationship harmful, behavior.

- i. To be openly, honestly, and clearly rebuked or admonished provides an opportunity for you to stop your sin and correct your behavior before going so far that the damage done cannot be repaired and the consequences cannot be altered.
    - ii. To be loved by someone who will not honestly confront you is like having a treasure that is of no joy on the good days and no benefit on the bad ones.
  - b. **Proverbs 28:23**, He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with the tongue.
  - c. **Matthew 18:15-17**, If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. [16] But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. [17] If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.
  - d. **Galatians 6:1-2**, Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. [2] Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.
6. Faithful are the wounds (*rebukes*) of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.
- a. **Principle:** The friend wounds/rebuked for your good, the enemy gives deceitful kisses for his good (*Judas – to get 30 pieces of silver*).
  - b. The wounds/rebuked of a friend are faithful because they can be trusted to be fair, accurate, deserved, and an act of love.
7. A sated man loathes honey, But to a famished man any bitter thing is sweet.
- a. **Principle:** You have no interest in what you do not desire/long for, but even the worst forms of what you desire/long for will be satisfying to you (*such as gladly eating food that tastes bad when you are starving*).
  - b. **Applied to the Christian life:**
    - i. You will neither pursue nor be tempted by what you do not desire or long for – so consider yourself dead to sin, and if that isn't working, deny self so as to treat desires/longings as if they don't exist.
    - ii. You will eagerly pursue even the hardest to endure forms of what you desire/long for – so hunger and thirst for righteousness, count it joy when hard times give you the opportunity to build your faith and grow your perseverance in order to better pursue godliness.

8. Like a bird that wanders from **her** nest, So is a **man** who wanders from his home.
  - a. **Notice**, the bird is female, so her primary responsibility is her nest, her eggs, and her young. To go out for building material or for food is a necessary part of her responsibilities. To go wandering about is an unnecessary neglect of her duties, a danger to her eggs or her young, and likely a sign of discontent with what she has or ought to be. Most often, bad things come from the neglect of our duties.
  - b. **Notice**, a man is referred to in relation to wandering from home. As with the female bird, so with the man of the house. To go wandering about is an unnecessary neglect of his duties, a danger to his family, and likely a sign of discontent with what he has or ought to be. Most often, bad things will come from the neglect of his duties.
  
9. Oil and perfume make the heart glad, So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend.
  - a. **Alternate Translation** (NJB) Oil and perfume gladden the heart, and the sweetness of friendship rather than self-reliance.
  - b. When we are in need of counsel, a friend's clear-headed, wise, unbiased counsel is a true comfort and joy to our mind and heart.
  
10. Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.
  - a. The depth of a relationship with a dear, trusted friend and/or a good neighbor is most often more meaningful, available, helpful, and therefore valuable than a relationship with a brother or sister – and especially if they are far away and you rarely see/interact with them.
  - b. **Principle**: Hold on to your dear friends and the dear friends of your family of origin, because in times of trouble you will be better off going to a dear friend nearby than a sibling far away.
  
11. Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad, That I may reply to him who reproaches me.
  - a. A wise child brings joy to his/her parents, and should someone question or even condemn the parent's parenting abilities, they can point to the wise child to prove the quality of their parenting.
  - b. **Proverbs 23:24-25**, The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, and he who sires a wise son will be glad in him. [25] Let your father and your mother be glad, and let her rejoice who gave birth to you.

12. A prudent man sees evil and hides himself, The naive (*blindly optimistic*) proceed and pay the penalty (*pay the price for not thinking or taking appropriate precautions before proceeding*).
  - a. **Proverbs 22:3**, The prudent sees the evil and hides himself, But the naive go on, and are punished for it.
  - b. **Principle**: Wisdom/prudence prevents us from making foolish, self-destructive, or illegal decisions. Naivete (*not thinking or taking appropriate precautions*) often results in making foolish, self-destructive, or illegal decisions.
  - c. **Proverbs 14:15-16**, The naive believes everything, but the sensible man considers his steps. [16] A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and careless.

**Vs 13 makes sense when understood in relation to the naive of vs 12**

13. Take his (*naive of vs 12*) garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for an adulterous woman hold him (*naive-vs 12*) in pledge.
  - a. **Proverbs 20:16**, Take his garment when he becomes surety for a stranger; And for foreigners, hold him in pledge.
  - b. To be surety for someone is to become liable for and therefore to guarantee the payment of another person's debt, repayment of another person's loan, or compensation for what another person may lose or damage.
  - c. To become surety for a stranger (*someone you don't know, and so don't know if you can trust*) or an adulterous woman (*someone you know is not trustworthy*) is so foolish that only a naive person would do it. And as **vs 12** says, if you are that naive, you will pay the penalty – such as losing your garment and/or our freedom.
14. He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning, It will be reckoned a curse to him (*the friend being blessed*).
  - a. Once it becomes obvious the flatterer is flattering for purposes of personal gain, his flattery, and especially his ostentatious flattery, will feel like a curse to the one being flattered.
15. A constant dripping on a day of steady rain And a contentious woman are alike (*both get on your nerves*);
16. He who would restrain her restrains the wind, And grasps oil with his right hand.
  - a. To be **contentious** is to be frequently disagreeable, often quarrelsome, and regularly argumentative – all for the purpose of getting your way or

maintaining the upper hand. Such a person is hard to please, and the price of failure is discord and strife.

- b. **Principle:** Better to live alone than with a husband or wife who is hard to please, rarely content, often argumentative, and makes you pay an emotionally painful price for displeasing them – because it is unlikely you can change the person or your situation (*only death will free you*).
- c. Other proverbs of a similar message:
  - i. **Proverbs 21:9,** It is better to live in a corner of a roof Than in a house shared with a contentious (*high-maintenance*) woman.
  - ii. **Proverbs 21:19,** It is better to live in a desert land than with a contentious and vexing woman.
  - iii. **Proverbs 19:13,** A foolish son is destruction to his father, and the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.

17. Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another.

- a. Solitude has its advantages, but living, working, socializing, and doing church with others provides challenges and opportunities, that if used properly, can help you grow – intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually – in ways that cannot happen in solitude.

18. He who tends the fig tree will eat its fruit, And he who cares for his master will be honored.

- a. **Principle:** As good gardening is rewarded with produce, so being a faithful, responsible, and attentive servant/worker is rewarded with honor (*respect, and greater, more leadership type responsibilities*).
- b. **John 12:26,** If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

19. As in water face reflects face, So the heart of man reflects man.

- a. **Principle:** To see who you are on the outside, look in a mirror. To see who you are on the inside, look into your heart (*examine your beliefs, values, desires, fears, hopes*).
- b. **Alternate interpretation:** To see who you are on the outside, look in a mirror. To see who you are on the inside, observe how other peoples' beliefs, values, desires, fears, and hopes affect their choices and behavior – for that will help you see what in your heart is driving your choices and behavior.
- c. **Alternative translation (NJB):** As water reflects face back to face, so one human heart reflects another.

- d. **Alternate Principle:** To see who you are on the outside, look in a mirror. To be treated with kindness, grace, patience, gentleness, and love, treat others this way – for that will encourage them to treat you this way.
20. Sheol and Abaddon (*uh BAD uhn*) are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied.
- a. Our eyes are a means of seeing what we desire or what we could desire. Because our desire for more is unending, the work of our eyes is unending in looking for what we want, or in simply looking and upon seeing something new and exciting, stirring our desire for it.
  - b. **Principle:** Just as death and the grave never say, “Stop dying, we’ve had our fill!” so our eyes are not satisfied with what they have seen, and we are not satisfied with what have. We continually want more.
  - c. Scriptures:
    - i. **Proverbs 30:15-16**, The leech has two daughters, “Give,” “Give.” There are three things that will not be satisfied, four that will not say, “Enough”: [16] Sheol, and the barren womb, earth that is never satisfied with water, and fire that never says, “Enough.”
    - ii. **Ecclesiastes 1:7-8**, All the rivers flow into the sea, yet the sea is not full. To the place where the rivers flow, there they flow again. [8] All things are wearisome; man is not able to tell it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear filled with hearing.
    - iii. **Philippians 4:11-12**, Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. [12] I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.
21. The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, And each is tested by the praise accorded him (*as to how the praise will affect him*).
- a. Praise tests our character, humility, and personal integrity.
    - i. Prideful, conceited people and those whose well-being is tied to approval and acceptance, thrive on praise and therefore seek it.
    - ii. The insecure, and those who are unsure of themselves are built up and emboldened by praise.
    - iii. Those who are wise and secure in God do not pay attention to praise.
22. Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.

- a. **Principle:** It requires hard work to separate wheat from its husks, yet an equal effort with a fool still will not separate him from his foolishness.
  - b. A fool's foolishness is so strongly reinforced by his life-style and therefore embedded in his nature that not even the harshest punishment or severest consequences can motivate him to change his ways.
23. Know well the condition of your flocks, And pay attention to your herds;
24. For riches are not forever, Nor does a crown endure to all generations.
- a. **Principle:** Pay careful attention to the risks and benefits, ups and downs of your source of income. Be a diligent worker, even when you have had more income than needed for a period of years. Use what you have in a responsible, wise way because life's circumstances are such that wealth is not guaranteed and the riches you have may not last as long as you need/want them to last.
  - b. Do not neglect God's part in providing/protecting what you have, and do not neglect trusting/obeying Him in relation to His provision/protection.
    - i. **Psalm 104:14-15**, He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the labor of man, so that he may bring forth food from the earth, [15] and wine which makes man's heart glad, so that he may make his face glisten with oil, and food which sustains man's heart.
    - ii. **Matthew 6:33**, Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
    - iii. **Proverbs 23:4-5**, Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, cease from your consideration of it. [5] When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.
25. When the grass disappears, the new growth is seen, And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in,
26. The lambs will be for your clothing, And the goats will bring the price of a field,
27. And there will be goats' milk enough for your food, For the food of your household, And sustenance for your maidens.
- a. **God provides** – He provides the sun, rain, seasons, new life to replace what has been harvested and/or eaten by the flocks and herds. He provides milk, meat, and clothing from the animals fed and watered by that which God has provided. And He provides the birthing of extra animals to sell in order to gain money for items not provided by the fields or animals.