

# Proverbs

A Study Of Proverbs 6:16-19

November 19, 2023

## I. Introduction

- A. **Proverbs 6:16-19**, There are six things which the LORD hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: [17] Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, [18] a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, [19] a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers.
- B. You may be thinking that these seven things do not apply to you because you are not that bad – and you are probably right. However, listen thoughtfully as we talk about these seven things God hates, and see if there is something that you could apply to yourself.
- C. The link between all seven of these abominations is that the perpetrator knowingly, willingly, and even deliberately harms others for self-serving, self-pleasing, unjust, and indefensible reasons.
1. Such behavior is not just the opposite of love, or the failure to love, it is intentional selfishness. This makes it the enemy of love, and the enemy of those effected by this unloving behavior.
  2. **Romans 13:10** says, Love does no wrong (*harm, evil, ill-treatment*) to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.
- D. **Think this through with me:** (1) If God is love, (2) and if the essence of all the commandments is to love God supremely and to love those around us as ourselves, (3) and if the intention of God's Word is to teach us the why and how of loving others as ourselves, (4) and if – as far as it depends on us – we are to be at peace with all people, (5) and if we are to even love our enemies, **then** it makes sense that God hates these seven enemies of love and sees them as abominations because of the harm they do to the sinner and those sinned against.
- E. Finally, God speaks of these seven abominations as coming out of our eyes, mouth, hands, feet, and heart. Since what we do with our eyes, mouth, hands, and feet come from within, we will look at these seven abominations in this order: heart, eyes, hands, feet, and mouth.
- F. Prayer

## II. Four Abominations which God hates

### A. A heart that devises wicked plans . . .

1. The person who devises wicked plans does so in order to take advantage of and/or mistreat others for personal gain. And he does these evil things because his **heart already contains** the desire to pursue personal gain and pleasure through evil means – which is why such a heart is an abomination to the Lord.
2. One of our greatest human weaknesses is believing that our thoughts, choices, words, and deeds are driven by other people's behavior and/or our circumstances.
  - a. For example, who hasn't said something like, "If you weren't so stubborn and ornery, I wouldn't be so angry!"
  - b. Yet the reality is, what is outside of us doesn't make us angry, it only stimulates what is in our heart – and it is what is in our heart that drives anger toward certain people or situations.
3. The Bible states very clearly that how we behave on the outside comes from who we are on the inside. For example:
  - a. **Mark 7:21-23**, For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, [22] deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. [23] All these evil things proceed from within . . .
  - b. **Proverbs 23:7a**, For as he thinks within himself, so he is.
  - c. **Proverbs 12:20a**, Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil.
  - d. **Proverbs 12:25a**, Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down.
  - e. **Proverbs 16:2**, All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the LORD weighs the motives (*what is in the heart*).
  - f. **Proverbs 16:5**, Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; assuredly, he will not be unpunished.
4. If you will acknowledge that your choices and behavior are driven by what is in your heart, then you can see what is in your heart by examining your recurring choices and behavior.
5. Finally, God's word speaks about what to do with our hearts.
  - a. **Proverbs 4:23**, Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.
  - b. **Psalms 139:23-24**, Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; [24] and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.
  - c. What is in your heart? May we want what is of God in our hearts.

## B. Haughty eyes . . .

1. Haughty eyes are a form of pride that drives looks, facial expressions, and an attitude of disdain and contempt toward those you deem beneath you, less important than you, unworthy of being given respect, or who you consider worthless.
  - a. Haughty eyes feed unjust discrimination, unloving prejudice, hatred of specific people groups, intentional mistreatment of individuals in those groups, persecution, and murder.
  - b. The person with haughty eyes has no regard for the feelings or the suffering of those he looks down on or mistreats.
2. **Proverbs 21:24** says this about such a person, "Proud," "Haughty," "Scoffer," are his names, who acts with insolent pride (*gross disregard for the feelings of others*).
3. We may never approach the degree of evil coming from the person with haughty eyes, but it is possible that with our eyes, facial expressions, and attitudes we show our disapproval, disgust, or even disdain for those around us who repeatedly disappoint us, frustrate us, fail to love us as we want to be loved, or mistreat us.
4. God's way, the godly way, is humility:
  - a. **Romans 12:16**, Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.
  - b. **Colossians 3:11**, ...There is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

## C. Hands that shed innocent blood . . .

1. Shedding innocent blood speaks of murdering someone who has done nothing to deserve death – for example, Cain with Able. God specifically prohibited murder in the Sixth Commandment.
  - a. Jesus expanded the application of the sixth commandment in **Matthew 5:21-22**, You have heard that the ancients were told, "You shall not commit murder" and "Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court." [22] But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, "You good-for-nothing," shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, "You fool," shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.
  - b. Do you see how the pride of haughty eyes encourages the three kinds of murder Jesus describes as unlawful?

2. You may never contemplate murdering an innocent person, or even a guilty person for that matter. But have you spoken to, or spoken about, or treated someone as if they were an unredeemable fool, or as if they were worthless, or as if they were of no value to you?
  - a. It is rare to have these kinds of thoughts, feelings, and actions toward strangers. More commonly, we think or feel and act this way toward those we live with or encounter on a regular basis.
  - b. Do you have haughty eyes? Do you, or have you committed the **Matthew 5** kinds of murder through your looks, facial expressions, and attitudes when dealing with certain people in your life – such as your spouse, children, siblings, parents, extended family members, neighbors, co-workers, or a boss?
3. If you are honest, I think you can agree that it is easy to commit the **Matthew 5** kind of murder, especially in the home. May we fight our inclinations to let our emotions and feelings rule our choices and behavior when we are feeling frustrated, angry, or hurt.

#### D. Feet that run rapidly to evil . . .

1. Those who run rapidly toward evil do so because they want whatever it is that evil does for them, and they want it now.
2. Those who are driven by these kinds of desires, and who make this kind of effort, are committed. They have neither time nor interest in listening to sensible advice. For them, an alternate, godly option is no option at all. The good of others is not on their mind. And self-control isn't even a fleeting consideration.
3. They are running rapidly to what the evil will do for them because they are driven by a heart that is full of self-serving and self-pleasing desires, longings, passions, and sense of need.
4. What drives you? I have found that fear and self-protection are two of the more powerful forces that shape people's choices, behavior, and the course of their lives. Close behind those two are the need for approval and acceptance, followed by such things as various forms of pleasure and entertainment, fame, possessions, power, control and a sense of security – especially financial security.
5. You may not run rapidly to such things, but it is possible you walk or jog repeatedly to one or more of them because you want whatever it is they do for you.
6. And in many cases, we turn to these things – **instead of God** – because it is easier, and they are faster acting when it comes to gratifying our desires, or gaining a sense of security, or calming our

- fears, or dulling our senses, or distracting us so that we can forget for a time just how challenging life is.
7. However, if we would turn to God, we would find that He gives what we need – not just for the moment, but for a life-time – because what He gives is **ever-present** and **ever-satisfying** in a complete rather than partial and momentary kind of way.

### III. Three abominations that God hates which deal with our words

- A. The three abominations that God hates which deal with our words are: a lying tongue (**vs 17**), a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers (**vs 19**).
- B. **A lying tongue: Proverbs 12:22** says, “Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal faithfully are His delight.”
  1. By contrasting lying lips with those who deal faithfully, **Proverbs 12:22** is saying that lying lips are unfaithful lips, that is, (1) lips that willfully violate trust or confidence; (2) lips that intentionally break allegiances, vows, and promises – such as marriage vows; and (3) lips that choose to harm others for personal gain by being dishonest, unfair, or irresponsible.
  2. Such unloving, harmful behavior comes from a heart that is so full of self that there isn’t room for considering the good or feelings of others, or for showing genuine love – which is why a lying tongue is an abomination to God.
- C. **A false witness who utters lies** is someone who deliberately and selfishly perverts justice by falsely accusing the righteous or acquitting the wicked.
  1. These kinds of lies do serious damage to the quality of life in the community, because they make it safe for the evil doer to do evil while working against righteousness and those who choose to live godly.
  2. The reality is, when we pervert justice, we are being hostile toward what is best for the community and friendly with what is worse – which is why a false witness is an abomination to God.
- D. **One who spreads strife among brothers:** There are those who intentionally spread strife to achieve a specific goal. However, the majority of strife is spread by people who are perverse (*stubbornly contrary*) (**Prov 6:14**), hateful (**Prov 10:12**), insolent (*arrogantly contemptuous*) (**Prov 13:10**), hot-tempered (**Prov 15:18**), self-ruled

(*doing as they please without regard for the law or what is moral*) (**Prov 17:19**), quarrelsome (**Prov 20:3**), a scoffer (**Prov 22:10**), contentious (**Prov 26:21**), arrogant (**Prov 28:25**), and angry (**Prov 29:22**).

1. All these evil things come from within, that is, the heart – which means they represent what a person **is**, not just what a person does – which is why such people are an abomination to God.
2. **Colossians 3:8** says we are to put away abusive speech, **Ephesians 4:29** says to avoid unwholesome speech and focus on speech that edifies, and **Ephesians 4:15** says we are to speak the truth in love.

E. **Proverbs 18:21a** says, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue.” Actual death and life may not be in the power of your tongue, but your words have power none-the-less. For example, your words have the power to (1) encourage or discourage, (2) build up or tear down, (3) affirm love or express ill-will, anger, and resentment, (4) endear or push away, (5) compliment or belittle, (6) urge or demand, (7) reprove or angrily criticize, (8) promote peace and unity or promote conflict and division, (9) express appreciation and thanks or express ingratitude and a demand for more, and (10) affirm approval and acceptance or affirm disapproval and rejection.

#### IV. Conclusion

- A. The reality is, no matter how good, gracious, and loving our words, they are no substitute for deeds (**Prov 14:23; 1 John 3:18**), and they cannot compel a response (**Prov 17:10; 29:19**). Yet what comes out of our mouth matters!
- B. What are you doing with your words? Do you consider the effect of your words and tone of voice on others?
  1. Do you listen to yourself (*choice of words, tone of voice*) to hear how you sound to those to whom you are speaking?
  2. Do you ponder ahead of time how to say what you want to convey if you are going to say something you know the other person doesn't want to hear, but should hear?
  3. Do your words show respect, invite cooperation, encourage meaningful discussion, work toward conflict resolution, repair relationship damage, and seek to build mutual love and trust?
- C. **Colossians 4:6**, Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.