

Class Notes - Christian Ethics

Appendix number one

PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT FROM PROVERBS

These are just some samples of the practical wisdom in this book that we could well apply to our day by day lives. A careful reading of Proverbs from time to time would be of great value! (All references are from the book of Proverbs, and based on the King James Version unless otherwise noted)

* **Relationships with other believers.**

- ** 11:15; 22:26, 27. Do not be "surety for a stranger." The principle is, do not be too trusting of people you don't know, don't guarantee their loans, etc.
- ** 23:1 - 8. Beware of accepting too readily the favors of the rich and powerful. You will soon be under their power or evil influence.

* **Business.**

- ** 11:26. Do not try to "manipulate the market." The wholesaler who will not sell his rice until he has **forced the price up** is hated by the poor people who need the food.
- ** 15:16. It is better to seek godliness than riches. 20:10, 14, 23. "Sharp [dishonest] business practices" do not please the Lord.
- ** 22:7. To be in debt is to be in bondage.
- ** 27:8. A worker should not neglect his responsibility. He should not always be jumping from one job to another.

* **Friendship.**

- ** 13:20; 29:24. Choose good companions -- they will affect your life.
- ** 18:24. We should be friendly to others, treasuring Christ's friendship to us.
- ** 19:6. Do not trust friendships that may be based on desire for favors or gifts.
- ** 22:24, 25; 23:20, 21; 24:1, 2. Choose your friends carefully.
- ** 25:17. Do not impose upon the time of a friend. If you are always in his house, he won't be able to get his work done. He will no longer enjoy your visits.

* **Sorrow.**

- ** 14:13. Entertainment and amusement are not the cure for sorrow.
- ** 25:20. Don't try to "cheer up" a sad or discouraged person with jokes, singing, etc. ("Nitre" is soda. Pour a little vinegar over some baking soda and see what happens!) Compare 12:15.

* **Anger and enmity.**

- ** 14:29; 15:18; 16:32. A quick temper exalts foolishness.
- ** 15:1. "The beginning of strife is like letting out water: so quit before the quarrel breaks forth." (Berkeley Bible). Misunderstandings should be solved before

they lead to angry words & actions. (Once water breaks out of the container you can't get it back in again)

- ** 20:3; 26:17. Stay out of other people's arguments. 24:17, 18. Do not rejoice in misfortune that comes to your enemy. 24:29. We are not to try to "get even" with others. **We** are **not** the ones to render to them according to their works, that is **God's** responsibility (24:12). Compare 25:21, 22. 12:10. Animals should not be mistreated. A man's care for his animals reveals his inner character.

* **The tongue.**

- ** 14:23. Deeds are better than mere words.
- ** 15:22; 24:6. It pays to seek godly advice.
- ** 19:13; 27:15, 16. Women should not be "nagging" wives to their husbands.
- ** 20:6; 27:2. Do not boast of your own goodness.
- ** 20:19; 25:27; 26:28; 27:14; 28:23; 29:5. Do not love flattery.
- ** 17:28; 21:23; 29:20. Do not talk too much.
- ** 24:9. Watch what you think -- it will affect what you say. It also indicates what you **are** (23:7-a).
- ** 25:23. (See also Psa. 15:3; Rom. 1:30; 2 Cor. 12:20) Do not listen to a "Backbiting tongue." See also Psa. 101:5 ("privily" is the same word as "backbiting"). The main idea of the word is "covered" or "hidden" -- (a dog bites another dog on the back where he can't see what is being done or defend himself). See Deut. 27:15; Psa. 27:5; 31:20; etc. The NT word (used in Rom. 1:30; 2 Cor. 12:20; 1 Pet. 2:1) means "evil speaking," "slander," or "talking against."

* **Folly.**

- ** 17:6. Money spent on education is wasted if the student does not want to learn.
- ** 26:4, 5. How to answer a fool. There are two kinds of fools: **1.** Those who make "smart remarks" and "wise cracks." **2.** Those who try to appear wise when they are not.
- ** 26:19. Warning against "practical jokes." They can often have tragic consequences!

* **Warnings against laziness.**

- ** 12:27; 24:30 - 34; 26:13 - 16; 27:23 - 27; 28:19.

* **How to choose a wife.**

- ** 31:30 (with the entire thirty-first chapter). Do not look for favor (popularity), for it is deceitful; nor for beauty, for it is vain. Look for true godliness and spirituality first -- if she happens to also be beautiful that is nice, but secondary.

* **Importance of training children.** 22:6, 15; 23:13, 14 (compare Deut. 21:18 - 21!); 29:15,17.

* **Giving to the poor.**

- ** 14:21, 31; 19:17; 21:13; 22:9; 28:8, 27; 31:19. Exhortations to give.
- ** 19:6. A warning!

** Compare Rom. 12:20; 2 Cor. 8:4, 14; 9:12; Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:8, 10; 1 Tim. 5:10; James 2:15, 16.

* **Miscellaneous.**

- ** 14:4. Application: If we reject everyone in the church who causes trouble, we will have no one left. We can get rid of our **problems** by getting rid of the **people** -- but then we have no church!
- ** 18:13, 17. We should not judge a case until we hear **both sides**.
- ** 21:17, 20. Love of pleasures and rich food produce poverty. Those who "live it up" and do not save will be poor.
- ** 22:1. We should guard our reputation as much as possible.
- ** 22:3; 30:26 (Matt. 5:25). It is wisdom to foresee danger and prepare for it.
- ** 2:28; 23:10. Do not be too quick to make changes, to ignore the wise decisions of the past. We should not be "revolutionaries" (24:21).
- ** 23:26. The **believer** should give **his** heart to the Lord so he may be pleasing to Him. (Salvation does not come when we **give** our heart [or anything else] to the Lord. It comes when we **believe** and **receive** eternal life as a gift).
- ** 23:29 - 35. The folly of drunkenness
- ** 24:11, 12. We should not say, "I don't want to become involved" in order to avoid helping those in trouble
- ** 25:8 - 10. Go to a man, himself, with your complaints -- do not make your charges in the presence of others. (Though if he will not listen, you may have to bring in others later. Compare Matt. 18:15 - 17.)
- ** 14:15. **Gullibility is not faith.**

(This appendix also used with Class Notes on Proverbs)

--- William P Heath

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