

] Better Than Secret Love [

Proverbs 26:23 – 27:27

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~ Our Spiritual Safari through Proverbs is bringing us truths that only the Holy Spirit can reveal to our hearts. Only by allowing Christ to live through us can an application of wisdom be realized in our life. These last six chapters should be reverently meaningful to a genuine believer; because they deeply affect our existential being. Our understanding of this section of Scripture dictates how we appropriate our minute-to-minute affairs, and the ensuing results. Tragically, this portion of the Bible isn't dealt with anymore in modern exegesis. These proverbs were given by a king in the age of law, and in the strength of the Mosaic Law but, for you and me, we're given the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Who writes His precepts and ordinances upon the fleshy tablets of our heart. Most modern preaching and teaching is light and creamy; it has no nutrition — touching only that which is superficial, forever-sweet endlessly lovely. Interestingly, we haven't heard much about love in Proverbs. God has taught us about the wicked man, the sluggard, an infidel and the scorner. And we've learned all about the fool. We've had to learn to control our tongue, and humble our pride before the Lord, and before his children — but very little has been presented about love. That's because love is already baked-in to these proverbs. If God didn't love us, He wouldn't speak to us.

Our salvation is not about making our lives happy, friends. No, it is about making us *HOLY*! Until we learn how to stand in the righteousness of Christ and appropriate it unto sanctification, we can never know what real joy, happiness, or true love are. True joy and fulfillment in this life means walking in Spirit and in Truth. That equation equals God; and it is a difficult learning process; because it requires learning from the Word of God. Most people literally refuse to obey that command. And it's more than that. George Washington said, ".... *it is impossible to govern without the Bible.*" Well, we're sure trying to govern our own lives without it today; and I mean the so-called Christian. England and Germany were informed by God a *long* time ago that they'll not be fit to govern His world. They both possessed the truth of the Word of God at one time — but they repudiated it; and

they are both fourth-rate countries today, as a result. America was entrusted with the Word of God, but we have, likewise, rejected Christ Jesus for Who He is – the True and Living God. The American liberal Jesus is not the Jesus of Scripture. America’s Jesus is a myth. America is beginning to comprehend a full dawn of realization. She is being advised that she’ll not rule the world, either. Of course, we never did; and were never intended to. That wasn’t God’ plan or purpose for America — even though it could have worked out that way. There’s nothing to be made great again here, friends; but let’s move forward with God now....

XXVI

23 Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.

24 He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him;

25 When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart.

26 Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.

27 Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

28 A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

~ This is a stern, prolonged and deeply stringent warning against hypocrisy. Unfortunately, we’re talking about hypocrisy amongst God’s people now. There are many utter hypocrites who make a profession of faith – in and out of the church. They are generally going to say one thing to your face, and another thing altogether behind your back. Some people that will literally flatter you will also secretly hate you in their hearts. The moment an opportunity arises, they will betray you. It’s very common for people to

hate those whom they have injured. Our hearts are naturally programmed to produce hate, lies and murder. I think of Haman in the Book of Esther in this connection. Haman was such a strong flatterer, while hatching a plan to kill the queen and overthrow the king at the same time! My friends, this runs rampant in Christian circles; and the church just ignores the problem as if covering it up will somehow make it go away. The entire church feels defeated if there is even the mention of a hypocrite in their midst! Even in my own heart it feels like self-treason to even acknowledge the possibility that I may possess hypocritical biases or other contradictory misunderstandings. To realize that a tiny little root of bitterness sometimes taps into my life forces me to face-up to a whole new set of problems. How about you? Well, these proverbs should be very effective at doing exactly that; and at clearing it all up for us....

XXVII

1 Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

~ We arrive in a beautiful section of Scripture regarding friendship. Verse one is probably familiar to many people; but most people exact the second part of the sentence and discard the first. Frankly, most people use this as a verse of hope and promise of what tomorrow may bring; when, in reality, it is a warning that tomorrow may not be so wonderful. That's tomorrow, my friends – uncertain; make a note of that – and that's when you're going to need a real friend. Jesus saith, *“you are My friends if you obey My commands.”* It's pretty important we learn this truth. We must be extremely careful and deliberate in how we handle Holy Writ, right now; because the road of the by and by leads to the house of never. Someone has said, *“....the road to hell is paved with good intentions.”* Those secular proverbs holds true on every level. Procrastination only steals one precious commodity: our time! Most men and women have a tendency to want to wait. We all know of things we should do today, but we don't; we all naturally want to wait until tomorrow concerning most of the important matters in our lives.

The Word of God says we will be saved *today* if we will hear His voice and harden not our heart. Right *now* is the acceptable time and the day of salvation which the Lord hath made. Jesus says, *"come, let us reason together...."* Jesus is calling you now, friends. Today might be your last tomorrow. Festus spoke to Paul while Paul was his prisoner, and Festus said, *".... I'll hear you further when there is a more convenient season."* As far as Festus was concerned, that time never came! Pharaoh kept promising to let he children of Israel go free — tomorrow — always just a day away! Well, it cost both of those men dearly....

2 Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

3 A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.

4 Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?

5 Open rebuke is better than secret love.

6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

7 The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

~ Interestingly today, we have a population that is starving, and simultaneously morbidly obese. Cooking and exotic food preparation has been developed to a high-degree of culinary perfection. It has become a scientific obsession, in some regards. It is one of the most popular television themes to present. The ruling class has plenty of everything; yet they get bored having the same luxury again every day. There comes a time for the natural man when filet mignon with lobster tails, served with drawn butter and a dessert of strawberry caramel ice cream, becomes, well, average. Of course, a man who is hungry enough will eat whatever you give him. The same spiritual application is relevant to the Word of God, friends!

We must eat the Bread of Life every day; and only the Lord Himself can give us an appetite for that. Only the Spirit of God can take the unleavened bread in our safari and make it tasty or appealing to anyone....

8 As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place.

~ We all have a specific function in the body of Christ during our time on earth. Jesus Himself sets the members in the body as it has pleased Him! What we must do is pray God might reveal our spiritual gift to us. I am convinced that there are very few people who are truly fulfilling their calling down here; and I do mean *VERY* few. Remember, Paul wrote about a man named Demas, “... *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.*” Demas never quite fit in; and never really loved the work of the Lord. Today, we utterly neglect essential spiritual gifts the church should be doing, such as hospital visits to cancer wards, elderly visits, material giving and outreach that brings people to Bible study. Everyone seems interested in speaking in tongues or boasting of all the great things they do — usually both — but not much doing thereof. There isn’t much sincerity in learning. Those aren’t gifts, friends. That’s an empty, dead, religion....

9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off.

11 My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.

12 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.

13 Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

14 He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

15 A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.

16 Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth itself.

17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

18 Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.

19 As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.

20 Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

21 As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.

22 Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

23 Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.

24 For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

25 The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

26 The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field.

27 And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance for thy maidens ~

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