

TOPICAL STUDIES FROM

*Proverbs*

BY CHARLES WILLIS



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# Proverbs

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Written By: *Charles Willis*  
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# The Beginning Of Knowledge

*1:1-7 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: To know wisdom and instruction, To discern the sayings of understanding, To receive instruction in wise behavior, Righteousness, justice and equity; To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion, A wise man will hear and increase in learning, And a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel, To understand a proverb and a figure, The words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

*8:13 The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.*

*14:2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the Lord, But he who is devious in his ways despises Him.*

*16:6 By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, And by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil.*

*9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

*3:5-7 Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil.*

*16:25 There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

*2:1-5 My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What does the world say is the beginning of knowledge?
2. What does it mean to “fear the Lord”? (1:1-7; 8:13; 14:2; 16:6)
3. What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom? (9:10)
4. Give an example of how we should not lean on our own understanding (3:6; 16:25), but instead trust in the Lord (3:5).
5. Explain what our attitude must be to receive the words of wisdom (2:1-5)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*3:13-18 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains understanding. For her profit is better than the profit of silver And her gain better than fine gold. She is more precious than jewels; And nothing you desire compares with her. Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways And all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who hold her fast.*

*14:26 In the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge.*

*22:4 The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord Are riches, honor and life.*

*29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts in the Lord will be exalted.*

*31:30-31 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her the product of her hands, And let her works praise her in the gates.*

*14:16 A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless.*

*14:9 Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is good will.*

*28:14 How blessed is the man who fears always, But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.*

6. What are some of the benefits of wisdom?  
(3:13-18; 14:26; 22:4; 29:25; 31:30-31)

7. How do we lose our fear of the Lord?  
(14:9; 14:16; 28:14)

# About God

*3:19-20 The Lord by wisdom founded the earth, By understanding He established the heavens. By His knowledge the deeps were broken up And the skies drip with dew.*

*20:12 The hearing ear and the seeing eye, The Lord has made both of them.*

*22:2 The rich and the poor have a common bond, The Lord is the maker of them all.*

*5:21 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, And He watches all his paths.*

*15:3 The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.*

*15:11 Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the Lord, How much more the hearts of men!*

*21:1-2 The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes. Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts.*

*21:30 There is no wisdom and no understanding And no counsel against the Lord.*

*3:31-35 Do not envy a man of violence And do not choose any of his ways. For the devious are an abomination to the Lord; But He is intimate with the upright. The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the dwelling of the righteous. Though He scoffs at the scoffers, Yet He gives grace to the afflicted. The wise will inherit honor, But fools display dishonor.*

*21:12 The righteous one considers the house of the wicked, Turning the wicked to ruin.*

*22:22-23 Do not rob the poor because he is poor, Or crush the afflicted at the gate; For the Lord will plead their case And take the life of those who rob them.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What is important about knowing God as the creator? (3:19-20; 20:12; 22:2)  
[see also Romans 1:18-32; Colossians 1:17; Revelation 4:11]
2. Specifically, what does God know about us? (5:21; 15:3; 15:11; 21:1-2)
3. How does Proverbs 21:30 relate to those today who do not believe in God and are against Him?
4. How does God react to and judge men? (3:31-35; 21:12; 22:22-23; 24:11-12; 29:25-27; 30:5-6)

*24:11-12 Deliver those who are being taken away to death,  
And those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold them back.  
If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not consider  
it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps  
your soul? And will He not render to man according to his  
work?*

*29:25-27 The fear of man brings a snare, But he who trusts  
in the Lord will be exalted. Many seek the ruler's favor,  
But justice for man comes from the Lord. An unjust man is  
abominable to the righteous, And he who is upright in the way  
is abominable to the wicked.*

*30:5-6 Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those  
who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words Or He will  
reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.*

# Good Guidance

*11:14 Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory.*

*12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.*

*13:10 Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.*

*15:22 Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they succeed.*

*24:6 For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is victory.*

*12:5-6 The thoughts of the righteous are just, But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful. The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.*

*16:29 A man of violence entices his neighbor And leads him in a way that is not good.*

*3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.*

*16:3 Commit your works to the Lord And your plans will be established.*

*16:9 The mind of man plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.*

*19:20-21 Listen to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days. Many plans are in a man's heart, But the counsel of the Lord will stand.*

*20:24 Man's steps are ordained by the Lord, How then can man understand his way?*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What is the value of good guidance?  
(11:14; 12:15; 13:10; 15:22; 24:6)

2. Why is some guidance poor?  
How do we recognize bad advice?  
(12:5-6; 16:29)

3. What should be our attitude toward  
and adoption of God's guidance?  
(3:5-6; 16:3; 16:9; 19:20-21; 20:24)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*1:8-9 Hear, my son, your father's instruction And do not forsake your mother's teaching; Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head And ornaments about your neck.*

*5:1-2 My son, give attention to my wisdom, Incline your ear to my understanding; That you may observe discretion And your lips may reserve knowledge.*

*6:20-23 My son, observe the commandment of your father And do not forsake the teaching of your mother; Bind them continually on your heart; Tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; When you sleep, they will watch over you; And when you awake, they will talk to you. For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life*

*13:1 A wise son accepts his father's discipline, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.*

*22:17-21 Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, And apply your mind to my knowledge; For it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, That they may be ready on your lips. So that your trust may be in the Lord, I have taught you today, even you. Have I not written to you excellent things Of counsels and knowledge, To make you know the certainty of the words of truth That you may correctly answer him who sent you?*

*23:22 Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old.*

*27:9 Oil and perfume make the heart glad, So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend.*

*22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

4. What should be our response to parental guidance? (1:8-9; 5:1-2; 6:20-23; 13:1; 22:17-21; 23:22; 27:9)

5. What do the verses in question #4 indicate as the parents responsibility in giving good guidance? (see also 22:6)

# Who is Wise?

*2:1-6 My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

*4:5-9 Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding. Prize her, and she will exalt you; She will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a garland of grace; She will present you with a crown of beauty.*

*8:33 Heed instruction and be wise, And do not neglect it.*

*18:15 The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.*

*3:13-18 How blessed is the man who finds wisdom And the man who gains understanding. For her profit is better than the profit of silver And her gain better than fine gold. She is more precious than jewels; And nothing you desire compares with her. Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways And all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who hold her fast.*

*3:35 The wise will inherit honor, But fools display dishonor.*

*8:11-12 For wisdom is better than jewels; And all desirable things cannot compare with her. I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And I find knowledge and discretion.*

*9:10-12 Hear, my son, and accept my sayings And the years of your life will be many. I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths. When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; And if you run, you will not stumble.*

*16:16 How much better it is to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding is to be chosen above silver.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. Define wisdom.
2. How do we acquire wisdom?  
(2:1-6; 4:5-9; 8:33; 18:15)
3. What is the value of wisdom?  
(2:1-6; 3:13-18; 3:35; 4:5-9; 8:11-12; 9:10-12; 16:16; 19:8; 23:19)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*19:8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; He who keeps understanding will find good.*

*23:19 Listen, my son, and be wise, And direct your heart in the way.*

*10:1 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish son is a grief to his mother.*

*15:20 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.*

*13:18 Poverty and shame will come to him who neglects discipline, But he who regards reproof will be honored.*

*15:31-33 He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof Will dwell among the wise. He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding. The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility.*

*17:10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding Than a hundred blows into a fool.*

*19:20 Listen to counsel and accept discipline, That you may be wise the rest of your days.*

*19:25 Strike a scoffer and the naive may become shrewd, But reprove one who has understanding and he will gain knowledge.*

*25:11-12 Like apples of gold in settings of silver Is a word spoken in right circumstances. Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold Is a wise reprover to a listening ear.*

4. Based on 10:1 and 15:20, discuss the parental need to teach wisdom to our children.

5. What must be our attitude regarding reproof? (13:18; 15:31-33; 17:10; 19:20; 19:25; 25:11-12)

# The Foolishness of Fools

14:16 *A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless.*

15:21 *Folly is joy to him who lacks sense, But a man of understanding walks straight.*

18:2 *A fool does not delight in understanding, But only in revealing his own mind.*

19:3 *The foolishness of man ruins his way, And his heart rages against the Lord.*

27:22 *Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.*

3:35 *The wise will inherit honor, But fools display dishonor.*

10:8 *The wise of heart will receive commands, But a babbling fool will be ruined.*

10:23 *Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool, And so is wisdom to a man of understanding.*

14:9 *Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is good will.*

15:2 *The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, But the mouth of fools spouts folly.*

18:6-7 *A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows. A fool's mouth is his ruin, And his lips are the snare of his soul.*

19:1 *Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity Than he who is perverse in speech and is a fool.*

20:1 *Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.*

26:11 *Like a dog that returns to its vomit Is a fool who repeats his folly.*

27:3 *A stone is heavy and the sand weighty, But the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them.*

29:11 *A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back.*

29:20 *Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. Describe the attitude of a fool.  
(14:16; 15:21; 18:2; 19:3; 27:22)
  
2. Describe the behavior of a fool.  
(3:35; 10:8; 10:23; 14:9; 15:2; 18:6-7; 19:1; 20:1; 26:11; 27:3; 29:11; 29:20)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*1:32 For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them.*

*10:21 The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of understanding.*

*11:29 He who troubles his own house will inherit wind, And the foolish will be servant to the wisehearted.*

*19:29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers, And blows for the back of fools.*

*26:3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the back of fools.*

*13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm.*

3. What is the result of foolishness?  
(1:32; 10:21; 11:29; 19:29; 26:3)

4. Relate the importance of choosing good friends. Include how to discuss this with our children. (13:20)

# Righteousness

*10:16-17 The wages of the righteous is life, The income of the wicked, punishment. He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, But he who ignores reproof goes astray.*

*10:25 When the whirlwind passes, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has an everlasting foundation.*

*10:29 The way of the Lord is a stronghold to the upright, But ruin to the workers of iniquity.*

*11:4-6 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death. The righteousness of the blameless will smooth his way, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the treacherous will be caught by their own greed.*

*11:18-19 The wicked earns deceptive wages, But he who sows righteousness gets a true reward. He who is steadfast in righteousness will attain to life, And he who pursues evil will bring about his own death.*

*15:9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, But He loves one who pursues righteousness.*

*15:29 The Lord is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.*

*21:2-3 Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts. To do righteousness and justice is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice.*

*10:2-3 Ill-gotten gains do not profit, But righteousness delivers from death. The Lord will not allow the righteous to hunger, But He will reject the craving of the wicked.*

*10:6-7 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, But the mouth of the wicked conceals violence. The memory of the righteous is blessed, But the name of the wicked will rot.*

*10:24 What the wicked fears will come upon him, But the desire of the righteous will be granted.*

*11:5-6 The righteousness of the blameless will smooth his way, But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the treacherous will be caught by their own greed.*

*11:31 If the righteous will be rewarded in the earth, How much more the wicked and the sinner!*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. Define righteousness.
2. What does God think of righteousness? (10:16-17; 10:25; 10:29; 11:4-6; 11:18-19; 15:9; 15:29; 21:2-3)
3. Of what benefit is righteousness in this life? (10:2-3; 10:6-7; 10:24; 11:5-6; 11:31; 12:26; 13:5-6; 14:34; 16:8; 20:7; 21:21)

*(questions continue on next page)*

12:26 *The righteous is a guide to his neighbor, But the way of the wicked leads them astray.*

13:5-6 *A righteous man hates falsehood, But a wicked man acts disgustingly and shamefully. Righteousness guards the one whose way is blameless, But wickedness subverts the sinner.*

14:34 *Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to any people.*

16:8 *Better is a little with righteousness Than great income with injustice.*

20:7 *A righteous man who walks in his integrity— How blessed are his sons after him.*

21:21 *He who pursues righteousness and loyalty Finds life, righteousness and honor.*

10:31-32 *The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom, But the perverted tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous bring forth what is acceptable, But the mouth of the wicked what is perverted.*

12:3 *A man will not be established by wickedness, But the root of the righteous will not be moved.*

12:5 *The thoughts of the righteous are just, But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.*

12:10 *A righteous man has regard for the life of his animal, But even the compassion of the wicked is cruel.*

12:28 *In the way of righteousness is life, And in its pathway there is no death.*

13:5 *A righteous man hates falsehood, But a wicked man acts disgustingly and shamefully.*

13:25 *The righteous has enough to satisfy his appetite, But the stomach of the wicked is in need.*

14:2 *He who walks in his uprightness fears the Lord, But he who is devious in his ways despises Him.*

16:17 *The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who watches his way preserves his life.*

18:10 *The name of the Lord is a strong tower; The righteous runs into it and is safe.*

29:7 *The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor, The wicked does not understand such concern.*

4. Describe the way of righteousness.  
(10:31-32; 12:3; 12:5; 12:10; 12:28; 13:5; 13:25; 14:2; 16:17; 18:10; 29:7)

## The Tongue Used Poorly

6:16-19 *There are six things which the Lord hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, A false witness who utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.*

19:3 *A foolish son is destruction to his father, And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.*

30:11 *There is a kind of man who curses his father And does not bless his mother.*

6:12-15 *A worthless person, a wicked man, Is the one who walks with a perverse mouth, Who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, Who points with his fingers; Who with perversity in his heart continually devises evil, Who spreads strife. Therefore his calamity will come suddenly; Instantly he will be broken and there will be no healing.*

10:19 *When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise.*

17:9 *He who conceals a transgression seeks love, But he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.*

26:28 *A lying tongue hates those it crushes, And a flattering mouth works ruin.*

15:28 *The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.*

26:24-26 *He who hates disguises it with his lips, But he lays up deceit in his heart. When he speaks graciously, do not believe him, For there are seven abominations in his heart. Though his hatred covers itself with guile, His wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.*

28:25 *An arrogant man stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What use of the tongue does the Lord hate? (6:16-19)
2. How does our poor use of the tongue effect family relationships? (19:3; 30:11)
3. What are some other results of using our tongue poorly? (6:12-15; 10:19; 17:9; 26:28)
4. Why do we use our tongue poorly? (15:28; 26:24-26; 28:25)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*4:24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth And put devious speech far from you.*

*18:8 The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the body.*

*20:3 Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.*

*20:19 He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip.*

*26:17 Like one who takes a dog by the ears Is he who passes by and meddles with strife not belonging to him.*

5. Identify some poor uses of the tongue.  
(4:24; 18:8; 20:3; 20:19; 26:17)

## The Tongue Used Wisely

10:19 *When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, But he who restrains his lips is wise.*

15:28 *The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, But the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.*

16:23 *The heart of the wise instructs his mouth And adds persuasiveness to his lips.*

17:27 *He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.*

18:13 *He who gives an answer before he hears, It is folly and shame to him.*

29:20 *Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

1:7-9 *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction. Hear, my son, your father's instruction, And do not forsake your mother's teaching; Indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head And ornaments about your neck.*

15:5 *A fool rejects his father's discipline, But he who regards reproof is sensible.*

22:6 *Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

11:30 *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who is wise wins souls.*

12:18 *There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings healing.*

12:25 *Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad.*

15:7 *The lips of the wise spread knowledge, But the hearts of fools are not so.*

15:23 *A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word!*

16:21 *The wise in heart will be called understanding, And sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.*

16:23-24 *The heart of the wise instructs his mouth And adds persuasiveness to his lips. Pleasant words are a honeycomb, Sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. Describe the wisdom of keeping the tongue silent.

(10:19; 15:28; 16:23; 17:27; 18:13; 29:20)

2. Discuss the good use of and benefits of the wise tongue in the family.

(1:7-9; 15:5; 22:6)

3. Identify some of the wise uses of the tongue.

(11:30; 12:18; 12:25; 15:7; 15:23; 16:21; 16:23-24; 17:10; 25:11; 27:5; 28:23; 31:26)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*17:10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding  
Than a hundred blows into a fool.*

*25:11 Like apples of gold in settings of silver Is a word spoken  
in right circumstances.*

*27:5 Better is open rebuke Than love that is concealed.*

*28:23 He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor  
Than he who flatters with the tongue.*

*31:26 She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of  
kindness is on her tongue.*

*18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those  
who love it will eat its fruit.*

*20:15 There is gold, and an abundance of jewels; But the lips of  
knowledge are a more precious thing.*

4. What power resides in the tongue?  
(18:21; 20:15)

## Lazy or Diligent?

*10:4-5 Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, But the hand of the diligent makes rich. He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely, But he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.*

*12:11 He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, But he who pursues worthless things lacks sense.*

*12:24 The hand of the diligent will rule, But the slack hand will be put to forced labor.*

*12:27 A lazy man does not roast his prey, But the precious possession of a man is diligence.*

*21:5 The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, But everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty.*

*22:29 Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before obscure men.*

*27:23-27 Know well the condition of your flocks, And pay attention to your herds; For riches are not forever, Nor does a crown endure to all generations. When the grass disappears, the new growth is seen, And the herbs of the mountains are gathered in, The lambs will be for your clothing, And the goats will bring the price of a field, And there will be goats' milk enough for your food, For the food of your household, And sustenance for your maidens.*

*8:17 I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.*

*Heb. 4:11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.*

*2 Pet. 1:10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble.*

*2 Pet. 3:14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What benefit is the attribute of diligence? (10:4-5; 12:11; 12:24; 12:27; 21:5; 22:29; 27:23-27)

2. What will diligence find? (8:17 see the context; Heb. 4:11; 2 Pet. 1:10; 2 Pet. 3:14)

*(questions continue on next page)*

6:6-11 *Go to the ant, O sluggard, Observe her ways and be wise, Which, having no chief, Officer or ruler, Prepares her food in the summer And gathers her provision in the harvest. How long will you lie down, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep? "A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest"—Your poverty will come in like a vagabond And your need like an armed man.*

10:4-5 *Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, But the hand of the diligent makes rich. He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely, But he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.*

10:26 *Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, So is the lazy one to those who send him.*

12:24 *The hand of the diligent will rule, But the slack hand will be put to forced labor.*

13:4 *The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, But the soul of the diligent is made fat.*

15:19 *The way of the lazy is as a hedge of thorns, But the path of the upright is a highway.*

18:9 *He also who is slack in his work Is brother to him who destroys.*

19:15 *Laziness casts into a deep sleep, And an idle man will suffer hunger.*

20:4 *The sluggard does not plow after the autumn, So he begs during the harvest and has nothing.*

24:30-34 *I passed by the field of the sluggard And by the vineyard of the man lacking sense, And behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles; Its surface was covered with nettles, And its stone wall was broken down. When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction. "A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest," Then your poverty will come as a robber And your want like an armed man.*

26:14-16 *As the door turns on its hinges, So does the sluggard on his bed. The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; He is weary of bringing it to his mouth again. The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes Than seven men who can give a discreet answer.*

28:19 *He who tills his land will have plenty of food, But he who follows empty pursuits will have poverty in plenty.*

3. What problems arise from laziness?  
(6:6-11; 10:4-5; 10:26; 12:24; 13:4; 15:19; 18:9; 19:15; 20:4; 24:30-34; 26:14-16; 28:19)

4. Why do some choose to be lazy?

21:25-26 *The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, But everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty. The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue Is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death.*

22:13 *The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside; I will be killed in the streets!"*

# Good Neighbors

3:27-30 *Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it," When you have it with you. Do not devise harm against your neighbor, While he lives securely beside you. Do not contend with a man without cause, If he has done you no harm.*

13:20 *He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm.*

24:17-18 *Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; Or the Lord will see it and be displeased, And turn His anger away from him.*

25:21-22 *If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; For you will heap burning coals on his head, And the Lord will reward you.*

17:17 *A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.*

18:24 *A man of too many friends comes to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.*

27:10 *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.*

11:12 *He who despises his neighbor lacks sense, But a man of understanding keeps silent.*

12:26 *The righteous is a guide to his neighbor, But the way of the wicked leads them astray.*

20:3 *Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.*

25:17 *Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house, Or he will become weary of you and hate you.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What is God's expectation of us as neighbors to others?

(3:27-30; 13:20; 24:17-18; 25:21-22)

2. What is the value of a good neighbor?

(17:17; 18:24; 27:10)

3. What behaviors do good neighbors exhibit?

(11:12; 12:26; 20:3; 25:17)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*4:14-19 Do not enter the path of the wicked And do not proceed in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not pass by it; Turn away from it and pass on. For they cannot sleep unless they do evil; And they are robbed of sleep unless they make someone stumble. For they eat the bread of wickedness And drink the wine of violence. But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know over what they stumble.*

*16:29 A man of violence entices his neighbor And leads him in a way that is not good.*

*25:8-10 Do not go out hastily to argue your case; Otherwise, what will you do in the end, When your neighbor humiliates you? Argue your case with your neighbor, And do not reveal the secret of another, Or he who hears it will reproach you, And the evil report about you will not pass away.*

*25:18 Like a club and a sword and a sharp arrow Is a man who bears false witness against his neighbor.*

*26:17 Like one who takes a dog by the ears Is he who passes by and meddles with strife not belonging to him.*

*26:18-19 Like a madman who throws Firebrands, arrows and death, So is the man who deceives his neighbor, And says, "Was I not joking?"*

4. What behaviors do bad neighbors exhibit?  
(4:14-19; 16:29; 25:8-10; 25:18; 26:17; 26:18-19)

# Finances

*3:9-10 Honor the Lord from your wealth And from the first of all your produce; So your barns will be filled with plenty And your vats will overflow with new wine.*

*11:4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, But righteousness delivers from death.*

*16:8 Better is a little with righteousness Than great income with injustice.*

*22:1-2 A good name is to be more desired than great wealth, Favor is better than silver and gold. The rich and the poor have a common bond, The Lord is the maker of them all.*

*23:4-5 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, Cease from your consideration of it. When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings Like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.*

*11:1 A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, But a just weight is His delight.*

*16:11 A just balance and scales belong to the Lord; All the weights of the bag are His concern.*

*21:6 The acquisition of treasures by a lying tongue Is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death.*

*22:16 He who oppresses the poor to make more for himself Or who gives to the rich, will only come to poverty.*

*28:6 Better is the poor who walks in his integrity Than he who is crooked though he be rich.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What should be a believer's correct attitude about money?  
(3:9-10; 11:4; 16:8; 22:1-2; 23:4-5)

2. List the business practices that are wrong.  
(11:1; 16:11; 21:6; 22:16)

3. Discuss proper business practices in light of 28:6.

*(questions continue on next page)*

3:27-28 *Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it," When you have it with you.*

6:1-5 *My son, if you have become surety for your neighbor, Have given a pledge for a stranger, If you have been snared with the words of your mouth, Have been caught with the words of your mouth, Do this then, my son, and deliver yourself; Since you have come into the hand of your neighbor, Go, humble yourself, and importune your neighbor. Give no sleep to your eyes, Nor slumber to your eyelids; Deliver yourself like a gazelle from the hunter's hand And like a bird from the hand of the fowler.*

11:15 *He who is guarantor for a stranger will surely suffer for it, But he who hates being a guarantor is secure.*

14:31 *He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker, But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.*

21:13 *He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor Will also cry himself and not be answered.*

22:7 *The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower becomes the lender's slave.*

22:26-27 *Do not be among those who give pledges, Among those who become guarantors for debts. If you have nothing with which to pay, Why should he take your bed from under you?*

4. How should believers use their money?  
(3:27-28; 6:1-5; 11:15; 14:31; 21:13; 22:7; 22:26-27)

# Pride

3:5-7 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil.*

6:16-19 *There are six things which the Lord hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, A false witness who utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.*

8:13 *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.*

15:25 *The Lord will tear down the house of the proud, But He will establish the boundary of the widow.*

16:5 *Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.*

1 Pet. 5:5-6 *You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.*

11:2 *When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom.*

13:10 *Through insolence comes nothing but strife, But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.*

14:12 *There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*

16:18 *Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling. It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly Than to divide the spoil with the proud.*

18:12 *Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, But humility goes before honor.*

21:24 *“Proud,” “Haughty,” “Scoffer,” are his names, Who acts with insolent pride.*

26:5 *Answer a fool as his folly deserves, That he not be wise in his own eyes.*

26:12 *Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. What is God's attitude about pride? (3:5-7; 6:16-19; 8:13; 15:25; 16:5; 1 Pet. 5:5-6)

2. What results from a prideful attitude? (11:2; 13:10; 14:12; 16:18-19; 18:12; 21:24; 26:5; 26:12; 28:11; 28:25; 30:13)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*28:11 The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding sees through him.*

*28:25 An arrogant man stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.*

*30:13 There is a kind—oh how lofty are his eyes! And his eyelids are raised in arrogance.*

*15:33 The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility.*

*29:23 A man's pride will bring him low, But a humble spirit will obtain honor.*

*22:4 The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord Are riches, honor and life.*

3. What precedes honor?  
(15:33; 29:23)

Try to provide an example of a public figure who is honorable in this way.

4. What are the rewards of humility? (22:4)  
Please explain.

# Anger

*15:18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, But the slow to anger calms a dispute.*

*29:22 An angry man stirs up strife, And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.*

*30:33 For the churning of milk produces butter, And pressing the nose brings forth blood; So the churning of anger produces strife.*

*12:16 A fool's anger is known at once, But a prudent man conceals dishonor.*

*14:29 He who is slow to anger has great understanding, But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly.*

*15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.*

*15:18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, But the slow to anger calms a dispute.*

*16:32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.*

*17:14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.*

*19:11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to overlook a transgression.*

*20:3 Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.*

*16:28 A perverse man spreads strife, And a slanderer separates intimate friends.*

*18:6 A fool's lips bring strife, And his mouth calls for blows.*

*22:10 Drive out the scoffer, and contention will go out, Even strife and dishonor will cease.*

*22:24-25 Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man, Or you will learn his ways And find a snare for yourself.*

*25:23 The north wind brings forth rain, And a backbiting tongue, an angry countenance.*

*(references continue on next page)*

1. How does anger relate to strife?  
(15:18; 29:22; 30:33)

2. How do we keep from getting angry?  
(12:16; 14:29; 15:1; 15:18; 16:32; 17:14;  
19:11; 20:3)

3. What causes anger?  
(16:28; 18:6; 22:10; 22:24-25; 25:23;  
26:20-21; 27:3; 28:25)

*(questions continue on next page)*

*26:20-21 For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down. Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.*

*27:3 A stone is heavy and the sand weighty, But the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them.*

*28:25 An arrogant man stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.*

*14:16-17 A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless. A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of evil devices is hated.*

*18:19 A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a citadel.*

*19:13 A foolish son is destruction to his father, And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping.*

*19:19 A man of great anger will bear the penalty, For if you rescue him, you will only have to do it again.*

4. What problems result from an angry disposition?  
(14:16-17; 18:19; 19:13; 19:19)

# The Worthy Woman

## PROVERBS 31:10-31

10 *An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.*

11 *The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain.*

12 *She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.*

13 *She looks for wool and flax And works with her hands in delight.*

14 *She is like merchant ships; She brings her food from afar.*

15 *She rises also while it is still night And gives food to her household And portions to her maidens.*

16 *She considers a field and buys it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.*

17 *She girds herself with strength And makes her arms strong.*

18 *She senses that her gain is good; Her lamp does not go out at night.*

19 *She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hands grasp the spindle.*

20 *She extends her hand to the poor, And she stretches out her hands to the needy.*

21 *She is not afraid of the snow for her household, For all her household are clothed with scarlet.*

22 *She makes coverings for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.*

23 *Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.*

24 *She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies belts to the tradesmen.*

25 *Strength and dignity are her clothing, And she smiles at the future.*

26 *She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.*

27 *She looks well to the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.*

28 *Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying:*

29 *"Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all."*

30 *Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.*

31 *Give her the product of her hands, And let her works praise her in the gates.*

1. Describe a husband's proper appreciation for his wife.  
(31:10-11; 31:28-29)
  
2. Describe a wife's proper appreciation for her husband.  
(31:12; 31:23)
  
3. What is this woman's attitude toward labor and industry?  
(31:13-16; 31:18-19; 31:21-22; 31:24; 31:27; 31:31)
  
4. Discuss the woman's attitude toward self.  
(31:17; 31:22; 31:25; 31:30)
  
5. What is the woman's attitude toward others?  
(31:15; 31:20-21; 31:26)