

Topics in Proverbs

I. Skill in Godly Relationships - Pt 3

- A. The Importance of Relationships
- B. Caution Against Excess
- C. What to Seek and Cherish in Friends
- D. What to Beware and Avoid
- E. Pitfalls in Relationships

1. Mismatched Intimacy - Pr 25:17 Seldom set foot in your neighbor's house, Lest he become weary of you and hate you.

a. The terms

i. seldom - *yaqar* - precious, scarce, prized, valuable

- Make your foot rare or scarce

- scarcity drives up the value, drive up the value of your visit by avoiding excess

ii. Weary - *saba`* - to sate, fill to satisfaction:--have enough, fill, have plenty of, be satiate, satisfy (with), suffice, be weary of.

b. The Idea

i. avoid barging into someone's life, overwhelming them with one's needy demanding presence.

ii. Spend time appropriate to the friendship

iii. One's presence should be valuable and valued, not excessive

2. Flattery - Pr 26:28; 29:5

a. The Problem

i. relationships characterized by flattery

- hard truths are held back

- untruthful praise is lavished

ii. Flattery is not being kind, loving, or doing good

b. The Principle

i. failure to correct can be

- treating serious faults with adoring blindness (early dating)

- a relationship that is too fragile to handle the weight of reality

- the need for a friend that is unhealthy and unwise chaining one to another who cannot bear the truth

ii. if a friend criticizes you, consider

- am I above criticism?

- am I a scoffer - Pr 15:12

iii. We must cultivate the attitude of the wise man - Pr 9:8-9

3. Offense Given - Pr 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

a. Overview - the danger and the solution

i. A hostile inclination transforms any molehill into a mountain

ii. In contrast, love covers a multitude of sins - Pr 17:9; 1 Pe 4:8

b. Dilemma - Pr 17:14

i. the breach of the dam

- first a little
- the flow erodes the dam
- the dam eventually breaks and you have a flood

ii. Minor wrong in a relationship

- love should cover it
- find ourselves obsessing, due to injured feelings or pride
- keep bringing it up until a fight starts
- opening the floodgate, lets loose more than can be predicted, controlled, or retrieved

iii. Wisdom says abandon the quarrel before it starts - a quarrel is easier to start than to resolve.

c. Disaster - Pr 17:9

i. either love didn't cover it, or one didn't successfully resolve it

- by direct confrontation or
- lack of forgiveness of repented offense

ii. Repeating or harping on the offense

iii. Three possible solutions to offense

- allow love to cover the offense
- confront with a satisfactory outcome and drop the matter
- confront with an unsatisfactory outcome
 - distance ourselves from the friend
 - resolve to drop the matter
 - keep bringing it up and destroy the friendship

d. Demolition - Pr 18:19 - the ruin of a mismanaged offense

i. a more major offense - something that just can't be overlooked

ii. Confronting the offender as one who

- does not accept responsibility, repent, seek forgiveness, or give appropriate restitution.
- has offended in a way that the relationship can't continue as before

iii. Intimate relationships open one to vulnerability

- allows for great damage like no other
- when damage has been done, it is not easily undone

F. Peaks - 4 positives aspects of relationships

1. Analysis and Criticism - Pr 27:5-6

a. Words

i. rebuke - *towkechah* - used in 1:25,30 as counsel; in 3:11; 10:17; 12:1; 13:18; 15:32 as discipline

ii. open - uncovered, manifested, frank, direct

b. Hidden love that doesn't rebuke is morally useless

c. the wounds of a faithful friend are faithful wounds

i. Faithful - '*aman* - to confirm or support

ii. Wounds are still wounds

iii. Friend - '*ahab* - lit, one who loves

iv. The enemy intends to hurt or destroy in contrasts to the friend's intention of helping - Pr 28:23

2. Helpful Counsel - Pr 27:9

a. oil and perfume - associated with celebration, feasting, and joy

i. a good friend makes life sweet both on the physical plane as well as the non-physical

ii. Earnest counsel is lit counsel of the soul - heartfelt, sincere

b. heartfelt, sincere is precious and gladdening for two reasons

i. Has our best interest in mind

ii. Arises out of familiarity with us, our motivations, aims, character

3. Loyalty - Pr 20:6

a. emphasizes the importance of the quality in others and in self

b. a lynch-pin trait

i. a person with no character is easily swayed by whoever at any given moment

ii. Loyalty requires the ability to stick with a value or person against pressure to the contrary especially to God and then friends

iii. Underscored in Pr 21:21

- righteousness summing up our relationship with God

- mercy or kindness summing up our relationship with men

c. old friends are proven to be better than new friends - Pr 27:10

4. Mutual Refinement - Pr 27:17

a. shows the importance of real interaction instead of surface level stuff - Ge 2:18

b. iron is not sharpened by cheese or wood,

i. so interaction with sharp friends serves as a sharpening influence

ii. Must experience godly personal interaction with others that are growing in Christ

G. The Review - Started with

1. the dangers of isolation - Pr 18:1

2. the dangers of being social butterflies - Pr 18:24

3. weighed God's guidelines for

a. selecting friends,

b. the care and nurture of friendships

4. the need for mutually sharpening relationships