

PROVERBS 19

A WORD TO PARENTS AND CHILDREN

False witnesses indeed! (verse 9)

“A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.”

There must be something of more than ordinary importance in this verse, since it is the repetition of the same sentiment that we find in verse 5 – only with stronger marks of the awful sin of which it speaks. A false witness is the very opposite of Christ, the Faithful and True Witness (Rev. 1:5). And therefore, what an awful state are those persons in, who are found witnessing to lies – that is, to anything and everything that falls short of Him and His salvation! The Holy Spirit shows the sinner the evil of his ways, and He testifies that Christ alone can deliver the soul from going down to the pit. He points to the blood and righteousness of Jesus as the only possible means of salvation; and He gives assurance to the truth that “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved!” (Acts 4:12) Therefore, those persons must be false witnesses indeed, who attempt to direct a sinner to any other Savior; or who try to tempt the heart to believe that we are to seek acceptance partly in ourselves, and partly in Christ! May the Lord have compassion on perishing sinners, and send forth faithful shepherds to be His witnesses! (Jer. 3:15)

A prudent wife is from the Lord (verse 14)

“House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord.”

“Every good gift is from the Lord” – some through ordinary means, and others more directly from Him. Although houses and riches are His gifts, they come by ordinary descent from parents to children. But a prudent and loving wife is entirely unconnected with the man, for there has been no previous bond of relationship; and so she is clearly brought to him by the Lord. Even in Eden’s perfect Paradise, the Lord brought Woman to the Man by His special Providence – and therefore, as His special gift. The history of Ruth beautifully illustrates the workings of Divine Providence in marriage. Contrary to all human probability, through a chain of Divine events, the Moabitess married a man of Israel and became the ancestress of Israel’s king – and also of the Lord Jesus. The wheels of the Lord’s working in this interesting matter often constrain the admiration of men who are not well-exercised in spiritual observations. But how much more endearing and secure is a special gift of God! The manna coming down from heaven was more valued than if it had been the fruit of hard labor. Similarly, the prudent wife is honored as a special blessing of the Lord’s immediate choosing; and therefore, she is to be obtained by prayers from the hand of the Giver. However, the prudence that is here described implies even more than her wise governing of her household; but it also has reference to that Godly consideration that is connected with Divine Wisdom, by which she becomes the

joy and confidence of her husband. And for the record, a Godly husband is no less a direct gift from the Lord than a Godly wife. Let those who are unmarried seek this blessing of God's ordinance from Himself; let them never trust to their own judgment and affections, without primary reference to His Divine guidance.

A word to parents (verse 18)

“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.”

Christian parents! Carefully study the Word of God in this matter. See here an example of our Father's wise and loving discipline with His dear children. “Like as a Father, he pitieth his children.” “As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.” However, when His sons and daughters need chastening – although the flesh cries for the rod to be spared, and although every groan enters into His heart – yet He loves them so well, that He does not spare them for the sake of their crying. He will wither their brightest comforts if they turn themselves to idols; and this is not for His pleasure, but for their profit. And what child has not ended up blessing Him in the end, that He did not refrain His discipline until it had done “its perfect work”? Therefore, dear parents, this is to be our pattern and our standard for the education, shepherding, and discipling of our children. What grace and wisdom is needed to discipline our own minds, judgments, and affections so that we may train up our children practically for the Lord's service and their own happiness! Let us pray for this grace.



A word to children (verse 20)

“Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.”

The last paragraph gave a word for parents, directing their Christian discipline; but here, children are exhorted to humility. Once again, they are awakened to hear counsel and instruction. And they constantly need this admonition to be repeated to them, as has been done so often in this Book of Proverbs. Dear boys and girls! Remember that the seed which is now sown in the season of your youth will produce either blessed or bitter fruit in the end. Rich indeed was the harvest from Timothy's early attention to instruction! And fearful indeed is the judgment that has been meted out – and is still meted out – upon scoffers who despise early wisdom and instruction. How greatly does the wisdom of mature age depend upon our diligence in hearing counsel and instruction in our youth!

Lord, we pray for Christian families everywhere – both parents and children – that the grace of the Holy Spirit may direct them to follow the wise man's words in this chapter. Help these parents to faithfully discipline and disciple their little ones, and lead them to the feet of Jesus; and help the children to humble themselves to listen to and obey their parents' wise counsels, admonitions, and instructions. Amen.