

Wisdom For Life And Ministry

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.
(Proverbs 1:7 ESV)*

*Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life, but he who rejects reproof leads others astray.
(Proverbs 10:17 ESV)*

*'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.'
(Job 28:28 ESV)*

*The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.
(Matthew 12:42 ESV)*

Knowing What God Hates

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Proverbs 6:16-19

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Introduction:

Good morning church. I'd like to invite you to open your Bibles to Proverbs 6:16; that's on page 531 in your pew Bibles. Once again in this passage Solomon is giving counsel to his Royal Son about to make his way into the wider world. Look at verse 1 of chapter 6. The ESV gives this whole section from verse 1-19 the heading "Practical Warnings". That is an excellent heading! Because that's exactly what this is! The father is warning the son about some things that could KNOCK HIM OFF the road that leads to life and peace.

Look at verses 1-5. There he warns him about making foolish financial decisions. If you put yourself on the line for people you don't really know then that's like chaining yourself to a wild boar. If they go down they are going to drag you down with them. Don't do it. That's crazy. That will pull you right off the path that leads to life and peace.

Then look at verse 6-11. There he warns the son about laziness and self indulgence. A royal son could very easily become a lazy son. I can't remember who said it, but a fabulously rich man once complained in his later years that all that fabulous wealth buys you in this world is three

generations of useless descendants. There's some truth in that. It would be very easy for a royal son to become a lazy son and Solomon is saying here that if you fall asleep on the road that leads to life and peace then you are going to wake up in the gutter on your way to death and ruin – don't do it.

And then he goes on to warn about foolish association. Look at verses 12-15. There he says, if you link arms with worthless people then when they go sideways – as they most certainly will do – then you can be sure that they will drag you down with them. Do not be deceived! Bad company corrupts good character. Foolish association will DRAG YOU OFF the path of life.

And then finally, here in verses 16-19 the father tells his son to beware the anger and hatred of God. There are certain things that are absolutely sure to ATTRACT the judicial wrath of God. These things are like MAGNETS for the LIGHTNING of God. They will knock you down and they will knock you off the path that leads to life and peace. So have nothing to do with these things; that is wisdom.

Let's dig a little deeper into these things. Hear now the Word of the Lord, beginning at verse 16:

16 There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him:

17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil,

19 a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers. (Proverbs 6:16–19 ESV)

This is the Word of the Lord, thanks be to God!

Solomon tells his son about 7 things that inevitably ATTRACT the judicial wrath of God. These are things that God hates and therefore these are things that a wise son – or a wise daughter – is going to want to stay away from.

What Does God Hate?

The first thing he says is that God hates “haughty eyes”.

1. Haughty eyes

Now that's CODE in the Bible for a very particular type of arrogance. Bruce Waltke says helpfully here:

*“Haughty eyes describes the pompous Assyrian invader in Isaiah 10:12-14 as well as the proud king in Daniel 11:12. They manifest a denial of the Lord’s authority and a disregard for human rights.”*¹

The story of how God USED and then DESTROYED Assyria is one of the most fascinating stories in all the Bible. It really bothered the Old Testament prophets that God BRANDISHED the empire of Assyria as a TOOL of CHASTISEMENT against his own people Israel – that REALLY upset the Old Testament prophets – we think in particular of the prophet Jonah. The whole reason Jonah ran away was because God sent him to lead a revival in Assyria. Assyria was the WORST! They were the ancient version of the Nazis and they were the SOLE SUPERPOWER in the region and they were legendarily cruel and barbaric. The Assyrians used to punish cities and regions that defied them in brutal and inhuman ways. They would have their soldiers rip babies out of the arms of young mothers and smash their brains out against the city walls. They would rip open the wombs of pregnant women and leave them to bleed to death in the streets.

They BELIEVED that they had a divine right to rule and they met every act of resistance with inhuman cruelty. So the fact that God actually used them to punish Israel for FAR LESSER CRIMES – in the minds of the prophets – was just impossible to get their heads around.

But then in Isaiah 10 God says something unexpected. In verses 10-12 he says:

When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he will punish the speech of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and **the boastful look in his eyes**. (Isaiah 10:12 ESV)

So God USED Assyria but then turned and PUNISHED THEM CATASTROPHICALLY.

Their army literally disintegrated around the walls of Jerusalem and the remnant of them then limped back to Assyria whereupon their King was assassinated by his two sons. Whereupon all the

¹ Bruce Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1-15* in *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 346.

lesser powers in the region banded together in a super alliance and literally OBLITERATED the Assyrian Empire off the face of the earth.

They went from the top of the pile to literal extinction in the blink of a historical eye.

Apparently, if you act like God and treat people like animals – you IMMEDIATELY attract some kind of catastrophic intervention from the LORD.

That’s the illustration in the Bible for what happens to people with HAUGHTY EYES.

So – don’t have anything to do with THAT boy, Solomon says. No matter who you are – no matter how big and strong you are – if you act like you’re God and you treat people like animals then the real God is going to come and wipe you off the map. So watch out for haughty eyes.

The second thing he tells his boy is that God hates a lying tongue.

2. A lying tongue

This word is used also in Jeremiah 14:14 to describe the destructive influence of false teachers.

Jeremiah 14:14-16 says:

And the LORD said to me: “The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds. . . . By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed. 16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, victims of famine and sword, with none to bury them (Jeremiah 14:14–16 ESV)

Remember all of these “practical warnings” as the ESV labels them, have to do with how NOT to get knocked off the road that leads to life and peace. Well FALSE PROPHETS are sent by the devil to DO THAT VERY THING. Their JOB is to come alongside God’s people and to make nice and to pretend to be on our team and to whisper in our ears and to try and lead us OFF THE PATH of life and peace and onto the path that leads to death and ruin.

That’s their JOB!

Old Testament and New.

Jesus talked about this danger too. He told his disciples:

For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. (Matthew 24:24 ESV)

So Solomon warned his son about this, Jesus warned his disciples about this and the Apostle Paul warned his son in the faith about this too. He wrote to Timothy and said:

evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, **deceiving and being deceived**. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it (2 Timothy 3:13–14 ESV)

Paul actually says that some of these deceivers don't even know they are deceivers! They think they're hearing from Jesus when in reality they're hearing from the devil. He is the one ultimately steering them and if you follow them then you are going to find yourself on the road that leads to death and ruin. Have nothing to do with them but rather continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it.

So how can I know whether I am following the right people?

Basically Paul says beware of people with new doctrines and novel interpretations – where do you think they got them from? Do you think Jesus is having new ideas or do you think these people are actually hearing from the devil?

Stay on the old Gospel road son and don't stand too close to those who are spreading lies and false doctrines. Such people ATTRACT the LIGHTNING OF GOD and when it falls you don't want to be anywhere near them.

Thirdly, Solomon tells his son that God hates hands that shed innocent blood.

3. Hands that shed innocent blood

Now Solomon has warned his son about this already. Back in Proverbs 1:10-16 he said to his son:

10 My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.

11 If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason...

15 my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths,

16 for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood. (Proverbs 1:10–16 ESV)

So this is a REPEATED THEME – a REPEATED WARNING in the Book of Proverbs.

Apparently there are certain temptations that are particularly attractive and dangerous for a royal son. You can see that in the next section after the section we are looking at this morning. Flip back to Proverbs 6 and look at the paragraph immediately AFTER the section we are looking at today.

What heading does the ESV give that section in your Bible?

“Warnings Against Adultery”.

So that’s another theme that Solomon feels the need to revisit. Solomon understands that powerful people wrestle with PARTICULAR TEMPTATIONS and so he repeatedly warns his son against shedding innocent blood and pursuing illicit sex. He understands the attraction of these things but he wants his son to know that these are PRECISELY the sorts of things that SUMMON THE JUDICIAL WRATH OF ALMIGHTY GOD. Therefore he tells son, again and again, to have nothing to do with them.

Now, not many of us in this room are powerful people. I’m not. I have a hard time getting my kids ready for school let alone plotting the murderous destruction of my enemies. So I am unlikely to fall into this particular pitfall – and I suspect that you are unlikely to fall into this particular pitfall.

This warning may not have as IMMEDIATE an application to us AS INDIVIDUALS.

But of course it was originally given to a man who might eventually be King. The King in some sense stands for the nation and so I think it is appropriate for us as citizens to ask whether or not our nation has an appropriate respect for the dignity and worth of human life. Because if it doesn’t then it is summoning – WE ARE SUMMONING – the judicial wrath of Almighty God.

There have been approximately 1 million legal abortions performed in Canada in the last 10 years². And now it is legal for doctors and medical professionals in this country to kill seniors, the

² https://abort73.com/abortion_facts/canadian_abortion_statistics/

critically ill and even those in mental and psychological distress.

So it does seem that we as a country have become EAGER to shed innocent blood and according to this passage that sort of thing SUMMONS the JUDICIAL WRATH of Almighty God.

Fourthly, Solomon tells his son that God hates a heart that devises wicked plans.

4. A heart that devises wicked plans

We're always surprised to discover that God cares about what we THINK. Shouldn't he just judge our actions? But again and again in the Bible we discover that God cares about our thoughts. His judgment extends even to the hidden recesses of our hearts.

Of course we should have learned that from the 10 Commandments. We see there that God judges our SPEECH – we see that in the 3rd and 9th commandments. And we see that God judges our actions – we see that in the 6th and 7th and 8th commandments – but apparently he also judges our thoughts and feelings – we see that in the 10th commandment. The 10th commandment says:

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife ... or anything that is your neighbor’s.” (Exodus 20:17 ESV)

COVETING IS A FEELING! But apparently it is not exempt from the scrutiny and judgment of God.

Solomon already warned his son about this, he said:

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it. (Proverbs 4:23 NIV11)

Understand this son, even if your feet are on the path – if your heart has begun to stray then you may be inviting a lightning bolt of judicial action from the Lord. And nothing will knock you off the path faster than a lightning bolt to the heart. So above all else, son, guard your heart. For from it flow the issues of life – the old King James version says.

It all begins here in your heart.

If you are planning evil HERE – if you are fantasizing about doing evil things here – then believe me you, it will eventually manifest in your life. Thoughts never stay thoughts. Fantasies never stay fantasies. *As a man THINKETH so HE IS*, the Bible says.

For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he (Proverbs 23:7 KJV)

And indeed that is exactly the trajectory that Solomon predicts. He goes on to tell his son that God hates FEET that make haste to run into evil.

5. Feet that make haste to run into evil

If you think about it long enough in your heart then eventually you are going to run toward it with your feet. First you will run guiltily and sneakily but then eventually, you will run eagerly and boldly. You will become INTOXICATED with evil and it will become an addiction in your life.

Again – this is a repeated theme in Proverbs. Solomon warned his son about this back in chapter 4. He said:

14 Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil.

15 Avoid it; do not go on it; turn away from it and pass on.

16 For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong; they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble. (Proverbs 4:14–16 ESV)

You see, it starts in your heart. It's just a fantasy. It's just a desire. But then you do it. Hesitantly at first. Guiltily at first, but then repeatedly. Boldly. Instinctively and finally addictively. Eventually you can't even fall SLEEP until you have DONE evil.

Anyone been down that road?

That is the road to death and hell.

Once you are there – only a miracle can save your soul. You are a danger now to yourself and to everyone around you and you are attracting – like a mega magnet – NATURAL and SUPERNATURAL CONSEQUENCES. You are like the fool wrapping himself in tinfoil and

waving a golf club over his head during an electric storm.

Right? It's only a matter of time.

So don't be that guy son, and don't stand anywhere near that guy. Because that guy – or that gal – is surely headed for disaster.

Sixthly, Solomon tells his son that God hates a false witness who breathes out lies.

6. A false witness who breathes out lies

Allen Ross comments on this verse saying:

“Here the focus is on perjury, a direct violation of the Decalogue.”³

The “Decalogue” is the 10 commandments. The 9th commandment says:

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” (Exodus 20:16 ESV)

So that's what we're talking about here – we're talking about LYING so as to LEGALLY DISCREDIT and/or ENDANGER another person.

The classic illustration of this in the Bible is of course the story of Ahab and Naboth. Ahab was a wicked and weak King in Northern Israel and he wanted the vineyard of a man named Naboth whose land was nextdoor to the palace. He asked Naboth if he could buy it and Naboth said no, so Ahab literally went home and had a hissy fit. That's in the Bible.

Ahab went into his house vexed and sullen because of what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him ... And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and would eat no food. (1 Kings 21:4 ESV)

So his wife Jezebel who was also a piece of work, came up with a plan. She arranged to have some wicked men stand up at a feast and FALSELY ACCUSE Naboth of cursing God. These

³ Allen P. Ross, *Proverbs* in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* Volume 5 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 935.

same wicked men would then encourage the crowd to stone Naboth before a proper trial could be held.

And the plan went off without a hitch.

Naboth was executed in the street like a dog and Ahab took possession of the vineyard.

It was the perfect crime - except that God saw and God HATES precisely this sort of thing.

So God summoned the prophet Elijah and sent him to Ahab with a message. Thus you shall say to Ahab:

“Have you killed and also taken possession?” And you shall say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: “In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your own blood.”’” (1 Kings 21:18–19 ESV)

And that is exactly what happened.

In chapter 22 Ahab went to war but because of this prophecy he decided to go wearing a disguise so that no one would know that he was the king of Israel – but despite that prudent precaution he did not outrun the judicial wrath of God.

1 Kings 22:34 says:

But a certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate....

Notice those words AT RANDOM. You CANNOT ESCAPE the judicial wrath of God. The story continues in verse 37:

37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria. 38 And they washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes washed themselves in it, according to the word of the LORD that he had spoken. (1 Kings 22:34–38 ESV)

How about that?

Just like God said. If you do these things – I will see, I will come, I will find you and I will knock

you off the path that leads to life.

So don't do it son.

God is dangerously opposed to those who lie in order to bring harm upon other people.

Finally, Solomon tells his son that God hates those who sow discord among brothers.

7. One who sows discord among brothers

We know that God loves unity. Solomon's father David actually wrote a song about how much God loves unity. Psalm 133 says:

1 Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

2 It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes!

3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore. (Psalm 133:1-3 ESV)

So we're not surprised to discover that God hates the one who threatens that. He hates the one who DISTURBS the unity and harmony of the family – or of the congregation.

The New Testament takes this warning very seriously. The fastest way to get booted out of a New Testament church was either to engage in bold, arrogant, public sexual immorality – as per the man in 1 Corinthians 5 – or to stir up division in the local church, as per Titus 3:10-11.

As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned. (Titus 3:10-11 ESV)

Two strikes and you're out! That's what the New Testament says.

Because unity is sweet; unity commands a blessing; unity is something God loves.

And therefore the church **MUST NOT TREAT DIVISIVE PEOPLE WITH KID GLOVES**. You get two warnings and then a letter wishing you well on your journey **ELSEWHERE**.

That's what the Bible says.

Because if divisive people SUMMON THE LIGHTNING OF GOD then obviously you don't want to be sitting beside them at church.

Avoid such people son; for they ATTRACT the judicial anger of God.

Conclusion:

There is wisdom in knowing what the Lord hates.

When I was 10 years old I spent a summer living with my grandparents on their farm. It was a farm they shared with my aunt and uncle and two of my cousins, Graham and Gary. It was a good summer and we three boys got into an awful lot of mischief. We shot things we should not have. We broke things we were told not to touch. But I only remember my grandmother getting angry one time over the course of that entire summer.

We were sitting at the table and Grandma and Aunt Mary were making lunch and for some reason my cousin Gary who was 14 years old decided to sauce talk his mother. I don't remember what he said, but I do remember my grandmother walking over to the table and SMACKING GARY ACROSS THE SIDE OF THE HEAD. "You may speak to your mother that way, boy, but you do not talk to my daughter that way."

It got very quiet in that kitchen real quick.

And I learned a very important lesson that day.

It's a good thing to know what irritates Grandma.

Grandmas can get away with just about anything. She could run over you with her car and no police officer on earth is going to send her to prison – so it is WISE to know what SUMMONS the familial wrath of Grandma.

Right?

That's what we're talking about here.

As Christians we believe that our sin has been eradicated by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross – amen? And so we have to transpose this passage into a NT key. Our sin – as Christians - DOES NOT summon the JUDICIAL WRATH of God – but we still read these passages because our sin DOES SUMMON the FAMILIAL WRATH of God. And that's different but it still HURTS when APPLIED. The Book of Hebrews talks about that. The Apostle said:

For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives. (Hebrews 12:6 ESV)

So don't sit there and say: "Because I'm a Christian God loves me. I am a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ."

Well good for you – but hear this. The Lord DISCIPLINES THE ONE HE LOVES and CHASTISES – that's literally the word for "scourge" – God SCOURGES the one he receives. So this passage is still on the table. These sins still summon the painful attention of God. Not a sword if you are in Christ – but still a scourge.

So dear brother or sister, hear me well, we want to know what summons the FAMILIAL WRATH of God. That is prudence. That is wisdom. Thanks be to God. Let's pray together.