

Proverbs Chapter 12:

We continue following Solomon's fatherly advice to his son; conversely, God is using Solomon's pen to instruct us. Do you remember how Paul stated the principle of Scriptural authorship to Timothy? He wrote: *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;* 2nd Tim. 3:16 [NASB]

Proverbs 12:1: *Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.*

➤ **There is a right [godly] way and a wrong way of doing things in this life. God's way is not burdensome, although some religions attempt to burden "would be" believers with many do's and don'ts. God has given us His indwelling Holy Spirit to bring about the needed course correction. It is not the job of the church to impose guilt on another believer; our job is to teach the Word. God's Spirit will then take that Word and reprove, correct, _____, and train each of us individually. The Spirit's goal is for us to grow to a point that we reflect the image of Christ; so that through *Heart knowledge of the Word, in all situations, we may react in a godly fashion. Matthew 11:29-30: *Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. [30] For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light.* [NLT]**

*** Head knowledge comes easily, we read and then memorize, but the job of God's indwelling Spirit is to take that head knowledge and bring it into an agreement with the new nature that God has placed in each of us who have been born again, making it heart knowledge.**

Compiler's notes: a meaningful example of this can be found in the tithe. God expects us to tithe ---WILLINGLY. He doesn't need our money; it is our adherence to the generosity of the new nature within us that interests Him. For the child of God, our attitude should be one of privilege; our heavenly Father trusts our discretion to correctly administer 90% of

what already belongs to Him. He expects us to return at least the other 10%. Some ministers attempt to **compel tithing** by guilt by using a passage of Law found in Malachi; rather than simply teach the principle found in that Law, allowing room for the Holy Spirit of God to work. They will preach Malachi 3:8: "*Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' In tithes and offerings.* [NASB] Elders should be preaching from Scriptures that teach the principle of the tithe, like the words of Jacob who was before the Law; "*of all that Thou dost give me I will surely give a tenth to Thee.*" Genesis 28:22[NASB] What does God expect from His family? He expects a freewill offering that says, "I trust the Father to meet all of my needs."

Proverbs 12:2: *A good man will obtain favor from the Lord, but He will condemn a man who devises evil.*

I am sure that Solomon sat at the feet of his father David listening to Psalm 1, and perhaps it would be a good idea if we quietly sat at the feet of God, our heavenly Father, and receive the counsel of His indwelling Spirit: Psalm 1:1-6: *Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with scoffers. [2] But they delight in doing everything the Lord wants; day and night they think about his law. [3] They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season without fail. Their leaves never wither, and in all they do, they prosper. [4] But this is not true of the wicked. They are like worthless chaff, scattered by the wind. [5] They will be condemned at the time of judgment. Sinners will have no place among the godly. [6] For the Lord watches over the path of the godly, but the path of the wicked leads to destruction. [NLT]*

➤ **A godly man will obtain _____ from the Lord, while the wicked are _____ed_. The second most difficult part of a minister's job is to bring comfort to the family of a deceased person who was known to be wicked.**

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

Let's look again at Psalm 1:3, this time in the NASB. This proverb is clearly defined by verses 3 through 6. The _____ man cannot be uprooted or moved, even by a torrent of malice; rather, . . . *he will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.* Psalm 1:3: [NASB]

Our Lord Jesus addressed the principle of the contrast between the righteous and the wicked in Matthew 7:24-27: *"Anyone who listens to my teaching and obeys me is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. [25] Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse, because it is built on rock. [26] But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. [27] When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will fall with a mighty crash."* [NLT]

Psalm 1 continues; the wicked ^[4] . . . *are like the chaff which the wind drives away,* ^[5] *Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, *nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.* ^[6] . . . *But the way of the wicked will perish.* [NASB]

* I believe this points to what the apostle John writes about in Rev. 7:9 those who are righteous, "washed in the Word of the Lord". It reads; *After this, I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white and held palm branches in their hands.* [NLT]

Rev. 22:14: *Blessed are those who wash their robes so they can enter through the gates of the city and eat the fruit from the tree of life.* [NLT]

Solomon now goes on to give his son some advice about the taking of a wife. This is a subject about which Solomon knows a great deal.

Compiler's notes: Solomon . . . *had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines*. Just because the Word of God records sin, it does not imply that God endorses it, or in this instance, the act of polygamy. Scripture teaches that God has established for humankind, a monogamous relationship between a man and a woman. Notice what happened to Solomon as he indulged himself in these polygamous relationships; *and sure enough, they led his heart away from the Lord.* ^{1st Kings 11:3 [NLT]} Solomon's struggle with doubt and idolatry is recorded in the book of Ecclesiastes.

Proverbs 12:4: *An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who shames him is like rottenness in his bones.*

Our Bible gives many wonderful examples of excellent wives that could be regaled as queens to their husbands, a _____ to the marriage. But for a moment I'd like to examine the negative side, illustrated by a queen's daughter that is rarely taught about, the epitome of _____. This would be Athaliah, the daughter of Queen Jezebel. Her son was **King Ahaziah of Judah*. Reading from -- When she learned of her son's death; *she set out to destroy the rest of Judah's royal family.* ^[11] *But Ahaziah's sister Jehosheba, the daughter of King Jehoram, took Ahaziah's infant son, Joash, and stole him away from among the rest of the king's children, who were about to be killed. She put Joash and his nurse in a bedroom. In this way, Jehosheba, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, hid the child so that Athaliah could not murder him.* ^[12] *Joash remained hidden in the Temple of God for six years while Athaliah ruled over the land.* ^{2 Chron. 22:10-12 [NLT]}

* The evil of Jezebel became generational, passed on by Jezebel to her daughter and then her daughter's son, King Ahaziah: *And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab had done, because he was a son-in-law of the house of Ahab.* ^{2 Kings 8:27 [NASB]}

Over the years, the followers of wicked Athaliah had broken into the Temple of God, and they had used all the dedicated things from the Temple of the Lord to worship the images of Baal. ^{2 Chron. 24:7 [NLT]}

Compiler's note: we all like a good story, where good wins out over evil and the bad guy gets what's coming to him. Although it is not the end of the generational wickedness of Jezebel, it does have a fitting ending concerning Athaliah. *So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was peaceful because Athaliah had been killed.* ^{2nt Chron. 23:21 [NLT]} **Don't be misled. Remember that you can't ignore God and get away with it. You will always reap what you sow!** ^{Galatians 6:7 [NLT]}

Proverbs 12:5-7: *The thoughts of the **righteous** are just, But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful. ⁶ The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.⁷ The wicked are overthrown and are no more, But the house of the righteous will stand.*

➤ **These are contrasting couplets that clearly define God's approval of the _____, and His contempt for those who hold no regard of godly principles.**

Proverbs 12:8: *A man will be praised according to his **insight**, but one of perverse **mind** will be despised.*

➤ **God will praise the Christians when we acquiesce to the course-correcting, mind-renewing _____ of His Holy Spirit that tabernacle within us. At the same time, He will despise the perverse, flesh-trained _____ that yields to the rebellious bent of our old nature.**

Proverbs 12:9: *Better is he who is lightly **esteemed** and has a servant than he who honors himself and lacks bread.*

To correctly understand the significance of this proverb perhaps we have to understand the social confines within which Solomon penned it. In that day, to have a servant was a sign of prosperity. It is better to have a

servant and yet be considered of little importance amongst your peers than to be a self-aggrandized person who has nothing to eat.

➤ **Bringing this parable into the New Testament, we are called to be servants of our Lord Jesus, and to serve the gospel to those with no position in the kingdom, This, without regard to our personal self- _____.** Jesus said: ***But among you, it should be quite different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, [27] and whoever wants to be first must become your slave.*** Matthew 20:26-27 [NLT] He goes on to say in Matthew 23:11: ***The greatest among you must be a servant.*** [NLT] Matthew 20:28

The greatest example of all is again discovered through the life of our Lord Jesus, *who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,* Philip. 2:6 [NASB] . . . ***the Son of Man [Jesus] did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.***" Matthew 20:28 [NASB]

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

The story has been told of an old dog named Blue who grew up with a boy named Ronnie. Dogs of course, age much quicker than people, so by the time Ronnie was twelve, old Blue was old, crippled up and had developed an incurable disease. The time had come when the father told Ronnie, "that his lifelong companion had reached the end of the road and it would be kinder to take Blue to the vet's and have him put to sleep." The Dad knowing the bond between the boy and the dog asked if the boy wanted to accompany his old buddy Blue, on his final journey. The young fellow agreed and they began the road trip. At the vet's, Blue was gently lifted up on the surgical table, and a needle was inserted as Blue wagged his tail for the final time.

After leaving the vet's office, the Dad inquired if Ronnie "wanted to talk about what just happened."

To the father's surprise, Ronnie answered; "Nah! I guess dogs just learn to love much quicker than people and God doesn't have to leave them here on earth as long."

- **Most folks are compassionate people, even many who do not know Jesus as their Lord and Savior; it sometimes is easier to show our kindness toward mistreated animals than toward other humans. God compares this heartfelt compassion that you, a _____ person, have just experienced when you read the story of Ronnie and his dog against that of the hard-heartedness, of the wicked.**

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

- **Because of our bent-on rebellion against godly principles, the direction that we choose naturally, through our old nature, God has removed mankind from the status of school children dependent on the support of parents; parents who meet all of the child's needs. God has decreed this so that we don't expend our energy in pursuit of _____ things; we are to work and labor for them until graduation day, when we go to be with Him.**

Solomon, and by proxy God the Father, offers good advice to His children; that's you and me by the way if you have received Jesus as your Lord and Savior. This goes back to what God told Adam on the day that Adam rebelled. Genesis 3:17-19 . . . *Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil, you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ^[18] "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field; ^[19] By the sweat of your face You shall eat bread, till you return to the ground . . . [NASB]*

Compiler's meandering: I managed a flock of goats for years. In the beginning, I was surprised to find that goats, despite the popular notion, are finicky eaters. Do you know what the favorite food plants of goats are? You guessed it, it's "thorns and thistles." Perhaps there is an analogy hidden in this fact

but this rabbit trail eludes me. If you have insight, please let me know.

Paul brings this principle forward into the New Covenant; *Even while we were with you, we gave you this rule: "Whoever does not work should not eat."* 2nd Thes. 3:10 [NLT]

Proverbs 12:12: *The wicked man desires the booty of evil men, but the root of the righteous yields * fruit.*

➤ The translator's choice of the word booty, in today's vernacular, renders thoughts of ill-gotten gain, which makes the passage difficult to correctly comprehend. The Hebrew word used for booty is the word **matsowd**, {*maw-tsode'*} ; literally a net for capturing animals or a snare. So a good rendering could be: wicked men desire to use snares and tools crafted by the ingenuity of entities more devious than themselves, while righteous men depend on God (the root of our faith) to _____ fruit.

* While The word "fruit" is not actually found in the manuscripts, the context of the preceding word "**nathan**, {*naw-than'*}" is used with great latitude of application and allows the product of the yield to be Fruit, obviously relating to a previously studied passage in Proverbs 11:30: *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls.* [NASB]

Proverbs 12:13-14: *An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous will escape from trouble. ¹⁴ A man will be satisfied with **good** by the fruit of his words, and the deeds of a man's hands will return to him.*

➤ A man wiser than I once said, "God gave a man two ears and one mouth because we should listen twice as much as we talk." A proverb of my youth was "if you don't have something _____ to say, say nothing at all"; that is still pretty good advice, by the way. Paul goes on to define gossip as a trait of the unsaved and not that of a person who claims to walk in the footsteps of our Savior. Romans 1:28-32 lumps gossips in with other heinous attributes of the

wicked: *When they refused to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their evil minds and let them do things that should never be done.* ^[29] *Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, fighting, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip.* ^[30] *They are backstabbers, haters of God, insolent, proud, and boastful. They are forever inventing new ways of sinning and are disobedient to their parents.* ^[31] *They refuse to understand, break their promises, and are heartless and unforgiving.* ^[32] *They are fully aware of God's death penalty for those who do these things, yet they go right ahead and do them anyway. And, worse yet, they encourage others to do them, too.* ^[NLT]

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

The principle of repetition is evident here; we covered a similar Proverb in chapter 10 and verse 8: *The wise of heart will receive commands, but a babbling fool will be thrown down.* ^[NASB] God also makes this proverb applicable to the leadership of a nation in Proverbs 11:14: *Without wise leadership, a nation falls; with many counselors, there is safety.* ^[NLT] We will again touch on this in Proverbs 15:22, 20:18 and 24:6.

➤ **These are Solomon's words to one of his sons; sadly, he overlooks a serious flaw in human nature, it is subtle, but it is here! The way of a fool is right in his _____ eyes! The suicide bomber who willingly sacrifices many innocent lives in a crowded market place, believes very deeply that what he is doing is _____. What Solomon neglected to teach his son is that the guidance must be godly counsel. The suicide bomber receives counsel from depraved men who are lost in their own disillusionment. Solomon's Son and heir, King Rehoboam, followed ungodly counsel and created a division in the nation of Israel.**

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

- This proverb points to several of the God-given attributes included in our new nature and found in all re-born persons; they are patience, gentleness, and long-suffering. If you're at all like me, I wear my emotion like a marquee, so that in most situations, I must mentally refocus my mind on "whose I am," and who I represent at the table. The un-renewed mind parades his _____, while the ambassador of Christ remains calm when insulted. My mind, which chemically controls my emotions, doesn't always agree with my new nature, comparatively, it is as immature as teenagers in contrast to their more experienced parents. Eventually, through the sanctifying power of His Spirit, I will begin to think more and more like the Christ that is within me. Ephes. 4:15: *but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,* ^[NASB] and as my thought comes into agreement with my new nature, it will translate into godly, physical behavior.

Proverbs 12:17: *He who speaks truth tells what is **right**, but a false witness, deceit.*

- Truthfulness is one of the hallmarks of Christ, and we are to grow and mature into His attributes. While we are in the process of changing, it doesn't hurt us to remember the way we used to be when we walked and talked through our old nature. We live in a world that thrives on deceit and we need to now live above it, speaking what is _____ and in _____.

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

- Again, our Lord brings us back to two attributes of the new nature that He has placed in born again believers, *patience, and long-suffering*. When we speak out of anger, we drive away any hope of bringing the person to whom we are addressing closer to the Kingdom. We need to think calmly before we speak and remember that we are

ambassadors of our Christ. In so doing, we should use words that bring _____.

Proverbs 12:19: *Truthful lips will be established forever, but a lying **tongue** is only for a moment. ²⁰ Deceit is in the **heart** of those who devise evil, but counselors of peace have joy. ²¹ No harm befalls the righteous, but the wicked are filled with trouble.*

➤ The previous proverbs are defined a bit more, all of which have to do with the _____. The tongue often reveals what is in the _____. James, our Lord's physical half-brother, has a lot to say about the tongue; probably by personal experience, about which, I am sure he had many regrets. Do you recall this instance, as Jesus was becoming known, and large crowds began to follow Him? *When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him home with them. "He's out of his mind," they said.*

Mark 3:21 [NLT]

Perhaps it was his personal familiarity, and the words that cannot be unsaid, that enabled James to write through the inspiration of God's Spirit --- *And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is full of wickedness that can ruin your whole life. It can turn the entire course of your life into a blazing flame of destruction, for it is set on fire by hell itself.* James 3:6 [NLT]

James 3:8: *but no one can tame the tongue. It is an uncontrollable evil, full of deadly poison.* [NLT]

Peter is perhaps also quoting a scriptural passage that relates to his personal experience, involving his denial and ultimate forgiveness, in 1st Peter 3:10: *For the Scriptures say, "If you want a happy life and good days, keep your tongue from speaking evil, and keep your lips from telling lies.* [NLT]

Proverbs 12:22: *Lying lips are an **abomination** to the Lord, but those who deal **faithfully** are His delight.*

- **Need we examine the many reasons for a person telling a lie? Most often it is used for personal gain, position, or power. The late Johnny Cash once sang a song about a prison uprising where one of the uninvolved prisoners callously says (speaking of a fallen inmate), "let me stand on his body to see what all the shoutin's about". God considers the person who lies for advantage, an _____, while those who _____ hold on to truth are a delight to Him.**

Proverbs 12:23: *A prudent man conceals **knowledge**, but the heart of **fools** proclaims folly.*

- **Discretion is needed here; sometimes the blatant truth will only serve to hurt someone. I am sure that we can all think of times when it is prudent to withhold _____. I was with my wife when all four of my children were born, each after exhausting labor. I will tell you now, that when that baby comes out, covered with slime and gore, it is anything but cuddly, knowledge that I willfully withheld when my fatigued wife would ask about how beautiful the baby was. The nurse would clean and wrap the babies, and in those few moments their skin would color up, then she would hand my wife a perfectly formed, beautiful pink baby. Can you imagine what a _____ I would have been to describe truthfully what my eyes were actually seeing as the infant emerged with the umbilical cord still attached, and the head misshapen by squeezing through the birth canal?**

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

This proverb doesn't always work in the natural or in the post-Christian era of our society today where too often lazy people are put into power, but it does remain applicable in the spiritual realm. Paul writes in Romans 6:16: *Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, **you are slaves of the one whom you***

*obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in **righteousness**?* ^[NASB] He goes on to say in 2nd Tim. 2:12: *If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us.* ^[NASB]

- **When we graduate from this school of physical life by _____ obedience to the Spirit; the One who renews our carnal minds into conformity with that of Christ, resulting in _____; then we shall, one day, _____ with Him.**

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

- **The instruction here appears to be for the person who encounters another with a heavy _____. As Christians, we are to offer kind and comforting words, since our hope is found in no one else but our Lord Jesus. It would seem practical that those words of comfort can be found in the Word He has left behind.**

Compiler's note: we should keep in mind that we have two ears and one mouth, listening may be twice as important in helping another to relieve their burden.

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

- **A principle that is found in the Law and brought forth into the New Testament, as recorded in 1st Peter 1:16, reads: *because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am Holy."* ^[NASB] The word holy means to be "set apart". New Covenant _____ people have set themselves apart to God by a covenant, whereby we accept the sacrificial death of Jesus in place of our own sin debt. We request His indwelling presence in the person of His Holy Spirit, who then imparts a new nature within us, and we begin the life long course of being renewed into the image of Christ. While on this earth, we function as ambassadors of Christ, _____s_ for**

others, along the narrow path that leads to eternal life with Him.

Paul writes in 2nd Cor. 5:20: *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.* [NASB]

Galatians 5:22-23: *But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law.* [NLT]

Romans 12:1-2: *And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? [2] Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.* [NLT]

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

➤ When I read this proverb, it points to a particular behavior that was unique to my experience, and I am sure that if you think over your own life, you will recall an apropos example of your own. Years back I lived and preached in the Laurel Highlands of Pennsylvania; it was a prime hunting area for the folks from the cities, miles away, in the lowland areas. What would disgust the locals, and still does, is to find a deer carcass with only the hindquarters and of course the trophy horns removed Unlike my mountain neighbors, these _____ people failed to exercise _____ by utilizing all that God had provided, making no effort to haul the entire animal back to their vehicle. The

spiritual application here is that we must never **become lazy** in our renewing. By that I mean, taking Him for granted, so familiar with God that we lack the **diligence** to continually pursue our transformation into a Christ-like being.

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

➤ If we look at the previous Proverbs (12:27) from a spiritual perspective, the lazy man would be akin to an agnostic. He is somebody who believes it is impossible to know **whether or not God exists**, and is usually somebody who doubts that a question has only one correct answer. This leads him to adopt only what he cares to haul through life. May I say this? There is a God and **His principles for _____ are clearly defined in His Word**, but the _____ is narrow and **requires some diligence** to gain entrance. Even then, once through it, we must keep our focus on Jesus through His Word so as not follow a detour onto the "broad" way. The enemy of our souls works hard to make the detour appear to be the easier path to the same destination. The aforementioned agnostic or atheist takes the easy, **broad** way or chooses never to make an effort to leave it. This is his free-will choice, yet it is a bad one, for God's Word says it leads to an eternal _____.

Romans 1:20: *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, **His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*** [NASB]

Matthew 7:13: *"**Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it.*** [NASB]

Luke 13:24: *"**Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.*** [NASB]