

Proverbs 16: God's Situational Handbook.

We continue in this chapter like the proverbial fly on the wall, auditing King Solomon's instruction to his son as he prepares him for real life. These admonitions are recorded in God's Word so that we may, by proxy, assimilate and relate these principles in our own godly walk as we progress through the University of Hard Knocks toward a degree using God's situational handbook.

Proverbs 16:1: *The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.*

- **As Christians, we retain our free will in a manner no different than the unsaved person who is guided by his old nature. However, there is one major difference, by our request and permission, God has placed His Holy Spirit in us for guidance and renewing; bringing our flesh trained minds into an agreement with our new natures and its godly attitudes. Our strategies belong to us; we are free to make _____ and free to make errors of decision. For the Christian, as we learn to listen to His indwelling, convicting Spirit, it becomes obvious to us that while God has prepared our new nature for every good work, we become conscious that through our flesh trained un-renewed minds, we are not sufficient of ourselves to think or speak anything wise, good or godly. It is only as we learn to think and speak listening to the voice of His Holy Spirit within that we can become apt representatives of The Messiah.**

Proverbs 16:2: *All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the Lord weighs the motives.*

- **We seem to have a self-justifying problem when it comes to our own perspective about our own affairs, but our God knows the _____ of the natural born man's heart. Luke 16:15: *Then he said to them, "You like to look good in public, but God knows your evil hearts. What this world honors is an abomination in the sight of God.* [NLT]**

Sometimes we try and justify our self-elevating willfulness by pleading ignorance. Proverbs covers this in

chapter 21 and in Proverbs 24:12: *Don't try to avoid responsibility by saying you didn't know about it. For God knows all hearts, and he sees you. He keeps watch over your soul, and he knows you knew! And he will judge all people according to what they have done.* ^[NLT]

Proverbs 16:3: ****Commit** your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established.*

➤ It is a very un-human thing to do, to dump all of our plans on God and simply allow Him to unfold our potentials, even though we know He'll do it with our best interest at stake. By our very nature we want to worry, plan, plot and format our tomorrows, and unlike God, without the slightest idea what the future might bring. The word _____ in the Hebrew is the word **galal*, {*gaw-lal'*}, which means to roll away or roll over. We are to roll our anxieties and affairs over to Him. Jesus said in Matthew 6:25: "*So I tell you, don't worry about everyday life— whether you have enough food, drink, and clothes. Doesn't life consist of more than food and clothing?*" ^[NLT]

When we roll our concerns over to Him, we can have peace about tomorrow. Matthew 6:34: "*So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.*" ^[NLT] I imagine that Jesus' disciples would have been labeled wacky religious zealots by their contemporaries and denigrated, as Bible believers. In our post-Christian society, Jesus' words to them were as applicable then, as they are to us today. John 14:1 "*Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.*" ^[NASB]

Proverbs 16:4: *The Lord has made **everything** for its own **purpose**, even the **wicked** for the day of evil.*

➤ Back in the '60s, it was a popular saying among the peaceniks, to parrot the phrase, —" I am going to go and look

for myself," meaning in some nebulous way that they were going to try a change of lifestyle. What would be great is if some churchgoers would adopt that philosophy and try and live up to the old but practical catechism which states; *"the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."* Proverbs restate it by declaring that our God has made _____ for his own purpose and everything refers to folks like you and me, including all of the unregenerate people that inhabit the campus of earth. Psalm 76:10 puts it like this: *Human opposition only enhances Your glory, for You use it as a sword of judgment.* [NLT]

➤ Is that a true statement? Well, all that we have to do is to take a moment and listen in on God's conversation through Moses, as He confronts Pharaoh, demanding that Pharaoh let His people go. Exodus 9:14-16: *If you don't, I will send a plague that will really speak to you and your officials and all the Egyptian people. I will prove to you that there is no other God like me in all the earth.* ^[15] *I could have killed you all by now. I could have attacked you with a plague that would have wiped you from the face of the earth.* ^[16] *But I have let you live for this reason—that you might see my power and that my fame might spread throughout the earth.* [NLT] Both the _____ and Satan are mere tools in the hands of our God as He works out His own goals and _____. That purpose, my friends, is that God desires to separate for Himself a people; a people who will willingly choose to love Him and with whom, He will love in return, for the rest of eternity.

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

Perhaps it is time to bring up Isaiah 57:12: *"Now I will expose your so-called good deeds that you consider so righteous. None of them will benefit or save you.* [NLT] *Isaiah 64:6: We are all infected and impure with sin. When we proudly display our righteous deeds, we find they are but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall. And our sins, like the wind, sweep us away.* [NLT]

➤ The justice of God demands a penalty for sin – for every transgression the penalty is death. Paul records the principle of the Law like this in Romans 6:23: *for the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* ^[NASB] As Isaiah so directly stated our human dilemma, *all of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way.* . . . *^[NASB] The _____ heart is one that resists acknowledging the absolute authority of our Creator over our lives. God, knowing the human propensity toward sin and rebellion provided a suitable sacrifice to cover our sin debt through the humiliating death and blood offering of Christ Jesus. . . . *But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.* * ^{Isaiah 53:6 [NASB]}

When we accept Christ's propitiation in our place as payment for our sin debt, He will mark the accumulated debt paid in full; and create in us a new nature filled with His attributes, guided by His Holy Spirit. The Spirit will then take up residence in each of us, and with our acquiescence, bring our flesh-trained minds into agreement with our new nature so that we may love as Christ loved, and live as He did; overcoming our old nature, putting it to death, one minuscule bit at a time as we mentally conform to the attributes of our new nature.

Proverbs 16:6: *By loving-kindness and truth, iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil.*

➤ When we fail to remain on the narrow path, the problem usually stems from a lack of our _____ of the Lord. You may say that "I could not help myself, or the devil made me do it", God's Word finds you to be self-deceived! 1st Cor. 10:13, clearly states; *No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.* ^[NASB]

Compiler's note: In my opinion and according to my understanding of the book of Job {ee-yobe'}, temptation is a tool that God allows Satan to use, or enhance, since —forbidden fruit|| has its own allure to our old nature and un-renewed mindset. Through our personal victory and our overcoming temptation by the course correcting guidance of His Holy Spirit, we are sanctified (made holy) as we become more like Jesus.

Proverbs 16:7: *When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

➤ This is a proverb that can be interpreted in several ways but only one that is contextually aligned with the rest of Scripture. We know that if we share the gospel we will gather _____. They will not be at peace with us. Jesus said in John 15:18: *"When the world hates you, remember it hated me before it hated you.* ^[NLT] So the common understanding of this passage cannot be true. When we become ambassadors of Christ, the world will hate us. The best way to understand this passage so as not to create a conflict is as I stated in the compiler's notes above, as we have submitted to the renewing of our minds, and our mindset, for the most part, comes into agreement with our new nature, then it will no longer be necessary for our Lord to use the wiles of His enemy and ours, to tempt us. Like Job {eejobe'}, when we reach understanding and a level of maturity, God will bless us instead.

Compiler's note: do you remember when you were growing up how course correction never came easy. From a mature perspective, we can now see the wisdom of that process. As we gained a measure of correct thinking, the amount of discipline that our parents needed to administer diminished; the same is true of God, Paul tells us in Colossians 3:10: *In its place you have clothed yourselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed as you learn more and more about Christ, who created this new nature within you.* ^[NLT]

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

- The world's view holds that —more is better. But our God desires _____ or right thinking when we will begin to exhibit that, He will bless us with much treasure, in heaven, *where moth and rust do not destroy*. Paul writes to Timothy and by proxy, God to us; *Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need; always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them.* ^[19] *By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life.* 1 Tim. 6:18-19 [NLT]

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

- This is a repeat of 16:1, so it must be very important, God does not waste ink. The mind can make plans, but for the Christian, as we are being sanctified, we need to learn to allow our Lord to _____ our steps. Our _____, like our minds, must come into agreement with His. Romans 12:2: *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 16:10: *A divine decision is in the lips of the king; his mouth should not err in judgment.*

- Of course, in America, we don't have a king, but the proverb would be applicable to our political leaders had we not perverted the doctrine of —separation of church and state. Jefferson, along with other founding fathers, by experience, understood the dangers of a governmentally endorsed denomination, as the history of the Catholic Church in England, or the Islamizing of nations will attest; but that is a discussion for another time and place. Suffice it to say, if our politicians were to adhere to the Christian principles upon which this nation was founded, we would not be seeing the perversion of justice that we have today. Relying on God's indwelling Spirit;

our political and religious leaders would not _____ in their judgment.

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

- **Righteous thought is not just to be the purview of politician and apostate religious leaders; God expects our integrity in the workplace as well. Here, He is using the free-market work environment as an example, illustrated by the _____. Honest balance weights are also of great _____; the taking of adverse advantage of another financially, for personal gain angers God.**

Proverbs 16:12: *It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness, for a throne is established on righteousness.*

- **We may ask —why do I care about kings, I live in a republic. Good question, especially if you are in a position of authority. God’s expectations for a king are no different than what He expects from any politician, or you and me for that matter, God establishes their leadership based on _____. Just as it is with us common folk, for elected officials to commit wickedness is an _____ in God’s sight. King Solomon’s writing is self-condemning, by his personal experience. At this juncture in his life, he knows that *God establishes nations and He determines the course of world events; he removes kings and sets others on the throne. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the scholars.* Daniel 2:21 [NLT]**

In a similar manner to Solomon’s epiphany, the eighty-one-year-old Ben Franklin asserted, *“the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this Truth--that God governs in the Affairs of Men. ...*

Proverbs 16:13: *Righteous lips are the delight of kings, and he who speaks right is loved.*

- **Spoken truth is a _____ to kings, but especially to the King of Kings, our Lord Jesus. Solomon’s**

father, King David, learned firsthand the truth of this principle through his child born to Bathsheba, possibly leading David to write in Psalm 15:1-2: *Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? [2] Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. [NLT]* David confirms God's expectation of truthfulness in Psalm 25:5. Today we understand that Christ, the living Word is the epitome of truth, so we can join in King David's prayer, *Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you.* Psalm 25:5 [NLT]

Proverbs 16:14-15: *The wrath of a king is as messengers of death, but a wise man will appease it. [15] In the light of a king's face is life, and his favor is like a cloud with the spring rain.*

- **The King that we need to fear is King Jesus. Obedience to Him and His word is our only hope of averting the second death. Jesus said in John 14:15, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. [NASB] and again in Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. [NASB]** Citizenship in heaven is a free gift from God through the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross; that is, His blood for our pardon. To receive it we must _____ the gift giver by our Love and obedience for there is much more to our eternal salvation than just the forgiveness of our sin debt. Christ made it possible for mankind to again be indwelt by His Spirit and be transformed into the image of His Son.

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

- **Wisdom is better than gold, this may reference the wise person from the previous proverb, those who *appease* our Lord by aligning our will with that of His. What is interesting is the second part of this verse; _____ is to be chosen above silver or is more important than simply redemption through forgiveness. Throughout Scripture silver symbolically**

represents redemption. Understanding comes from His indwelling Holy Spirit as the Spirit takes the Word of God and teaches us how to apply it to our lives. As true believers we must accept the forgiveness offered through the cross of Christ first, that we may be, in God's eyes clean vessels - vessels that His Holy Spirit can work through; therefore, the greater gift is not merely —forgiveness but to acquire understanding by being baptized with His Spirit. John the Baptizer, who preached and baptized for repentance, reveals this truth in Matthew 3:11 *when he states: but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.* ^[NASB]

Compiler's note: Our faith and trust in God, in all situations that confront us on earth's campus of real life, are built through our understanding of His living Word. Romans 10:17 tells us; *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.* ^[NIV] It is as His Holy Spirit reveals the truth of the Word that our faith is established, and that is not without purpose. Ephes. 5:26 speaks of the church and we are His tabernacle (where the Spirit of God dwells)! His reason for indwelling us with His mind-renewing Holy Spirit is *to make her [us, you and me] holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,* ^[NIV] James 1:18 informs us that our new birth and sanctification comes through His Word. *He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.* ^[NIV]

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

➤ Do you remember back in Proverbs 16:6 where we spoke of the —*narrow path*? Jesus said the exit ramp to that narrow path off of the broad highway that leads to destruction is also very narrow. We must make an effort to get around the barricades that Satan has set up to prevent our access to that gate. Humanity is born on Satan's expressway to destruction. Christ came that we can find the gate which will enable us to depart his _____ to hell. Matthew 7:14: ***"For the gate***

is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it. [NASB]

Proverbs 16:18-19: ***Pride** goes before **destruction**, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.*

- **Need I cite examples of this? I think not! This is a proverb that should guide every Christian's life. I can't count the number of preachers who have fallen victim to _____.** I also fear for our nation, it seems that we have forgotten the One who has established us. We, as a nation, need to quickly humble ourselves before our Creator delivers us to _____.

Compiler's note: Pride is one of those things that is on our God's Hate list. We have already read about, and we will come across 16 more passages, in Proverbs alone, that deal with our —pride|| problem. Pride is that very thing that brought down Satan. It seems to be the byproduct of free will. Satan was probably the most developed creature that God has ever created, and then sin was found in him, a byproduct of his —free-will. Isaiah 14:12-13: "*How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! You have been thrown down to the earth, you who destroyed the nations of the world. [13] For you said to yourself, 'I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God's stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north.*" [NLT]

Proverbs 16:20: *He who gives attention to the **word** shall find good and blessed is he who trusts in the Lord.*

- **Did you know that the _____ of God has cleansing power? As Christians, we are to bathe daily . . . *cleansed . . . by the washing of water with the word,*** Ephesians 5:26 [NASB] **We are to bathe in the Word of God. Hebrews 10:22; *let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*** [NASB] **As we have discussed in an earlier study, His indwelling Spirit communes with our minds through the**

Word of God. Jesus tells His disciples in John 16:15, and by proxy you and me; *All that the Father has is mine; this is what I mean when I say that the Spirit will reveal to you whatever he receives from me.* ^[NLT] Jesus is the Word made flesh -- John 1:1 identifies the Word as God. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* ^[NASB] A few verses later, John speaks of the incarnation, where Jesus, the Word, born through the Virgin Mary, becomes flesh and blood. *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.* ^{John 1:14: [NASB]}

Proverbs 16:20-22: *The wise in heart will be called discerning, and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness.* ^[22] **Understanding** is a fountain of life to him who has it, but the discipline of **fools** is folly.

➤ The _____ are known for their understanding because they respond to their new nature and the Fruit of His Spirit that is a part of that nature. When a sanctified person speaks, his instruction will be appreciated if it's well presented, backed up by that speaker's _____ of the Word. Through God's Spirit, the discerning witness can offer a fountain of life. If the recipient of that Word refuses to accept the free gift of new life, walk away, *Matthew 10:14: "And whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake off the dust of your feet."* ^[NASB] Discipline is wasted on _____.

Proverbs 16:23: *The heart of the wise teaches his mouth and adds persuasiveness to his lips.*

➤ We have just read how the Spirit of God addresses our cognitive thought process resulting in our ability to communicate His Word. God's indwelling Spirit _____ us what to say, and how and with whom to express ourselves. He adds _____ and articulation to our voice.

Proverbs 16:24: ***Pleasant** words are a honeycomb, sweet to the **soul** and healing to the bones.*

- **Our broadcast news today seems to concentrate on bad news, a disaster here, and a murder there. It can be depressing to the _____; however, the Bible is filled with hope and good news. That is what the gospel means—good news. There is acceptance, forgiveness, and blessing throughout the Word of God. As Ambassadors of Christ, we need to share these _____ words. Better now with our voice, then later with flowers at a funeral. One neat epigram states, Prevent truth decay. Brush up on your Bible.**

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

- **We covered this proverb back in 14:12. I believe that our Lord realizes how hardheaded humans can be. Some wise person once said, —Repetition is the mother of knowledge.|| We are so easily deceived by Satan and his minions, believing his lie, we remain on the smooth fast expressway, garishly labeled – heaven this way, rather than brave, exiting via the narrow gate, and traveling the narrow _____, which really does lead to heaven and eternal life.**

Proverbs 16:26: *A worker's **appetite** works for him, for his hunger urges him on.*

- **This is one of those proverbs that illustrate how well our Designer knows us. It is also why Communism doesn't work. In that system of governance, as well as Socialism, the incentive to produce, other than by a fear of severe discipline, is removed. A person's _____ for success will motivate them. Fear only intensifies personal rebellion, causing the worker to produce as little as he can get away with.**

Proverbs 16:27: *A worthless man digs up evil, while his words are as a scorching fire. ^[28] A perverse man spreads strife and a **slanderer** separates intimate friends.*

- You may recall that gossip is one of those behaviors that makes it onto God's hate list; so much so that He has Paul lump the transgression in with murderers and other malicious behavior, according to Romans 1:29: *Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, fighting, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip.* ^[NLT] Our Lord recognizes the human motive behind _____, stating the principle and its prohibition in His Law. Leviticus 19:16: *"Do not spread slanderous gossip among your people. Do not try to get ahead at the cost of your neighbor's life, for I am the Lord.* ^[NLT]

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

- We need only to watch the news, observing the mesmerizing power that some of these Islamic terrorists seem to hold over the minds of our young folks, as they _____ them to do violence without regard for the innocent; in the name of -- anticipating the speculative blessing of their god.

Proverbs 16:30: *He who winks his eyes does so to devise perverse things; He who compresses his lips brings evil to pass.*

- Hmmm . . ., the language is getting a bit out of date here. Let's think of it this way; the _____ of the eye usually involves a co-conspirator or a second agenda, and neither is above-board as they _____ their perversity. Together they are plotting something evil, and without a word, they plan their mischief.

Proverbs 16:31: *A gray head is a crown of glory; it is found in the way of righteousness.*

- For the children of God, here lies the single benefit to getting old and _____. The foolish enthusiasm of our youth has passed, and in mellow thought, we can contemplate all that we have learned at the University of Earth as we continue to prepare for our graduation day.

Compiler's note: Someone has labeled the state of Florida as Heaven's waiting room.

Proverbs 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.*

- **As we are being sanctified through the course correction of God's indwelling Holy Spirit, our minds will come into agreement with His, and we will react according to the Fruit of the Spirit. One of those is the ability to be _____ to anger. It will drive our adversaries, either nuts, or create in them a desire to gain what we have found, peace in light of an affliction.**

Proverbs 16:33: *The lot is cast into the lap, but its every **decision** is from the Lord.* [NASB]

- **The lot in Jesus' day was like a roll of the dice or the lottery, we may think of it as pure chance, but with God, the dice are loaded, don't be a fool and bet against Him. Every _____ about you and me, about our government, about our future; it is all in the hands of our Lord.**

By 1778, George Washington had so often witnessed God's intervention that on August 20, he wrote Thomas Nelson that: *The Hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations.*

We have read earlier a bit of this excerpt from -- Benjamin Franklin's motion for Prayers in the Constitutional Convention, June 28, 1787; but let's put it in context. *And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend? or do we imagine we no longer need its assistance? I have lived, Sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this Truth, that God governs in the Affairs of Men. And if a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without his Notice, is it probable that an Empire can rise without his Aid?"*

Now let's just take a moment and reflect back on our own lives. It has become obvious to me that not only has God been involved in the affairs of other men and governments, but in my insignificant life as well.

Glory to God in the Highest; may we all learn to fear Him, the Designer, the Creator; the Redeemer for all who will love and accept Him.