

## Proverbs chapter 15, God deals with our hearts.

**Proverbs 15:1:** *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

This is an attribute that I too often fail to practice, as probably do you. We know this truth in our hearts and, in our God-given new nature, but too often we still react with our flesh-trained minds. Dr. McGee, in Through the Bible Radio brings up Abigail and Nabal as an Old Testament example, one we can be sure that Solomon was aware of since Abigail became a wife of his father, King David. Let's take a moment and read the story in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 25:3-26 as it is interpreted in the **New Living Translation**:

*This man's name was Nabal, and his wife, Abigail, was a sensible and beautiful woman. But Nabal, a descendant of Caleb, was mean and dishonest in all his dealings. <sup>[4]</sup> When David heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep, <sup>[5]</sup> he sent ten of his young men to Carmel. He told them to deliver this message: <sup>[6]</sup> "Peace and prosperity to you, your family, and everything you own! <sup>[7]</sup> I am told that you are shearing your sheep and goats. While your shepherds stayed among us near Carmel, we never harmed them, and nothing was ever stolen from them. <sup>[8]</sup> Ask your own servants, and they will tell you this is true. So would you please be kind to us, since we have come at a time of celebration? Please give us any provisions you might have on hand." <sup>[9]</sup> David's young men gave this message to Nabal and waited for his reply.*

*<sup>[10]</sup> "Who is this fellow David?" Nabal sneered. "Who does this son of Jesse think he is? There are lots of servants these days who run away from their masters. <sup>[11]</sup> Should I take my bread and water and the meat I've slaughtered for my shearers and give it to a band of outlaws who come from who knows where?" <sup>[12]</sup> So David's messengers returned and told him what Nabal had said.*

**Nabal's words were harsh enough to bring David to the point of killing him.**

*<sup>[13]</sup> "Get your swords!" was David's reply as he strapped on his own. Four hundred men started off with David, and two hundred remained behind to guard their equipment.*

**Abigail interceded in an attempt to bring Nabal to his common sense:**

*[14] Meanwhile, one of Nabal's servants went to Abigail and told her, "David sent men from the wilderness to talk to our master, and he insulted them. [15] But David's men were very good to us, and we never suffered any harm from them. Nothing was stolen from us the whole time they were with us. [16] In fact, day and night they were like a wall of protection to us and the sheep. [17] You'd better think fast, for there is going to be trouble for our master and his whole family. He's so ill-tempered that no one can even talk to him!"*

**Realizing the futility of arguing with an idiot:**

*[18] Abigail lost no time. She quickly gathered two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, nearly a bushel of roasted grain, one hundred raisin cakes, and two hundred fig cakes. She packed them on donkeys and said to her servants, [19] "Go on ahead. I will follow you shortly." But she didn't tell her husband what she was doing.*

*[20] As she was riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, she saw David and his men coming toward her. [21] David had just been saying, "A lot of good it did to help this fellow. We protected his flocks in the wilderness, and nothing he owned was lost or stolen. But he has repaid me evil for good. [22] May God deal with me severely if even one man of his household is still alive tomorrow morning!"*

**Abigail was perceptive enough to know that a gentle answer turns away wrath:**

*[23] When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed low before him. [24] She fell at his feet and said, "I accept all blame in this matter, my lord. Please listen to what I have to say. [25] I know Nabal is a wicked and ill-tempered man; please don't pay any attention to him. He is a fool, just as his name suggests. But I never even saw the messengers you sent.*

*[26] "Now, my lord, as surely as the Lord lives and you yourself live, since the Lord has kept you from murdering and taking*

*vengeance into your own hands, let all your enemies be as cursed as Nabal is.*

- **We know the human proverb that it is always best to avoid politics and religion in any social setting, just as we know that the subject of Christ will probably engender harsh words, and yet our Lord commissions us to go and invite! How do we reconcile this dichotomy? As this proverb suggests, we can win more arguments and more people to Christ if we learn to always answer with \_\_\_\_\_ words.**

**Compiler's note:** within a workgroup, with which I am currently involved there is a lady who is an ideologue, a doctrinaire who can't resist dropping comments and innuendos for her cause and issues. When she realized that I was a Christian conservative, I became a pariah in her eyes, and I can see that it is beginning to affect the tone and body language that she uses when she addresses anything of that nature, as her eyes usually focus on me. Can I win her over by arguing? Can I even justify the principles that I stand on by arguing? Of course not, but my flesh wants to! I know in my heart that the better way is to simply ask, as a five-year-old would, Why? When I can do that in my kindest and most gentle voice....., it is like putting a cork in a bottle. If I exhibit calm demure, it will either drive her nuts or cause her to ask about the source of my assurance and my corresponding self-control, at which point I would be able to share my faith in Christ.

**Proverb 15:2:** *The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools' spouts folly.*

- **This ties into the previous verse; if we try and win a point by arguing it only provokes emotions that block otherwise \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge. Gentle words and a calm demeanor will open the door to share our faith.**

**Compiler's note:** I have found that when I am baited into a discussion about politics or Christianity, ideologues are not interested in converse knowledge;

they just want to spout their position. In other words, they don't want to dialog, they want to proselytize. In a recent discussion, in a group setting inappropriate for a political/religious discussion, I was incessantly challenged by a person who knew that my affiliation and points of view were diametrically opposite of hers. I offered to use Emails for a discourse, sharing our heartfelt beliefs. Two days later, after not receiving an Email from her, I was told, point blank, that she has sought the advice of a close affiliate, of like mind, and was advised not to enter any discussions with me. Since I was both a Christian and a conservative, she would not be able to change my mind. My job was done; Jesus told His disciples that were sent out: *If the people of the village won't receive your message when you enter it, shake off its dust from your feet as you leave. It is a sign that you have abandoned that village to its fate.*"

Luke 9:5 [NLT] God is a great respecter of free-will, He wants those that will come to him, to come willingly; we cannot argue a person into the kingdom, but we can continue to pray for them.

**Proverbs 15:3:** *The **eyes** of the Lord are in every place, watching the evil and the **good**.*

➤ Our Lord understands that we humans have a capacity for both good and evil while we live in this body of flesh, along with all of its carnal desires. This is why He has given us His Spirit as a guide and adjudicator so that we, who are born from above may be consistently aware of His presence; never forgetting that He is an observer of our deeds, both \_\_\_\_\_ and bad. There are no secret sins where our Lord is concerned; neither a good deed nor sin goes unnoticed, for His \_\_\_\_\_ are everywhere.

**Proverbs 15:4:** *A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but **perversion** in it **crushes** the spirit.*

➤ I had to think about this a while before I understood a possible application common to our lives today. A soothing tongue is one that can bring comfort, godly counsel, even occasional self-deprecating humor, depending on the situation. It can bring healing to wounded consciences or it

can be used to reconcile parties at odds with one another. Humor is often used to lighten an unhappy situation, but when it becomes crass, coarse, or inappropriate, its \_\_\_\_\_ undermines our witness of Christ in the mind of the hearer. We need to always use our tongues to encourage others as we portray Jesus, the *Tree of Life*, with carefully chosen words. Harmful words can \_\_\_\_\_ the work of the Holy Spirit in that person's life.

**Proverbs 15:5:** *A fool rejects his father's **discipline**, but he who regards reproof is prudent.*

- **Personally, I believe that there is a great danger in the upcoming generations in our American society; children not raised with a father's \_\_\_\_\_, but by the buddy system. Some dads want to be their offspring's buddy, rather than the father who instills in their child right behavior, and a healthy fear of our Lord. A parent, who truly loves his child more than himself, is required by that professed love to not let the foolish child continue in a self-destructive behavior, undisturbed and on his way to ruin.**

**Proverbs 15:6:** *Much **wealth** is in the house of the righteous, but the **trouble** is in the income of the wicked.*

- **This proverb would not ring true if the \_\_\_\_\_ that God is considering were things of material value. It is only true when we consider it to be the treasures of the heart, things like love, joy, peace, and patience. \_\_\_\_\_ comes to the individual when there is poverty in these areas.**

**Proverbs 15:7:** *The lips of the **wise** spread knowledge, But the hearts of **fools** are not so.*

- **You may think this is merely a repetition of Proverbs 15:4, and essentially it is with a slight variation, lost in the translation. *A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but perversion in it crushes the spirit.* [NASB] The Hebrew word for**

tongue is the word **lashown**, {*law-shone*}; as many of our words, the true meaning must be defined by the context, similar to our word "fine," which must be contextually defined. Using the context then, the tongue here is one that brings gentle soothing.

In Proverbs 15:7 the Spirit chooses to use the word **saphah**, {*saw-faw*}; which is translated into English as "lips." Saphah is a compound of two root words forming a complete thought by melding. It forms both a natural boundary and one that is expressed through language. Therefore the \_\_\_\_\_ person is bound to speak from a true personal knowledge, while the \_\_\_\_\_, who may have very persuasive and charismatic deliveries, are typically just parroting clever phrases, normally without personal knowledge, and usually with an undisclosed agenda attached.

**Proverbs 15:8-9:** *The sacrifice of the wicked is an **abomination** to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is His delight. <sup>[9]</sup> The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but He loves him who pursues righteousness.*

➤ These two passages speak to the heart of Christianity, a fundamental principle that states a person can never be saved by good works. A person who is saved will do good works, but it is only an outward expression of an inward change to our new nature. Religion without focus on the propitiation of Christ and the baptism by His Spirit is a religion based on works and is an \_\_\_\_\_ to our Lord. Oh! Many think they are being made acceptable to our God by going to church on Sunday, giving financially to a mission or charity, or by following some ritual or formality. What is acceptable and a delight to the Father is for us to come to Him humbly, repentant of our trespasses, accepting the forgiveness of all of our sins through Christ's death. We must also be willing to submit our future to the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit, the one who will help

us to remain on the narrow path to eternal redemption. *1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 1:30* **God alone made it possible for you to be in Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made Christ to be wisdom itself. He is the one who made us acceptable to God. He made us pure and holy, and he gave himself to purchase our freedom.**  
[NLT]

**Proverbs 15:10:** Stern **discipline** is for him who forsakes the **way**; he who hates reproof will **die**.

➤ As we have read so often in these proverbs, those who remain on the broad way, will \_\_\_\_\_, not just physically, as we all must, but a second death in the Lake of Fire. God is not willing for any to perish; so, through the convicting power of His Holy Spirit, He sternly \_\_\_\_\_s\_ those who forsake the narrow \_\_\_\_\_; providing a return path of encouragement to those who have strayed from the fold. However, God will never encumber our free-willed choice. When it comes to our redemption, our God is very narrow-minded. To miss-quote a well-worn cliché, we can do it His way or we will detour onto the *broad way*, the way that leads to destruction.

**Proverbs 15:11:** *\*Sheol and \*\*Abaddon lie open before the Lord, How much **more** the hearts of men!*

\***sh<sup>e</sup>owl**, {*sheh-ole*}; A compound word that indicates the place of the dead combined with the direction of down, that is, an underworld.

\*\***'abaddown**, {*ab-ad-done*} The place of perishing or destruction.

➤ So, we could say that even the depths of hell and the place of perishing are known by the Lord, how much \_\_\_\_\_ does he know the secrets of the human heart! Can the hidden motives behind any acts, good or bad, be hidden from Him? Hebrews 4:13: *Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. This is the God to whom we must explain all that we have done.* [NLT]

**Proverbs 15:12:** *A scoffer does not love one who reproves him; He will*

not go to the **wise**.

- **The Christian friend, like the God that we serve, is the court of last resort. The unbeliever will turn to the confidence of a Christian friend usually, and only after all else has failed. Lacking one, they may finally turn directly to God. Someone wiser than me has said; "there are no atheists in a foxhole." For some, only when they finally hit the bottom, will they look up. In this compiler's opinion, government charity and entitlements can be a deterrent to a person's redemption. Charity belongs in the Church, where \_\_\_\_\_ guidance and compassion can be offered; that is, caring for persons' physical needs as well as their spiritual essentials, the necessities for a secure eternity.**

**Compiler's note: The purpose of the tithe, while in part is to support the ministry of the gospel, the principle also directs us to provide for the needy; that when their bellies are full, they may realize the emptiness of the place in their person, developed by our Designer to house His Spirit. The principle as it is laid out in the Law is stated in Deut. 26:12: "Every third year you must offer a special tithe of your crops. You must give these tithes to the Levites, foreigners, orphans, and widows so that they will have enough to eat in your towns. <sup>[NLT]</sup> For you and me, the Christian, as we shall soon see, every day is Holy and dedicated to our Lord.**

**Proverbs 15:13:** *A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, but when the heart is sad, the spirit is **broken**. In Nehemiah 8:8-10 we read about Israel, back in the Land, listening to the Law as Ezra and Nehemiah read from it. They read from the Book of the Law of God and clearly explained the meaning of what was being read, helping the people understand each passage. <sup>[9]</sup> . . . "Don't weep on such a day as this! For today is a sacred day before the Lord your God." All the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the law. <sup>[10]</sup> And Nehemiah continued, "Go and celebrate with a feast of choice foods and sweet drinks, and share gifts of food with people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don't be dejected and sad, for the **joy** of the Lord is your **strength!**" <sup>[NLT]</sup>*

- **Compassionate charity is the purview of the church.**



When, as a church, we adhere to the principles stated in the Law, we will find great \_\_\_\_\_ as our Lord's Holy Spirit builds in us the \_\_\_\_\_ of the character which is in Jesus.

On the other hand, when God's Spirit is not controlling our lives we live by the mindset of our carnally taught minds. Our minds function according to the whims of our old nature, and spring from a \_\_\_\_\_ spirit. The result is a gloomy, impatient, unthankful attitude filled with pride, having an undue attachment to worldly wealth. This renders a person uneasy with himself and others.

**Proverbs 15:14-15:** *The mind [leb] of the intelligent seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on folly. <sup>[15]</sup> All the days of the afflicted are bad, but a cheerful heart [leb] has a continual feast.*

**Compiler's note:** unfortunately, in our English language some words don't properly convey the entire thought, which explains why a word-for-word interpretation from the manuscripts written in a native language will often render a passage meaningless. The word Love is a good example. We have one word that must be defined by context, while the Greek has four words, and each communicates its own context. In this passage, our translators chose our English word mind to translate the Hebrew word **leb**, {*labe*}; which seems to miss the boat. **Leb** is a Hebrew word that is used figuratively and very widely for our feelings, or to express our will; it carries with it the idea of being the "center of everything," so it is often translated as the heart, as it is in verse 15

➤ The heart of the person with a new nature intuitively seeks the input and discernment of God's resident Holy Spirit, regardless of the external situation. In Christ, we can have a \_\_\_\_\_ countenance, while the natural born person often accepts bad counsel, the incomplete product of his five senses, and in the stress of a particular situation, may lead them to make \_\_\_\_\_ decisions.

**Proverbs 15:16-17:** *Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than*

*great treasure and turmoil with it. [17] Better is a dish of vegetables where **love** is, than a fattened ox and hatred with it.*

➤ **The natural man, or one who still retains an un-renewed way of thinking, has a serious perspective problem. We naturally think more is always better! What comes to mind is the human proverb, "He who dies with the most toys wins." On the other hand, God is never willing for any to perish, so He gives us what we can handle without being distracted or detoured from His narrow way. From God's perspective, it is always better to have \_\_\_\_\_ than to leisurely saunter along the broad way lacking a \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord.**

➤ **It is better to receive God's redemptive \_\_\_\_\_ than to embrace the pleasures of sin without fear of retribution. In the end, the man without the Fear of the Lord stands before the Almighty, empty at the throne of Judgment.**

**Compiler's notes: The other evening one of our church elders brought to the attention of the congregation, stories of the modern-day tragedies from some contemporary quasi-Muslim countries; persecutions that have come to those who profess Christ as Lord and Savior. It welled up emotions coupled with the question – Why would God allow that to happen to one of His committed disciples?" The answer can only lie in one of two scenarios since God already knows the future; either it would be better for those persons to be taken home now than to suffer what may befall them in their future, or more simply, their death as martyrs would be of greater value, useful in bringing more into the kingdom than could their physical life. He chose to give them rest in His loving arms. We find folks like that mentioned in John's writing. Rev. 6:9: *And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;* [NASB]**

**The church elder also shared the story of a young man, terminally sick with leukemia; whose hospital witness was perhaps greater than anything that he may have been able to accomplish should he have remained on the campus of planet earth. From God's perspective, death isn't the end of life for**

the Christian; the testimony of this young fellow's faith, through his death, may become the catalyst for many more to find life through Christ.

**Proverbs 15:18-19:** *A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger **pacifies** contention. <sup>[19]</sup> The way of the **sluggard** is as a hedge of thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway.*

➤ **We are looking at three types of people in these passages, the bully, the lazy, and the man who demonstrates by his actions, the attributes of his Creator. The bully starts fights while the man of God works to \_\_\_\_\_ contention. The lazy person is happy to take advantage of the labor of another and often works harder than the upright person in an attempt to gain an advantage. I think of traffic jams that regularly occur along our highways. While the methods of transportation may have changed since Solomon's day, the nature of the natural born man has not. Solomon could not have known anything about "Road Rage" when he penned this proverb, but it is apropos to our day. Have you ever noticed the reason for most traffic snarls is because the \_\_\_\_\_ or self-indulged person tries to gain an advantage over others, not willing to wait their turn? The church parking lot compared to a Little League game letting out can serve as a microcosm of the opportunist and the godly person. The church lot empties quickly and usually without snarls, while chaos prevails at the ball field as the aggression of the natural born dominates.**

**Several years ago, I regularly had to pass through the Squirrel Hill Tunnel in the Pittsburgh area. During one construction season (PA. only has two seasons a year, winter and construction), for several weeks, one of the two lanes was closed for repairs and while traffic slowed, even though it was a major access route, it did not snarl. The reason, apparently some wise D.O.T. employee entered words on the changeable warning sign, "Take Your Turn," reminding people of our need to preserve a considerate attitude.**

**Proverbs 15:20-21:** *A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man **despises** his mother. <sup>[21]</sup> Folly is joy to him who lacks sense, but a man of understanding walks **straight**.*

- **We covered this subject back in Proverbs 6:20, but here it is again, so in God's eyes, it must be important. A wise child is one who has adhered to his parents' godly instruction, which brings joy to the father, but the one who rejects the parental coaching of their mother \_\_\_\_\_ her. This principle seems to hold true for the person who rejects the course correction of God's Holy Spirit; eventually, many will turn on those who continue to walk the \_\_\_\_\_ and narrow path that God has set before us.**

**Proverbs 15:22:** *Without **consultation**, plans are frustrated, but with many **counselors**, they succeed.*

- **God knows how undependable and contentious to reasonable logical thought emotions can be, so He advises us to seek, independent from our emotional involvement, *many* \_\_\_\_\_. As a way of illustration on just how undependable our emotions can be, we need to look no further than our living rooms and a TV drama. We are watching a good mystery when we see the damsel about to go through the wrong door or go down the wrong passageway. Our adrenalin begins to flow, leading to horrific anxiety; yet, there we are in the safety of our own homes, comfortable in our favorite chair. Our only danger is dropping some of the popcorn that we have been munching. God's word warns us, before we make major plans to seek the advice of good and godly \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Proverbs 15:23:** *A man has joy in an **apt** answer, and how delightful is a **timely** word!*

- **A lesson I learned the hard way, years back when I was a youth pastor. One of the members of my youth group was a beautiful young teenage girl, who at the hand of a boy who had rejected the whole Christian scene got her in the family way. I went to the hospital to see her and the new baby, offering freely my services as a minister, to work with**

them, planning and consummating a marriage. Unfortunately, I was unaware of the hidden thoughts that the boy harbored toward both matrimony and ministry. While my intentions were good, "marriage" was an \_\_\_\_\_ word. It was received by the boy as a rebuke on his lack of moral character. Sadly, the young lady withdrew from the emotional support of the youth group; eventually, the boy left her and went on his own agnostic way, leaving the mother and baby to fend for themselves.

- Often, we will not be aware of the result and joy that an \_\_\_\_\_ answer can bring. God's Word cautions us to carefully guard our words. It is not only what you say, but when you say it that can bring either joy and comfort or denunciation and contention.

**Proverbs 15:24:** *The path of life leads upward for the wise that he may keep away from Sheol below.*

- The path of the \_\_\_\_\_ leads to eternal life and they who would follow it leave hell and death behind.

**Proverbs 15:25:** *The Lord will tear down the house of the proud, but He will establish the boundary of the widow.*

- Our God watches out for the \_\_\_\_\_s\_ and the orphans. According to Malachi 3:5; those who take advantage can expect His retribution. *At that time, I will put you on trial. I will be a ready witness against all sorcerers and adulterers and liars. I will speak against those who cheat employees of their wages, who oppress widows and orphans, or who deprive the foreigners living among you of justice, for these people do not fear me," says the Lord Almighty.* The principle is laid out for us in the Law, found in Exodus 22:22: "*Do not exploit widows or orphans.*" [NLT]

**Proverbs 15:26-27:** *Evil plans are an abomination to the Lord, but pleasant words are pure. [27] He who profits illicitly troubles his own house, but he who hates bribes will live.*

- God expected those who represented Him as a nation of

witnesses [Israel]; to \_\_\_\_\_ above-board, holy and \_\_\_\_\_. After Pentecost, and since His witnesses are now indwelt by His Holy Spirit, the standard of spiritual purity is even higher. He trusts His very reputation with us, as well as those souls of some others, whose eternal life may teeter on our testimony. Souls, who may either find their way through the narrow gate and onto the narrow path by our ambassadorship, or who may discount our witness as a false testimony and thus remain lost forever.

**Proverbs 15:28:** *The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the **wicked** pours out evil things*

➤ Back in 15:18, we read how A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, if you don't already know it, you will soon learn that the Word of God is like a Geiger counter; wherever the word is presented, it is sure to stir up strife, causing the \_\_\_\_\_ to spew out vitriol. The Word of God, like the Geiger counter, will reveal the veiled apostate, and it will ferret out the unsaved when it is run over a congregation. Either they will leave, or they will force us out.

**Proverbs 15:29:** *The Lord is **far** from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.*

➤ Peter addresses this in the New Covenant epistle of 1 Peter 3:12: *the eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right, and his ears are open to their prayers. But the Lord turns his face against those who do evil.*" [NLT] Often we hear the voice of discouragement when the unsaved person tries to pray to God for a blessing, and He remains \_\_\_\_\_ off. The prayer that God is waiting to hear from the unsaved is one of repentance and submission, one of invitation for His Holy Spirit to come and indwell them. That is a prayer that He will answer.

Compiler's note: I have heard preachers use an analogy of His Spirit being like a telephone line directly into heaven; Whereas the unsaved person must make a collect call, the charges of which may be refused if the subject is not one of repentance and acceptance.

**Proverbs 15:30:** *Bright eyes gladden the heart; Good news puts fat on the bones.*

**A cheerful glance brings happiness to the \_\_\_\_\_, while \_\_\_\_\_ brings to health to a person's countenance.**

**Proverbs 15:31:** *He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.*

➤ **An old human proverb says you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink; this is certainly true when it comes to leading a person to accept the free gift of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross for the forgiveness of our sin debt. God's plan is all about free will. He makes every effort not to coerce a person; His desire is that a person comes to Him freely and by a free-will choice. Our job as ambassadors is to give out the Word of God; whether people accept that \_\_\_\_\_ Word is between them and their Maker.**

➤ **The passage actually goes beyond the unsaved person who needs to be born again. It seems equally apropos to the person who after having received God's indwelling Holy Spirit and new nature, ignores that baptism, rejecting the course correcting \_\_\_\_\_ that will enable us to live our lives in a way that is pleasing to our Savior. Jesus gives us an illustration of His attitude toward the self-willed reprobate in Matthew 7:21-23; the passage portrays a scene at the Great White Throne Judgment.**

○ ***"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. [22] "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' [23] "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'***

[NASB]

**Compiler's note: The key word is found in the last sentence:**

**“you who practice lawlessness;”** Continual and ongoing, ignoring the voice of His Spirit within who offers wise, life-changing reproof, as our minds are being renewed into an agreement with the traits now found in our new nature. *But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>[23]</sup> gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law. <sup>[24]</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. <sup>[25]</sup> If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.* Galatians 5:22-25 [NLT]

**Proverbs 15:32:** *He who neglects discipline **despises** himself, but he who listens to **reproof** acquires understanding.*

➤ In the Christian vocabulary, this is Spirit-taught discipline [sanctification], where we will, during the course of our maturing, submit differing aspects of our mental attitudes to the renewing (*nauling them to the cross*), as God's Spirit builds the character of Christ in us. This life-long process is called Sanctification and it is detrimental to our being accepted and known by our Judge and Maker, Christ our Lord. The Christian who does not submit to this course correcting \_\_\_\_\_ actually \_\_\_\_\_ themselves, and may, in the end, be rejected by these fateful words, **“I never knew you; depart from Me.**

**Proverbs 15:33:** *The **fear** of the Lord is the **instruction** for wisdom, and before honor comes humility.* [NASB]

➤ The \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord is to hold him in absolute awe and admiration. Because of His majesty and out of a deep respect for His continual love and mercy, it is crucial to our salvation that we humble ourselves before Him; having received and accepted the life-changing \_\_\_\_\_ of His Spirit, so that when we stand before Him, we may resemble Him in character and honor.