

The Keys To Wisdom

Love

Patience

Obedience

Mercy

Trust

Understanding

Truth

Discretion



Proverbs

WEEK 7

“A Honest Salesman”

Study: Proverbs 11:1-3

Reading: I Kings 3:1-16, II Corinthians 13:7-11

Memory: Proverbs 3:33

A few years back, I had two vehicles that had sat around all winter. Both of them had problems that were repairable, but I didn't have the time or money to attempt to fix them. I decided to sell the vehicles for as much money as I could get out of them. I knew of some problems on the vehicles that weren't visible at first glance. In fact I could have sold the vehicles for more money if I didn't tell the buyers some of the problems. At that time, those couple hundred of dollars extra I could have made were very important to me and it was tempting not to be fully honest. But, I knew that God would not be pleased if I was dishonest. When people came to look at the vehicles, I chose to tell them all the known problems. I knew I will lose a couple hundred dollars because of my honesty, but I also knew that God would bless me for my honesty. I chose God's blessing over temporary financial gain.

Today we are going to see how God delights in the honesty and integrity of His people, but He despises dishonesty and pride.

What Does the Bible Say?

In the Bible days, they didn't have pre-packaged food. When they would go to market to buy what they needed, their food would be weighed out on a scale. Not the type of scale that we have today that uses springs or digital readings. They would use balances. On one side of the balance the seller would put a set amount of weights and on the other side they would put the food. They would charge the buyer a certain price per weight. Some dishonest merchants would adjust their weights so that they were lighter than they were supposed to be. That meant that the buyer would not always get the amount of food that they were paying for. Solomon said that this was an abomination before God. God hates dishonesty, but He loves the truth. In today's society, we don't do things exactly like they did, but the point is still the same. God wants honesty to prevail in every area of our lives (vs 1).

One of the great sins that has troubled mankind since the beginning of

the world is the sin of pride. Satan was kicked out of heaven because of his pride. He thought he was better than he really was. All pride brings into our lives is dishonor and problems. That is why we need to strive to be humble people. Wisdom isn't knowing more, thinking we know more, or acting like we know more than others. Wisdom involves humbling ourselves and knowing that God has given us all we have (vs 2).

Integrity can be defined as, "honesty, sincerity and singleness of purpose." When we are honest about who we are before God, we will sincerely love Him. The more we love Him, the more we will love others around us. The more we know God, the more we will realize our purpose in life is to please Him. These things will guide us into the right path as we walk through each day of our lives (vs 3).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you honest in all your dealings with others? Do you sometimes tell half-truths so that you can profit? God hates dishonesty. You should make it a goal in life to be an honest person. This means that sometimes you will have to pay the price for your mistakes because you honestly confess your errors. It means that some times you will not be able to make as much money as you could if you were dishonest. Honesty may involve temporary sacrifice, but God will bless you for it.

Is your life characterized by humility and integrity? Do you realize that all you have was given to you by God? That means that you have no reason to be prideful because you can't do anything apart from Him. You also need to realize what your purpose is in life. When you are striving to please Him, you will walk in integrity and wisdom.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Ask God to help you be honest before Him and others.
- * Thank God for taking care of your problems.
- * Praise God because He is truth.

Thought for the day

What is an abomination to the Lord (vs 1)?

What does "abomination" mean (vs 1 - ESV)?

****This is a very strong Word that describes how something is detestable to God. It was used in reference to idols which God hated and wanted Israel to have no part in.*

How can you operate with a "false balance" in life?

What does God delight in (vs 1)?

What does it mean to "delight" (vs 1-ESV)?

****It is interesting to see the contrasting words of "abomination" and "delight." These are polar opposites and express deep feeling. This indicates God's view of honesty and dishonesty.*

****It should also be noted, that you don't have to go above and beyond to bring delight to God. Practicing simple, daily honesty is something that brings great delight to Him.*

What does pride lead to (vs 2)?

How have you seen this true in your life or the lives of others?

What does humility produce (vs 2)?

Why do you think humility produces wisdom?

What guides a person who is upright (vs 3)?

What destroys a person (vs 3)?

How do you know if the choices and decisions you are making are out of "integrity" or "crookedness" (vs 3 - ESV)?

“Wealth or Righteousness”

Study: Proverbs 11:4-7

Reading: Matthew 6:25-34, Proverbs 31

Memory: Proverbs 3:33

One of the things I enjoyed most about my childhood was the love that my mom was always around. With five children in the family, it wasn't always easy financially, but we were very frugal and God provided for us. My mom did work during at the private school I attended which helped pay for our schooling, but she had a great desire to always be around for her children. Though this is not God's plan for all families, I am so thankful that she was able to be there for me and my siblings.

Today, we are going to see that society puts God and family on the back burner and puts wealth and “things” on the front burner. It is easy to get caught up the pleasures that money can buy.

What Does the Bible Say?

Countless numbers of Christians have been turned away from God because of their desire to be rich. Several times throughout the Scripture God warns us about seeking after wealth instead of seeking after Him. In today's society, it is easy to get caught up in the thinking of the world. Though we wouldn't openly admit it, many have bought into the idea that money brings happiness. Many people don't find time for God or their families because they feel then need to work. Often, this gets disguised as necessary, when actually spending less money is the better option. We need to trust God to take care of our needs and provide for us when we have our priorities right. He also has the ability to give us jobs where we can have the proper priorities. When you choose to put God and the things that are important to Him first in your life, He will take care of the rest (vs 4).

When a person is living righteously, God will smooth his path. That doesn't mean that things will always be easy or that we will never have problems. It means that through our trials and troubles, God will give us the comfort and the strength that we need. Also, when we live righteously, we won't have to face the punishment and natural consequences of sin. When a person lives unrighteously, they are setting themselves up for a rough road

in life (vs 5). Verse six basically repeats verse 5 to emphasize the point that wickedness leads to problems, but righteousness leads to a life of peace (vs 6).

The “wicked man” is one who holds a position of authority which he abuses by acting lawlessly. He sets his eyes on prosperity, power, and a long life. All of these will fade away when he dies in the pain of his sin. No matter how many abilities or strengths a person has on earth, he will die. Hebrews 9:27 says, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” (vs 7).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you seeking after the riches and the wealth of the world? Are you putting financial desires in front of God and your family? Advertisements flaunt all the things that money can buy in front of our faces on a daily basis. To get those things means that we have to find the best paying job that we can find, even if it means sacrificing time with God and family. I want to be very cautious about this next thought, but I do believe that one of the areas where the world's philosophy has become evident among believers is when mothers put their careers in front of their families. It has become common place for moms to “have” to work outside of the home to help provide for the “needs” of the family. This may be true in some circumstances, but I propose to you that many moms work outside of the home to help provide the “wants” of the family. Please do not get me wrong, we will see how Proverbs 31 describes a woman who goes to the market to sell her goods to help provide for her families needs. Yet, we are also told in Titus 2:4-5 that older women are to teach younger women “to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.” There is not a “one size fits all” approach to this issue, but I strongly encourage families to do what they can to allow the mom freedom to be at home as much as possible when her children are at home. There are some situations where this simply can't happen, but I do believe that when we place priorities in the right place that God will provide.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Ask God to help you seek righteousness instead of riches.
- * Thank God for taking care of your needs.

What do you think the “day of wrath” is (vs 4 - ESV)?

What doesn't profit at that time (vs 4)?

Why aren't they profitable in that day?

What are we told is more important than riches (vs 4)?

How do you think righteousness and riches often battle against each other?

What are ways that you have struggled in this area?

What does righteousness do (vs 5)?

What do you think it means to be righteous?

What happens to the wicked person (vs 5)?

What do you think it means to be wicked?

What will deliver a person (vs 6)?

What do you think the beginning of verse 6 means?

How have you seen this to be true?

What happens to a “treacherous” person (vs 6 - ESV)?

What do you think the end of verse 6 means?

What happens when a wicked person dies (vs 6)?

How will the wealth or strength of a wicked be unable to help them when they die (vs 6)?

Why is it vitally important to have the proper perspective about the riches of this world?

“God Blesses the Righteous”

Study: Proverbs 11:8-12

Reading: Genesis 39:1-5, 19-23, 41:38-49

Memory: Proverbs 3:33

In *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, completed in 1787, Edward Gibbon lists the following reasons for that fall. As you read these reasons, think about how applicable they are to today's society.

1. The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society.
2. Higher and higher taxes and the spending of public money for free bread and circuses for the populace.
3. The mad craze for pleasure; sports becoming every year more exciting and more brutal.
4. The building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within: the decadence of the people.
5. The decay of religion—faith fading into mere form—losing touch with life and becoming impotent to guide the people.

Today, we are going to see how we can stop the decay of morals in our society. We will see how every Christian needs to stand up for what is right and remove evil out of their lives.

What Does the Bible Say?

Psalms 46:1 says, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Whenever the righteous run into problems and difficulties, God will be there to help them through. As we all know, we will face troubles as Christians. The difference between the righteous and the wicked is that God will be there to help the righteous, but the wicked will have to face their troubles alone. This is a great benefit that God gives us when we live for Him. Romans 8:31 gives the righteous a comforting thought. It says, “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” When we are living righteously, we have nothing to be afraid of! (vs 8)

In our study of Proverbs, we have already seen how we need to use our tongues in a positive way. The wise man uses his tongue to speak the truth and build others up rather than to tear others down (vs 9).

I believe that America became a strong nation because of the influence and blessings of those who have sought after God. Solomon teaches that principle in verses 10 & 11. I also believe that if something doesn't change, the second part of verse 11 will also come true. When the number of people who are living righteously decrease, the blessings will decrease also. When wickedness prevails, a city, or in our case, a nation will be torn apart. That means that our great nation is headed toward destruction unless we do something to change it (vs 10-11).

A person who despises others is not a person of wisdom. The foolishness of this man will be evident when he talks negatively to his neighbor. Wise men will do their best to avoid disputes and one of the best ways to do this is to remain silent. When someone is upset at us, or raging against us, staying silent is not always easy, but is the wise thing to do. Doing what you can to diffuse the problems you have with your neighbors will go much farther than when you respond in a foolish manner (vs 12).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you a righteous person? A righteous person is one who constantly strives to obey God and do what is right. Righteous people also know and love God and are living for Him every day. When you are righteous, God will not only bless you, but He will also bless others who you come in contact with. Believe it or not, you can have a part in keeping your country strong when you do what is right. The problem is that some Christians buy into the wicked ideas of Satan and don't live out what is right. Instead of opposing evil, they often become part of evil. Make it your goal and purpose in life to live for God.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Praise God for being a righteous God.
- * Thank God for the blessing He has given to your country.

Thought for the day

What does God do for a righteous person (vs 8)?

Does this mean that righteous people will never have any problems? Explain.

What happens to the wicked person (vs 8)?

What do godless people do with their mouths (vs 9)?

What are ways that you have been tempted to act godless with your mouth?

How can you avoid hurting others by what you say?

Why is knowledge so important when it comes to saying the right thing (vs 9)?

What will happen in a city when the righteous are prevalent (vs 10)?

****It must be remembered in that culture that many cities were separate entities and weren't part of a greater kingdom.*

What happens when wicked leaders pass away (vs 10)?

How is a city exalted (vs 11)?

How is a city destroyed (vs 11)?

Why do you think the success of a city or failure of a city is centered around the things that people say (vs 11)?

What does this reveal about the power of your words?

Who lacks sense (vs 12)?

What harm can come when you belittle your neighbor?

Why is keeping silent a sign of wisdom (vs 12)?

“Stand Up For Jesus”

Study: Proverbs 11:13-17

Reading: Matthew 9:35-38, II Timothy 4:1-8

Memory: Proverbs 3:33

When I was on the school board for a local Christian school, one of the things I understood was the importance of keeping private issues private. There were times where we would find out information about what a student had done, many times from their own mouths, and would have to make decisions for the good of the school based on the knowledge we had gained. This was met with opposition at times from people outside the school board who didn't know what we knew. As much as I wanted to reveal the private knowledge to set things straight, I knew how important it was to keep details private for the good of the student and all those involved in a situation.

Today, we are going to read how a wise man knows how to keep things discreet and private. We will read about this and a few other principles of wisdom that we can apply to our daily lives.

What Does the Bible Say?

A wise man knows how to keep secrets. When someone tells him something, he doesn't spread it around to others. He knows that what he will say can possibly harm the person that told him the secret. He also knows that these secrets could also be very hurtful to others so he chooses wisely what to say and not say. Because of this, he is trustworthy and will be known as a man of wisdom and integrity (vs 13).

Jesus described the Jews “as sheep having no shepherd.” (Matthew 9:36) They had few godly leaders to direct them towards God. There were several “religious leaders,” but they were leaders who cared only about themselves and not the people. Though the Jews had the Word of God in the form of the Old Testament, they were spiritual wanderers because they didn't have any leaders. When there are a lack of good leaders, a nation will fall, but when there are many good leaders, a nation will become great. This also applies to the church. When many people are taking a stand for God and righteousness, the church will grow spiritually. But when there are few in the church who are taking a stand, the church will begin to die. Even more

specific, is the idea of male leaders. God has naturally designed men to be leaders in their homes and in the church. A healthy church is one where men take a stand to lead their families and homes (vs 14).

Solomon encouraged us not to loan another person money so they can pay a debt, especially someone that we don't know to well. This doesn't mean that we can't give money to someone else who financially is in need. The Bible tells us to help those who are in need. God wants us to use our money in a wise way. If a person couldn't pay off a loan to someone else, what makes us think that they will pay the loan that we give them (vs 15).

There are three main characters mentioned in verses 16 & 17. There is a woman who is gracious, a man who by brute force earns money and a man who is merciful. By presenting these three characters, Solomon is making the point that we can have all the money that we want, but yet be miserable. On the other hand, a gracious and merciful person will bring honor to himself and do himself much good. That person will also be full of joy and peace because of his generosity. A peace that can't be bought no matter how much money is gained (vs 16-17).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you being a leader in your church and people you are around? A leader isn't just someone who stands in front of the congregation and leads in public worship. A leader is someone, young or old, who takes a stand for Christ. Leaders are not afraid to share their faith openly and publicly. They step out by faith to be different than the world. It is easy to wait for others to respond or stand up before you do. Are you scared to stand alone? Have you ever stepped out on faith to do something when no one else was willing? You can be a leader. All you have to do is be willing to deny yourself and obey God.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Ask God to help you to be a leader.*
- * *Thank God for giving you the strength to stand alone.*
- * *Praise God because He will never leave you.*

Thought for the day

What is slander (vs 13)?

What are areas where you are tempted to spread secrets about someone else (vs 13)?

Why do you think it is important to cover up things you know about someone that may be harmful?

How do you balance this out with the importance of not covering things up that are criminal or morally wrong?

****It must be remembered that Proverbs are general truths and can't be applied to every situation. For instance, if a church leader knows that someone has abused another person in the past, it is vital that this is not kept secret. By covering something like this up, it opens up the door for others to be abused.*

What happens when there are few good leaders (vs 14)?

What is safety found (vs 14)?

Why is this such an important truth?

What will happen to the person who co-signs for a stranger (vs 15)?

What does this verse caution against?

What does a gracious woman get (vs 16)?

Why do you think we are told a violent man does get riches (vs 16)?

What is the benefit to being kind to others (vs 17)?

How have you seen this true in your life?

What does a cruel man bring upon himself (vs 17)?

“True Beauty”

Study: Proverbs 11:18-22

Reading: II Chronicles 20:20-30, I Corinthians 4:1-6

Memory: Proverbs 3:33

One of my favorite roller coasters to go on when I was a teenager was called the ‘Blue Streak’ at Cedar Point in Ohio. When I would go on this ride, I would try to raise my legs up as high as I could when the worker came by to push down the lap bar. This meant that I wasn’t strapped in too tight and as I would go over the many small hills, I felt like I was coming out of my seat, adding to the thrill of the ride. The roller coaster didn’t have the huge hill, but many small humps that it would go up and down over.

Today, we are going to read how we should avoid being “roller coaster Christians” going through many on and off periods when it comes to our Christian life.

What Does the Bible Say?

Several places in the Bible we learn about the principle of sowing and reaping. When we deceitfully gain money, we don’t really profit. On the outside it may appear that we have gained something, but true gain isn’t measured in outward success. True gain will come to those who live righteously. No matter how much money you make or gain in this life, it won’t buy you peace and happiness. Righteousness will produce peace, happiness and great joy in this life and the life to come (vs 18).

It is important to understand that God wants us to be faithful in our righteousness. Our lives shouldn’t be characterized by living on a spiritual roller coaster. By that I mean that one day you are excited about the things of God and actively serving him for a while, then something happens and you get discouraged and drift from God for a while. When you repeat this cycle, this is what I refer to as a “spiritual roller coaster.” We need to determine in our hearts that we are going to live righteously no matter what happens to us. When we do this, it will bring us abundant life. But if we live in evil, it will bring us to a miserable death (vs 19).

God will always love us no matter what we do or how far we turn from Him, but he is delighted when we walk in His ways (vs 20). No matter how

much we think that we are getting away with our sin, we're not. God says that if we live in sin, we will not go unpunished. He also tells us that not only will we be blessed if we live righteously, but our decedents will also be blessed because of our choice to live righteously (vs 21).

Solomon uses some descriptive and humorous language in verse 22. He gives us the picture of a dirty hog that has a beautiful nose ring. He relates this to a woman that doesn't use discretion. The word "discretion" (ESV) has to do with a lack of moral understanding. This lack of discretion runs rampant through much of our society. Many woman act in certain ways and even dress in certain ways that draw the attention of men. Many times, they are not aware of the effect that they have on the males that they are trying to appeal to. There is a difference between wanting to look nice and attractive compared to dressing in a way that purposely causes a man to think sexual thoughts. A woman's beauty is not just found on the outside, it is also found on the inside. Many women spend great time and effort into making their body appealing on the outside, but they spend little time working on the inside (vs 22).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Have you been faithful in living a righteous life? Have you made up your mind that you are going to do right no matter what happens to you? God wants your faithfulness. One of the things that turns many people away from Christianity is the unfaithfulness of professing Christians. When you say that you are a Christian, but act like you're not, you are giving people a negative picture of God. The phrase, "You are the only Bible that many people will read" has much validity to it. You need to live a life that makes people want to come to Christ. You can do this by making it your goal to consistently do what is right.

Are you more concerned with your outward appearance than your inward beauty? Inward beauty comes from living a Christlike life. When you are following the principles that are found in God's Word, your life will be beautiful on the inside and the outside.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Ask God to show you any areas of your life where you are not living a righteous life.*
- * *Thank God for the abundant life that He has given you.*

What will a person receive when they act wickedly (vs 18)?

What do think these wages are?

What will a righteous person receive (vs 18)?

What do you think is the main theme of verse 18?

What do you think it means to be "steadfast in righteousness" (vs 19 - ESV)?

Why is being steadfast so important when it comes to living out your faith?

What does verse 19 says the result will be when you are faithful to God?

What do you think the difference is between life and death in verse 19?

Who experiences this death?

Who is an abomination to the Lord (vs 20)?

What do you think it means to have a "crooked heart" (vs 20)?

What does God delight in (vs 20)?

What will happen to evil people (vs 21)?

Why do you think we are told to be assured this will happen (vs 21)?

What will God do for the righteous (vs 21)?

What picture does verse 22 paint?

What do you think it looks like for a woman to act without discretion?

Why do you think this proverb is addressed towards women?

“A Cheerful Giver”

Study: Proverbs 11:23-26

Reading: II Corinthians 9:1-15, Philipians 4:15-20

Memory: Proverbs 3:33

I am never ceased to be amazed at how much God has financially blessed me and my family over the years. One thing that my wife and I chose to do early on in our marriage is to be generous givers. There were times we struggled financially and the money we gave away could have been used for some of our necessities and wants, but we were convinced to believe what God declares about generosity. As I look back on my life, I see how faithful God has been to me and it reminds me to continue to be a generous giver.

Today, we are going to look at an important principle that deals with the way we use our money. We will see that God wants us to be generous and that He will reward our generosity with generosity of His own.

What Does the Bible Say?

Those who live righteously will desire that good will come not only to themselves, but to others. On the other hand, those who live in sin often wish evil to come on others. Though they wish evil to come on others, God rewards their evil desires with evil (vs 23).

People often hoard money and are unwilling to share it with God and others because they are afraid that they won't have enough for the things that they want. Several times in the Bible God tells us how He will provide for us and give back to us when we are generous. Solomon tells us that the more we scatter or give out, the more we will get in return. This thought defies our natural thinking. Math says that if we have 10 and give 3 away we only have 7 left for ourselves. God's principle stated in this verse is a little different than our human thinking. When we give more, we will have more. The more a person gives to God and others, the more they will be satisfied.

When people are unwilling to give, they will always be in want. They may be able to save up more money than the person who is generous, but they will always have a desire for more. Once again we see that money

doesn't satisfy. The only thing that brings satisfaction in life is living the way God wants us to live. God wants His children to see the importance of giving (vs 24).

Solomon continued the thought of generosity in verses 25 & 26. He used a well to illustrate the point that God will give back to us. In the dry and arid climate throughout much of Israel, it was of extreme importance to have a source of water. Many times a city would have one well where many people would gather together to draw water for themselves and for their animals. If a person was traveling through the country, they would often stop at one of these wells to refresh their animals. Travelers were normally welcomed to draw from the well because that is what the people of the city would want others to do if they were traveling. Solomon also used the illustration of giving food to those who were hungry. A generous person is willing to give some of his food to help others. When he is generous, he will be blessed. But when he is stingy and selfish, he will be cursed.

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you a cheerful giver? II Corinthians 9:7 says, “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” Do you give to the Lord by giving to your local church and other ministries? Are you generous in giving to others who are in need? God will richly bless you and reward you when you give to Him and others. Don't let your selfishness and love for money stand in the way of the blessings that God wants to give you. Some of the money that God has given you was given to you for the sole purpose of being given to Him or others. If you aren't a generous giver, take on the challenge of giving more to Him and others. Try it out for a few months and see how the principle of sowing and reaping presented here in these proverbs are true.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Ask God to show you how much you should give to God and others.
- * Thank God for His abundant blessings.

Thought for the day

What ends in good (vs 23)?

What do you think this may be referring to?

What happens to the person who isn't righteous (vs 23)?

****When we do good, we should expect good in return. This doesn't always mean we will get what we want or that we should do good just for selfish gain, but we will be blessed when we do good.*

What principle of giving is presented in the beginning of verse 24?

How is this opposite of what many people think?

How have you seen this verse to be true in your life? If you haven't, explain why you haven't?

What happens to the person who should be generous but is not (vs 24)?

Take a moment to think about how generous you are. Would you place yourself in the first part of this verse or the second part? Explain.

Who will be enriched (vs 25)?

What will happen when we are generous and loving to others (vs 25)?

Describe how you are being enriched in your life by the good you do to others and the way you are generous to others.

Who will be cursed (vs 26)? What do you think this means?

****This verse does not appear to be referring to giving away food, but encouraged the selling of food to help others who were lacking. Instead of storing up food for themselves in time of famine, being willing to part with the food by selling to help others was a way to bless others.*

Why is generosity so important to true fulfillment in life?

Memory Verse

Proverbs 3:1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, 2 for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. 3 Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones. 9 Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; 10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. 11 My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, 12 for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights. 13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, 14 for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. 15 She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. 16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. 17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. 18 She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed. 19 The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; 20 by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew. 21 My son, do not lose sight of these— keep sound wisdom and discretion, 22 and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. 23 Then you will walk on your way securely, and your foot will not stumble. 24 If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. 25 Do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the ruin of the wicked, when it comes, 26 for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught. 27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. 28 Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it"—when you have it with you. 29 Do not plan evil against your neighbor, who dwells trustingly beside you. 30 Do not contend with a man for no reason, when he has done you no harm. 31 Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways, 32 for the devious person is an abomination to the LORD, but the upright are in his confidence. 33 The LORD's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous.