



"REASONS TO REJOICE"

"Your Words were found and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." Jeremiah 15:16

PROVERBS

LESSON 12

We see a shift of style in the next seven chapters of Proverbs. Beginning in chapter 16, Solomon uses the word "and" more than the word "but" to emphasize by repetition and addition. These "synonymous maxims" are not just given for the betterment of society, but to show God's people how to live Godly lives. These are more than mere secular suggestions, rather, they are Godly principles that we are told to govern our lives by. Chapter 16 begins and ends on the subject of the sovereignty of God while reminding us that there are two authorities which govern us; a divine sovereignty and a human government. Although it is a "dual-authority," it is not an "equal authority." Our God reigns and is supreme over all!

First Day

1. Read Proverbs 16:1-33. Below is a list of topics found in this chapter. Please write the verses that coincide with the topic.

Heart:

Speech:

Walk:

Lord:

Judgment:

Wisdom:

Evil:

Possessions:

2. The "Lord" (Jehovah) appears eighty-six times in this book. How many times is the Lord's Name used in this chapter? Why is that significant?
3. How many times are man's "thoughts" referred to?
4. How many times is the word "and" used?

This chapter shows us the balance between man's plans and God's sovereignty over them; human freedom and God's sovereignty. Zuck wrote, "Though man is strongly encouraged in Proverbs to acquire wisdom, he is not released from dependence on the Lord." God's sovereignty always reigns over man. God's sovereignty means that "He is on the throne and controls all things." Charles Spurgeon wrote, "No doctrine in the whole Word of God has more excited the hatred of mankind than the truth of the absolute sovereignty of God. The fact that 'the Lord reigneth' is indisputable, and it is this fact that arouses the utmost opposition of the unrenewed heart."

5. Why do you think unbelievers have issue with God's sovereignty?
6. Which verses talk about the "human" king and his ways?
7. Which verse or verses specifically speak to your heart today and why?

Memory Verse of the Week: "He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." Proverbs 16:32

Second Day

Work on your memory verse. Do you rule your spirit well?

1. Read Proverbs 16:1-7. How does verse 1 show that God's sovereignty prevails over man? How is He sovereign over our thoughts and words?

The word "preparations" in verse 1 literally means plans, or "arrangements." It's a word used for placing things in order, like arranging soldiers on a battle line. (Genesis 14:8) Verse 1, according to Eric Lane, means "This verse taken as a whole means that no purpose of man that enters into the heart, can come to anything without God's involvement in some part of the process (vs 9, 19:21)."

2. What does verse 2 say about man's motives? (Also read Proverbs 21:2.)
3. Why are we often unable to judge our actions objectively? (Read Jeremiah 17:9-10.)

Although our actions are often good, God looks at the motive behind them. Outwardly they may seem very innocent and pure, but God knows our motives, and "weighs" them, meaning that he "passes judgment on their merit."

4. Because this is true, what must we do daily, according to Psalm 19:14 and Psalm 139:1,23-24?

5. Time for a heart check. How quick are you to justify yourself and your actions? Are you quick to self-examine or quick to think your motives are pure?
6. Because the Lord knows every motive of every action, what should we do, according to verse 3?

The word "commit" in verse 3 means to "roll upon, or onto," referring to a sense of finality. In other words, "roll it onto the Lord and leave it there." The Lord wants us to be free from stress, worry, and anxiety by rolling over all our plans into His care, which brings about a great sense of peace.

7. Waltke said, "The faithful must not fret or worry about their effectiveness, or even their purity, for that assessment and their achievement depend on God, not on the doer." Write your thoughts on this quote.
8. Read the following verses on this subject and write your thoughts.
 - A. 1 Peter 5:7
 - B. Psalm 37:5
 - C. Psalm 55:22
 - D. Psalm 94:19
 - E. John 14:27
 - F. John 16:33
9. In your own words, how do you commit your works to the Lord? Have you been doing this? Do you "roll" your plans over to the Lord, asking for His assistance, and then commit them to His care? Do you have a sense of peace when you do?

That's it for today. May you daily ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and weigh, or judge, what He finds. Because our hearts are so wicked, only He can reveal our true inner thoughts, attitudes, and motives. And may we be willing to see and hear what He finds. 😊

Third Day

Work on your memory verse. It's a good one. Hard, but good!

1. Begin by reading Proverbs 16:1-7, focusing on verses 4-7. How do these verses show that God is sovereign over ALL things?

Nothing and no one is out of God's control. Everything means everything, without exception. Although hard to accept at times, the unrepentant will be judged by God, because of His justice, mercy, and truth. (Romans 9:14-24, Ephesians 1:11) Because of His unfailing love for us, He has provided atonement for our sins, a remedy for our transgressions. In the Old Testament, it was through obedience to God and the Levitical sacrificial system. In the New Testament, this has been replaced by the sacrifice of Christ. When we trust in the blood of Jesus, who has made atonement for our sins through His death on the cross, we will avoid the eternal punishment these verses are referring to.

2. In verse 6 we find another reference to the "fear of the Lord." What does it say about it? What does it mean, in your own words?
3. Explain the principle behind verse 7. Have you seen this to be true in your own life?
4. Read Proverbs 16:8. Basically this verse is referring to the topic of contentment. What does 1 Timothy 6:6-9 add to this thought?

5. Would you consider yourself to be a "content" person? Why or why not? How can you "learn and grow" in this area?

Solomon is now going to be discussing the topic of the kings of that day. I believe he wants to draw a contrast between dependence on God and respect for the king. During the time of the writing of Proverbs, Israel was regularly dealing with kings, both good and bad; those who did evil in the sight of the Lord and those who feared Him. Hubbard wrote, "They lived in the tension between God and Caesar, the tension of which Jesus spoke so plainly when he gave His prescription for dealing with dual authority (Mark 12:13-17; Matthew 22:15-22; Luke 20:19-26). Proverbs 16 more than any other section of the book brings together the two types of sayings; those that describe proper royal behavior and correct comportment of the ones who serve the kings and those that depict the King of kings, always to be reckoned with in His ultimate authority and hegemony in human affairs. Israel's young leaders, like all who wield authority in any place or time, lived under the eyes of their Lord and before the face of their king. How they did so is the subject of this chapter."

6. Read Proverbs 16:10-15. I read that there are 5 things discussed here regarding the king. What do these verses say about these characteristics?

A. Justice:

B. Integrity:

C. Morality:

D. Honesty:

E. Power:

Verse 15 speaks of the "cloud of the latter rain." In those days, when a rain cloud appeared in the sky, people were excited for their crops, because it meant life for them. The rain was often heralded with joy. So when the king was smiling, it meant favor and joy for the people!

7. Are these qualities still valued today in those in government, in your opinion?

8. How are these qualities elevated in the King of Kings?

9. How do corrupt governments affect the lives of the people they rule?

10. In your own words, explain how to practically "depend on God" while continuing to show respect for the king. What if his character is such that he doesn't "deserve" respect?

11. Read Proverbs 16:16. Compare/contrast the words "get" and "choose." Which do you value more?

We'll end here for today. You get to "choose" what you seek after. You get to choose whether or not you want to pursue and ask for wisdom and understanding, or sin and folly. So make sure you "choose" to "get" the right things!

Fourth Day

Work on your memory verse.

1. Read Proverbs 16:17-33. Write your thoughts on the "highway of the upright." What do you picture?

2. Read verses 18-19, which talk about pride and humility, a topic he has previously discussed. What does he say about the proud? What different "spirit" do each have?

3. How can pride cause "destruction"? What "destruction" has it caused in your own life? What lessons did you learn from it?

4. Verse 19 talks about the "lowly" in spirit. What does that mean? What do the following verses have to say about that?
 - A. Psalm 34:18
 - B. Psalm 138:6
 - C. Matthew 5:3
 - D. Matthew 11:29
 - E. James 1:9-11

5. Read Proverbs 16:20. Such a lovely verse! What are the blessings of wisdom and trust?

6. According to verse 20, faith obeys. Are you trusting the Lord, hearing His Word, and then wisely obeying it? Is He calling upon you to do something, in some area of your life? To stop doing something? To start or stop a behavior, action, or thought? Will you trust Him and obey?

7. Verses 21, 23-24 talk about wise words. What do they say?

8. How do "pleasant words" add sweetness and health to someone's life?

9. Are you adding or subtracting health to someone's "bones" by your words? Your husband? Kids? Friends? Co-workers? Do you bless or irritate them?

10. Read Proverbs 16:25. How does it relate to verses 1,2, and 9? Why do you think he says it again? (14:12)

11. Can you think of an example from Scripture that would illustrate verse 25?

Let's stop here for now. Have a great day, my friends. Stop and count all the reasons you have to rejoice today!

Fifth Day

Write out your verse by memory.

1. Read Proverbs 16:26-33. Are there any new thoughts or topics found in this section?

Verse 26 is a confusing one. Commentators seem to disagree a bit on what it exactly means. The Bible Knowledge Commentary says this, "Hunger can motivate people, sometimes even lazy people, to work so that with their wages they can buy food. This verse has an interesting wordplay: though a person is working as a laborer for someone else, his appetite is "working" for himself. Diligence is encouraged in 10:4-5; 12:24; 14:23; and 28:19."

2. Verses 27-30 refer to a mischievous, trouble-making man. What kind of "trouble" does he tend to cause?

"Plots evil" literally means to "dig a calamity," suggesting that he's putting in a lot of effort to dig a pit to trap others. The fool goes to a lot of trouble to tear people apart.

3. How can "whispers" separate the best of friends? (Also read Proverbs 17:9.)

4. Have you been a victim of any of this? How did you handle it? Did God bring reconciliation between you and your friend?

5. On the other hand, have you ever been the one causing strife and separating friends, even if it wasn't intentional? What should you do about it now?

6. In verse 29, the "man of violence" is not content with sinning alone, he wants others to join him. Why does he desire to lead others away with him? We've heard the saying "misery loves company." Does "sin" as well?

7. Evil "burns on his lips like fire." How does James 3:3-8 tie in with this?

8. Read Proverbs 16:31. Remember that in the Old Testament under the old covenant, obedience was rewarded with long life. What principle is this proverb teaching?

Gray hair is like a distinguished crown on the head of someone who has "earned" it! When young people see age, they often look down on the person rather than admiring and respecting them. Gray hair was like a reward for living a righteous life. Leviticus 19:32 calls for respect for the aged. Again, if we live a righteous life, we aren't "promised" a long one. Sometimes the righteous die prematurely (Psalm 44:22; Proverbs 3:1-12; Isaiah 57:1), and old age brings health problems. But the principle here is clear; a righteous life will more likely be accompanied by dignity, authority, and beauty!

9. I love Psalm 92:12-15. What will those who are older still be "doing" if they are "righteous" according to this passage?
10. Are you one of the "gray hairs" now? Are you still bearing fruit? Although the type of service and fruit may be different, you should still be bearing fruit. What are some ways older folks can continue to minister to others? So ... is there a time when we are told we can "stop"?

I wrote this lesson the week that our faithful pastor, Chuck Smith, died. To me, he is such an example of this passage of Scripture. Although he was "up there" in years, as well as very sick, he was still bearing fruit. He was planted in the house of God; he was fresh and flourishing! He was going to "die with his boots on," as they say. May we follow that example of faithfulness, diligence, and integrity as we grow older, and bear even more fruit than in our youth!

11. Proverbs 16:32 is our memory verse this week. What principle was Solomon trying to teach them? What "fruit of the Spirit" is needed to "rule our own spirit"? Read Galatians 5:22-26. How is conquering "oneself" better than conquering a city? Why is it harder to control our own passions than lead an army?

12. Is the fruit of self-control evident in your life? Are you "slow to anger" or do you have a short fuse? What are the dangers of not "ruling your own city"?

We end this chapter with a reference to God's sovereignty once more. When you throw the dice, it might seem like it's mere "chance," but God controls everything and is Lord over all! When the Israelites threw the "Urim and Thummim," they believed that the decision was from the Lord (Numbers 27:21, 1 Samuel 14:3-37). They believed in the sovereign Lord and His will. Do you?