



"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 8

Our chapter this week is full of contrasts, great word pictures, and short sayings to remember. Chapter 12 consists of two subunits of proverbs, dealing with speech (1-14) and deed (15-28). Those subunits then seem to be broken down into partial units as well. There are a few verses in this chapter that really pack a wallop, if you know what I mean! Solomon goes to great lengths again to compare the righteous and the wicked in how they choose to live their lives, as well as in who they are. Lifestyle and character are really the two areas of discussion this week. How is our character revealed in how we plan, in how we speak, in how we work, and in how we socialize? Let's see if we have any adjustments we need to make. ☺

First Day

1. Read Proverbs 12:1-28. Are there any repeated words or phrases? How many "buts" are there?
2. What are some of the "topics" that Solomon brings up in this chapter?
3. Do you notice any type of pattern?
4. In verse 1, the phrase "loves instruction" literally means to "willingly accept." Why do you think Solomon began with these words?

Solomon seems to want to remind his son or students about the rough world we live in. It's like he's constantly warning him that there are two kinds of people, righteous and wicked, and we need to be able to discern between the two. His exhortations are much needed today, for we live in a sad, dark, ungodly world, filled with sin and evil. May we live "aware" of that fact, and purposely decide to stay on the path of righteousness.

5. According to verse 1, what are we considered if we hate reproof?
Those are some pretty strong words. Why does he say that? How does it relate to verse 15?

6. Which proverbs in this chapter would you consider your favorites, or which ones specifically spoke to your heart?

That's all for today. May you ponder the truths of this chapter as you go through your week! See you tomorrow

Memory Verse of the Week: "Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad." Proverbs 12:25

Second Day

Work on your memory verse. Can you give someone a good word?

1. Read Proverbs 12:1-28. Come back and focus on verses 1-3. The word "instruction" in verse 1 can also be translated "discipline" or "training." Why is it important for a believer to live a "disciplined" life and "train themselves in godliness" like Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:7?

Remember that many different words are used in Proverbs to describe the wise or righteous man. Verse two uses the word "good" to describe him. The wicked man, or the "crafty" man does not only not receive favor or "acceptance" by God, he is condemned, or "declared guilty."

In Israel, land was very valuable, and they cherished it. Solomon used a "root" analogy to paint them a great picture in verses 3 and 12.

2. According to verses 3 and 12, what happens to the "root of the righteous"? What character traits do these verses refer to?

3. According to Ephesians 3:17, where are the believer's roots?

To me, these verses speak about being secure, immovable, and permanent. If our roots are firmly planted in Him, we can never be moved. We can be shaken, blown, and even stripped of our branches, but we will stay grounded in Him and will bear fruit once more.

4. What do these verses tell us about this?

A. 1 Corinthians 15:58

B. 2 Corinthians 4:7-10

C. Matthew 7:24-27

D. Acts 20:22-24

E. Psalm 15b

F. Psalm 125:1-2

5. Do you feel "secure" in your relationship with Christ? When the winds blow and the storms rage, are you anchored in Him or do you tend to drift?

6. Is there a trial you're facing right now that is beating you down and threatening you? How can these verses encourage you?

7. Verse 12 tells us that the root of the righteous will bear fruit. Is there fruit in your life?

8. Can you explain verse 4 in your own words?

We must remember that when Proverbs speaks about women or their roles, Solomon is speaking from a man's point of view, because he is speaking to young men, or sons, who would be growing up and looking for wives. He isn't being "sexist" or prejudiced by advising them what to look for. So women, let's heed his words. The word "excellent" can be translated "noble" or of "noble character." Having strong character is above having physical attractiveness (11:22, 31:30). A wife with good character will make her husband proud and honored, as a crown on his head. Matthew Henry says she will make him "happy as a king." But if she is a disgrace to him, it's like his bones are decaying, giving him inner pain, causing weakness.

9. If you are a married woman, would you consider yourself to be an excellent wife? Why not ask your husband? What do you think he'd say?

See you tomorrow, ladies. I pray that we spend more time on "strengthening our character" than just painting the barn, if you know what I mean. 😊

Third Day

1. Read Proverbs 12:5-9. Solomon is contrasting the righteous and the wicked. Please make two categories and do the same.

Righteous**Wicked**

Solomon uses a building analogy in verse 7 to show us what happens to a wicked man. He uses the word "overthrown" which means "blown flat" like the tent in Gideon's dream in Judges 7:13. It refers to a sudden upset or reversal of a chain of events. His trap trapped himself! But the house of the righteous will stand; it is secure.

2. Verse 9 is interesting. How would you put it into a modern day analogy?

Well, since we don't really have servants anymore, what does this verse mean? This contrast is between a person who pretends to be self sufficient but isn't providing for his family, to the person who might be looked down upon, but is working hard to meet his own needs, or earns his own living. It's talking about putting status above the necessities of life, or maybe we can call it "keeping up with the Jones." Maybe it's buying the fancy car that everyone can see, yet not providing for your family in ways that you should. This proverb seems to be speaking about keeping up a good image in the society.

3. Does this description fit you at all? Do you worry about what your neighbors or friends think of you? Do you have the "keep up with the Jones" attitude in any area of your life, whether it is success, possessions, or how well your kids do compared to others? Any changes you need to make in this area?

hasty wealth (10:3, 12:2). The proverb is repeated with a different ending in 28:19. The book of Proverbs does not concern itself with the loss of food due to providence. But the truth that poor ways produce poverty must be balanced by the reality of poverty due to poor environment and poor government (10:4), the concern of Job and Ecclesiastes."

8. Read Proverbs 12:13-14. Explain the power of words to either damage or bless the one speaking.

9. We could probably talk about our words every week and be convicted every time! (At least I could.) What did your words accomplish today?

10. How can you use your words to bless those living in your home today? Try to be intentional in how you speak to others throughout the rest of the day.

God bless you, my friends!! (Notice my nice words!)

Fourth Day

Work on your memory verse!!!

1. Let's read Proverbs 12:15-22. What are two marks of a fool in verses 15-16?

2. How does the fact that a fool is right in his own eyes explain why he doesn't receive correction?

3. How do you react to insults? Do you immediately show your annoyance, or are you able to control your response?

Often, our anger flares up before we even hear the entire insult. Lane wrote, "Saul's anger flared up against his son before he even knew the facts (1 Samuel 20:30) and Nabal was angered by a peaceful request for hospitality (1 Samuel 25:10). Alas, even the godly are found guilty of this. Moses may have been more humble than any man on earth, but when the people accused him of bringing them out of Egypt to die in the desert, he cursed them and struck the rock from which came their water supply (Numbers 20:10)."

4. Verse 16 says a prudent man "covers" his shame, or "overlooks or conceals" it. How can we get better at doing this?

5. I read this week that we should be better at listening to what someone really says, not to what we fear he might be saying. What are your thoughts on this? Do you ever do this? Why is this so easy to do?

6. Read Proverbs 12:17-19. What does it mean to speak "like the piercings of a sword"?

7. Have you ever been "pierced" by someone's words? Have you ever been the one holding the sword, saying the "cutting remarks"? Have you gone back and tried to make them right?

8. How can the words of the wise promote health? (Ephesians 4:29, for example)

Reckless words are so dangerous. Words have such amazing power. Matthew Henry said, "The tongue can be death or life, poison or medicine, as it is used." So true.

9. I think we all would agree that a lying tongue is bad. Why do you think Solomon says that a lying tongue is "but for a moment"?

10. How much does lying bother you? Some it really does, while others seem to think it's not that big of a deal, since, well, everyone lies. Advertisers lie, politicians lie, the internet lies! How about you? Do you think lying is just a part of life, or do you truly understand the abomination it is to the Lord? An abomination signifies that liars so repulse His nature that He casts them aside. Think on that. Then write your thoughts.

Lies seem to have a short life span, don't they? "A moment" is translated "the blinking of the eye" or "lasts only while I wink." Usually lies are exposed very quickly; not always, but often. Especially because one lie leads to another lie, and so on.

11. Have you ever been caught in a tangled web of lies? If we're honest, I'm sure we all have. What's the best way to get out of the web?

I pray that we all value honesty and truth in our relationships. The devil is the father of lies (John 8:44), and we certainly don't want to resemble him! Honesty is always the best policy, right ladies? Let's strive to be completely honest and pure before our God. He knows the truth anyway!

Fifth Day

Write out your verse from memory.

1. Read Proverbs 12:20-28. What are "counselors of peace" blessed with? What does that mean? How can we become a counselor of peace?
2. These Proverbs really show us the difference between the dispositions of the wicked and the righteous. Whereas the righteous have joy, what's inside the wicked?
3. Verse 25 is an interesting one. What do you think Solomon is saying? How would this tie in to the tongue "promoting health" in verse 18?

6. Solomon advises extreme caution in verse 26. Why? What's he worried about?

The word "carefully" in verse 26 means "searches out" or "sends out for intelligent information."

7. How careful are you when choosing your friends? What should you be looking for in a friend?
8. We want to choose our friends carefully so we aren't led astray, but what about you? What kind of a friend are you? Are you just as careful not to lead your friends astray by compromise, carelessness, or laziness? How can you be a better friend?
9. We already discussed verse 27 while looking at the topic of work, but notice that a lazy man is too lazy to even cook what he hunts, or he doesn't value what he acquired. We can also say he doesn't "value what he owns." Do you value what you own? Are you too lazy to take care of what you've acquired? Have you taught this principle to your children?
10. Solomon wraps it up with the results of choosing your path. Where does the good path lead? The bad?
11. What specific verses really ministered to your heart this week?