



1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger. 2 The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness. 3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. 4 A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit. 5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent. 6 In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble. 7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so. 8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight. 9 The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness. 10 Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die. 11 Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men? (Prov 15:1-11)

The text today centers, again, upon character virtues and their opposites. Throughout all of nature, there are positives and negatives. In our world today, men are attempting to do, as Bing Crosby sang, "accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative." Were we successful at doing so, we would have to do without electricity, nighttime sleeping, and any honest question. There would be no 'down' for all would be up; no cold, because all would be hot; no space travel requiring the thrust of rocketry; and very little of any of the common benefits of nature. Perhaps I exaggerate, but you get the idea! I have heard Bible teachers claim that we must be POSITIVE in reading the Bible. Look for the GOOD and ignore the Negatives. What would that mean? It would mean that we must ignore 50% of God's Word for He has as many negatives as positives in His Word. Without the possibility of evil, there could be no righteousness. So God places before us both blessings and curses for our behaviors. There also would be no love if there was no possibility of hate. Give that some thought.

1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger. I wish more Christian evangelists understood this principle and more managers as well. Instead of hammering the lost over the head with the “fire and brimstone” of damnation to the lost, why not convince them of the beauty of God words. Introduce them to that which they can grasp and proceed then from the known to teach the unknown. There will be plenty of time to teach the severity of God’s wrath once the heart is attune to faith – even if very elemental faith. We are to feed the lost person with milk, and not with strong meat; all the more for being in a condition of fault. Once strong spiritual bones and muscle begin to develop, we may then proceed to the meat of God’s Word.

Is not the tongue the fountain of our heart? Do not the treasures, or wickedness, of the heart emerge with our speech? 2. The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness. “Think before you speak” my father used to vainly advise me. How many times have I made a fool of myself, and still do at times, by speaking before thinking the matter through? Once we have given thought to our answer, we speak only that which we know to be true in order to avoid appearing the fool. Abraham Lincoln once said: “It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool, then to speak out and remove all doubt.” When we speak from a venue of knowledge, reason, and friendliness, the wrath of the other party will be turned away. Wrath blinds us to truth, so the wise man will attempt to vanquish the wrath in his friend by speaking from knowledge and patience.

3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Some of our readers may recall the obverse side of the Great Seal of the United States which depicts the Great Pyramid of Giza with the Chief Cornerstone suspended above its proper place on the Pyramid. Inside the Chief Cornerstone is the All-Seeing Eye of the Lord. Being centered on the peak of the Pyramid, there is nothing hidden from all sides thereof. It is not commonly known that the builders of the Great Pyramid neglected to raise the Chief Cornerstone to its place until they had so constructed the Pyramid to make the lifting of that pre-cut stone into place impossible. So the Great Pyramid remains unfinished. It was the largest manmade structure of the ancient world, and now the new. *Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* (Matt 21:42-44) The Jewish rulers had rejected the Chief Cornerstone; therefore, there building remains incomplete. So do our buildings remain ‘unfinished and in ruins’ if we reject the Chief Cornerstone which is Jesus Christ.

4 A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit. What has the tongue to do with the Tree of Life? The Tree of Life, in Eden and also in Paradise, speaks only Truth and Wisdom, but the perverse tongue speaks from a contrary tree – the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In our daily lives, our words have consequences that reveal the fruit hidden deep in our hearts. If we offer words of peace and comfort to the widow and orphan, our words become a Tree of Life. If all is condemnation and profane that we utter, we spread gloom and death in our wake. The tongue of truth saves lives – the tongue of the deceitful promotes sin and error. There are ALWAYS opposing tongues of Good and Evil in the Garden of Life.

5 A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is

prudent. It is true that a father will always speak out of knowledge, experience and love to his son; but the son that believes his own meager knowledge to surpass that of a loving father is an outright fool. What of the one who despises the counsel of his Father in Heaven? He is an exponentially greater fool than any other. Those who hear and obey the instructions of their father, and their Heavenly Father, will be accounted not only wise, but righteous.

6 In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble. The House of the Righteous is the Temple of God in this world. The heart that possesses Christ possesses all of the riches of Heaven. The perceived wealth of the wicked is fleeting to say the least, and illusory to say the most. The ill-gotten wealth of the wicked will only purchase for the wicked a six foot by three foot long home. The grave gapes ahead as a reward for all wicked and their wealth. They will take none with them, but leave all their wealth for others to take. Despite their best efforts to secure their wealth in the flimsy banks of the world, they will eventually leave this life naked and penniless – the same manner in which they entered upon life but damned to boot.

7 The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so. God teaches His truth repetitively for retention. This truth is a summary of those that have preceded the verse above. The broad dispersion of truth benefits all of humanity including its advocates. The modus operandi of the foolish attempts to horde power to itself through the keeping of secrets and proclamations of lies. Please do not believe that I refer to Washington, D.C.....

8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight. Many misconstrue this truth. *1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* (1 Cor 13:1-3) Our alms and good works do not save us, only a surrender of the heart to God will save us. Therefore, it is our prayers of repentance and acceptance that delights the Lord. All of our labors, without love, are vain. Do I sin by plowing my field or delivering newspapers? Yes, I do if I have not the love of God in my heart. ***An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.*** (Proverbs 21:4)

9 The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness. This verse reinforces the previous. There is nothing that the wicked can do that is pleasing to the Lord. Those who belong to the only OTHER family of the earth – that of Satan – can do nothing to satisfy God. But His own children are loved by God and they will follow God after the Law of Love.

10 Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die. When a man has known God and falls into apostasy, he will find any reminder of his wayward sins to be a matter of contempt. Likewise, those who hate the Law of God shall die and be buried just as the rich man who neglected Lazarus. Yet, Lazarus was escorted by Angels to the bosom of Abraham.

11 Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men. This is the unseen world of which Hell, destruction, and the hearts of men are open to God. There is nothing hidden from the All-Seeing Eye. But Hell and destruction are not in the future for those who love the Lord. *For thou wilt not leave*

my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. (Psalms 16:10) As we know from the Gospels, God did not leave His Holy One – Jesus Christ – in Hell, nor did He allow His Holy Body to see corruption having been raised on the Third Day. Once you have closed your eyes in the sleep of death in this world, will you open them in the bosom of Abraham having shared in the Resurrection of the righteous of Christ?