



17 Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long. 18 For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off. 19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. 20 Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: 21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags. 22 Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. 23 Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding. 24 The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. 25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice. 26 My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. 27 For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. 28 She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men. 29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? 30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. 31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. 32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. 33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. 34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. 35 They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again. (Proverbs 23:17-35)

The principles and proverbs of life set forth in these verses are greatly rejected by modern America and the world at large. Immoderation in all things leads to depravity and gloom. Too much meat, too much wine, too much leisure – all have brought our country to a staggering incapacity to be the noble free of decades past. Satisfying our lusts always before our responsibilities has led to a backwater of human oysters instead of a nation of eagles. We have come to believe that we can no longer care for our own needs and have sought out the help of Caesar. But every penny Caesar doles out comes with a tiny, but binding, string attached. We are so tightly wrapped in these many twines that we are no longer free, but vassals on our own land. God has warned us against such servitude in Goshen, and that is why Caesar hates God so intensely. A nation whose God is the Lord cannot be brought under servitude in the way that our nation has presently been brought to endure. When God is no longer welcome in our public forums, He dismisses Himself and will not intrude to save us in time of want and famine – why should He?

17 "Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long. 18 For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off. 19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way." During the hours of darkness, when good men and women are sleeping, why do we arouse to covet the false lights of the cocktail lounges and glittering lights of gambling halls. How many have been doomed to ruin by these false lights? How many mothers and children have gone wanting in rags because of the sins of the fathers? Surely, the darkness of night is a

blessing to the sleep of the honest; and the sunrise ALWAYS approaches to spread its brilliance across the land. We observe the excesses and deceitful ways of the ungodly and envy their ill-gotten wealth. Why, we ask, are these so prosperous and yet so full of wicked thoughts? Their ill-gotten wealth will be the means of their own great sorrows and ruin – in God’s time. Wisdom ALWAYS calls out for us to hear its voice! The sly and deceitful whispers of the devil are so easily heard in the noisy thoroughfare, but the voice of wisdom must cry out to be heard. If we hear that voice, and respond, the compass of the Holy Spirit shall guide our hearts aright.

Need I remind the reader that these proverbs are directed to children – and we are ALL children? 20 *“Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: 21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.”* It seems quite probably that Solomon paid much attention to the teachings of his father, David, for his proverbs so closely parallel the wisdom of David in the Psalms. Wine is a mind-altering drug. It may relax a tired and weary body if taken in moderation, but if taken habitually and excessively, it lowers the mind’s inhibitions against sin. It is impossible to be a consort with winebibbers and the gluttonous without adopting their unseemly ways. This is true, especially, of youth. The young man or lady will emulate the ways of the company they keep. I heard a country preacher in Louisiana once describe old Joe, the sinner. Old Joe loved alcohol and was a daily attendant at the local bar. He loved fancy cigars and frequented the tobacco shop regularly. No weekend passed without Joe appearing in the casino. He was, as well, a philanderer and was a familiar face to the women of ill-repute of the French Quarter. But old Joe, so wrapped up in his depravity and sin, had no time for God. His form never darkened the door of the many churches of New Orleans.

In the process of time, old Joe’s name came up on the roster kept by the Angel of Death. He was summoned, perfunctorily, to go to his ‘reward.’ Must I tell you that every reward is not necessarily pleasant? As the funeral ambulance carried old Joe to the cemetery, it passed through the French Quarter. Many women of the night walked along the morning streets after a night of carousing, but old Joe took no notice of them. The ambulance passed by the local bar and cigar shop, but old Joe took no note of them. It passed the familiar casinos, but old Joe was mindless of their glittering neon lights. Why? Because old Joe was as dead as a door nail. He had been dead all the days of his life, and now he was condemned to an eternity of death and darkness in the torments of Hell. It was too late for old Joe to make a conscious decision for Christ. We were all dead in trespasses and sin, just as dead as old Joe, before we came to the life-giving Fountain of Living Waters. We may have our temporary reward in this life and serve a living Hell in eternity, or we may enjoy the fruits and blessings of God in this life, and in the life to come. It is up to us.

22 *“Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old. 23 Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding. 24 The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. 25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.”* Solomon gives us some stark principles by which we shall be profited in our earthly walk: 1) Take the counsel of the father who bore you seriously. We all had earthly fathers who, hopefully, taught us moral lessons of life; but we should, as well, have a Heavenly Father by whom every Christian is begotten by adoption. We will all love our mothers when we are young and helpless, but the love of many turn to a burning contempt of them when she grows old and becomes a like burden to us. What wretched hearts could ever hate their mother is beyond my understanding, but clearly, it is a problem of our day. 2) We should go to any length to

grasp the truth. If necessary, we should purchase truth with the last penny in our pocket; however, the good news is that truth is free for the asking. *“Ask and ye shall receive; knock and it shall be opened unto you.”* We should never SELL the truth! How many fancy-dressed clergy stand in the pulpits with only one thought in mind: “How shall I fleece these lambs?” Modern Bible versions, copyrighted to aggrandize profit, are yet another cheap means of selling a corrupted truth. Then we are told that wisdom draws our attention to the need for truth. We seek the understanding upon which that truth will become understanding to us. 3) A father will always rejoice at the righteousness of his son or daughter. A happy father will also be a GENEROUS father in imparting blessings to such children. Do you believe our merciful Father in Heaven is any different? 4) If our father is rejoiced at a wise son, how much more the loving mother whose love is unconditional, but enormously rewarded by the wisdom of her children. We must forever honor our fathers and mothers!

26 “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. 27 For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. 28 She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.” What wisdom is distilled in the counsel of Solomon here! If a son or daughter gives their heart to their father, then all that the father does and knows shall be studied by them. How much greater the son or daughter who gives their heart to the Heavenly Father. They will diligently study His ways and His works to be like Him. Though a carnal whore is the example, the object is greater than this. In the eyes of God, adultery and idolatry are the same. A Christian belongs to the Bride of Christ (the Church). If we whore after other gods of sex, money, or drugs, we have made those inclinations an idol and have not been faithful to the Bridegroom of our Church. Just as a prostitute makes her bed in Hell, she entices the young boy to the gossamer curtains of her bedroom to steal him away from every thought of virtue and goodness. But so do the idols and false gods of this world steal a man away from the true and Living God.

A favorite adage of the drunk may be heard from the bar: “It just don’t get any better than this!” Truly, it does not, for the drunk kills another handful of brain cells with every additional drink. 29 “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? 30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.” The drunk tortures his body with drink which offers no redeeming benefit. Feeling himself to be bullet-proof after five drinks, he is inclined to boast and fight men of much greater stature. He loses control of his tongue and is a laughing stock to the sober. Who on earth have the greater woe? Those drunks by whom woe is self-inflicted. So many innocent lives, too, are lost to the irresponsibility of the drunk. After a few sips of quality wine, the drunk forgets the quality and goes for quantity. Wherever he can find a substance with alcohol as its base, there he goes to drink.

31 “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. 32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.” The abused substance is not inherently wicked, it is the abuser that is wicked and made a slave to the substance. The redness of the wine in the cup denotes the growing strength of the wine. The wine sparkles in the cup and is enticing to the drinker. It moves in the cup by foaming to overflow. It enters the mouth and is sweet and pleasant to the tongue. After it is consumed, and too late to avoid, it is as deadly as a serpent – as deadly as the fiery serpents of the Wilderness. It will eventually destroy the strong pillars of the temple of the body.

Here we see the most dreadful and damaging effects of either spiritual, or

physical intoxication. 33 *“Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. 34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. 35 They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.”* When we are under the compelling influence of alcohol, or of diverse gods, our values change and our perceptions are corrupted. Our tongues utter words that are characteristic of a perverse heart. Error and deception flood over the soul of those drunk with wine of the vine, or the wine of apostasy, and drown the soul beyond hope. We are taken off balance and find it difficult to appear respectable. Every excuse of the drunk is to the external factor and never the internal weakness. Those who are under the spell of false religion are of like characteristic. They may make horrendous errors and are found out. They seem to repent, but after recovery, seek the very same that drove them to despair.

Please read the dire warning of the great, false church of the end times: *“I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.”* (Rev 17:3-6)

(The knowing heart will understand.)