



Proverbs 2026

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“Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked. “How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” Acts 8:30b- 31a

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Day 1 | Proverbs Intro

The Foundation of Wisdom- Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Hello friends, and welcome to the Book of Proverbs. And what a book considered by many to be the greatest collection of wise sayings ever assembled. What a treasure!

We all know what it's like to read a quote with such insight and impact that it just stops you because it articulates so clearly and powerfully a truth. Proverbs is a trove of those sayings. It is time.

Time to grow in wisdom, time to learn discernment and understanding, to approach the great challenges of life and respond well. To do right, to face confusion and find insight, to see and perceive and choose rightly.

Proverbs is for wisdom, and Proverbs tells us that wisdom is found in a multitude of counselors. That means it's good to listen to a variety of teachers. Proverbs will also encourage us to walk with the wise and grow wise. So I brought some friends, some of my favorite teachers who I go to for wisdom.

We'll start this journey with two of us here. My name is Khris Langham and my good friend Peyton Jones will be joining us for this adventure. Peyton, how do you read Proverbs and what is wisdom?

Peyton Jones: I think a lot of people struggle with the definition of wisdom. Maybe the best way to think about what wisdom is, is to start with what we all know really well. Foolishness. We're all experts on that. Folly is the opposite of wisdom.

We've all watched someone chunk up their life and thought, oh man, they just blew it. So Proverbs is a book that's written to show you the opposite, how not to blow it so much or so hard.

Wisdom is the ability to live life well and skillfully. Living by design, making life work.

Just in case we're fuzzy on what wisdom is, verses one through seven give us ten synonyms for wisdom, instruction, insight wise, dealing, prudence, knowledge, discretion, learning, guidance, understanding and teaching. You know how you take selfies and depending upon your angle, you can look different. This is different angles on wisdom. What wisdom looks like from different angles in different situations.

Kris Langham: I like that changing your vantage point can change the way you see not only yourself, but a work of art or a wonder of nature. Proverbs does that for life.

Repeated themes weave throughout, and each time we come back with a new perspective. Now the first seven verses are really the introduction and purpose of this book.

So let's stop and look at some of those vantage points on wisdom right here. Join me at verse one, the Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel.

Peyton Jones: Now verse one gives us the author, King Solomon, son of David, the man given a gift by God himself of wisdom, the wisest man in the world. Now, that may have been hyperbole, but one thing we know about Solomon he too was too often a fool.

Like all of us. He missed the mark even when he knew better. And much of this collection is Solomon offering to us the chance to learn from his mistakes.

And I don't believe that Solomon wrote all of these. Solomon was both a writer and collector of wisdom. Solomon interacted with many leaders among many nations and gathered wisdom.

Because truth is truth, and truth comes from the Lord. And whatever place you find it, these are gathered here and assembled into the Word of God.

Kris Langham: Then verse two begins the purpose for gaining wisdom and instruction, for understanding words of insight. So here we begin.

Those synonyms. Proverbs are for gaining wisdom. More street smarts for life instruction. This isn't just for being. It's for listening and growing. And here as we walk through the first few verses, I want to show you how I come at the Proverbs.

It's pretty simple, but it really helps me get the most out of it. The content in Proverbs is rich, so I like to slow down and just define words.

You know the key ones. I'm actually walking through Proverbs right now with a young man who happens to be dating my daughter. And so much of what we do is just slow down to define the words and then put them back into the sentence.

Look back at verse two for understanding words of insight. Understanding is that aha moment, the light bulb, I get it. Words of insight that's seeing into a thing. Past the surface to get how it works.

Then verse three for receiving instruction in prudent behavior. Prudent is a great word. It's not the word prudish. Don't get confused. Prudent means knowing the right thing to do at the right time. And what a skill that is.

How many times have you been desperate to just know the right thing to do? And when it's about doing? Back in verse three, doing what is right and just and fair.

Peyton Jones: Now that doing brings up a question. Isn't that what the law was written for? Proverbs was in fact written after the law. Now, you might think that the law should be enough to get people to live right.

But I think we all know that a law abiding citizen can still be a selfish jerk, a law abider can still twist the law to selfish ends, and all of us can know God's law but failed to bring it to bear in everyday life.

The way I interact, do business. Buy, sell. Make deals, do homework. And that makes me the fool.

And of course we can hear any instruction and not always apply it. And so what Proverbs does is takes the law of God and it actually applies it to your work, family relationships and business dealings.

It deals with the habits of your speech, the faux pas you make with your tongue. It takes all that the law says about righteousness, justice and equity and brings it into the kitchen or out onto the football field.

And these are all the places you're going to really need wisdom because it's where other people are. And I don't know about you, but life would be so much easier if it weren't for other people.

Kris Langham: Yes. And then back in verse four, the Proverbs are here for giving prudence to those who are simple. Simple is a Bible word for the way we all think and act before we get it. When we apply the right rule to the wrong situation, or we hurt a friend without meaning to. When I say what did I do?

And everyone just looks at me like I'm an idiot. It's moments like that when I need prudence. Back in verse four for giving knowledge and discretion to the young. I've worked with kids and teens for over two decades, and Proverbs is my go to book. The young need knowledge and discretion.

Discretion means acting under your own ability and judgment unsupervised. We want that for our kids, but they need wisdom first. And I love verse five. Let the wise listen and add to their learning and let the discerning get guidance. Proverbs aren't just for the simple. They're for the wise. The truly wise are always growing.

Peyton Jones: Then verse six for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise, and pay close attention to her. Verse seven. This verse is the crux, the cornerstone of the whole book. Listen carefully, verse seven. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Kris Langham: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. That one really challenged me when I first read Proverbs, and it's a key phrase. You find it again in Proverbs 9:10, in Psalm 111 and Job 28. The fear of the Lord is the beginning. It's the starting place. But why is that?

Peyton Jones: I think what this verse does is connect our walking in wisdom with God Himself. Wisdom is relational. It doesn't just guide me in relating wisely with others.

It also helps me walk wisely with God. In fact, wisdom starts there. It starts with God looking at him, knowing that there is a creator who designed the universe, who knows how life works.

Wisdom starts with humbly acknowledging his wisdom and seeking to make his wisdom your own. This is why Proverbs gives wisdom a personality, so that we remember that there is a person who is behind all of this, and in fact, thousands of years later, wisdom personified will walk around on two legs. His name was Jesus and he would show us what wisdom lived out looks like for human beings.

Kris Langham: The fear of God. Now there's a phrase that packs a wallop to recognize who God is and stand awestruck by his power, by his love, by his wisdom. I was really feeling that fear of God for the first time in my life. But I read this.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. And I wondered, beginning because when I arrived here, I had a lot of schooling. I almost had a degree in engineering at that point. I had plenty of knowledge. So how could the fear of the Lord be the beginning of it?

I pondered over it for some time. I had knowledge that was real math, science, history, philosophy. I studied, but I learned that the word here in verse seven means more than just the starting line. It means foundation. I had gained knowledge, but I had also skipped step one. I never laid a cornerstone. I had no foundation beneath my science and philosophy.

And when I finally did find the fear of the Lord, I had to do some careful deconstruction and reconstruction with the knowledge I had and the fuller my view of God, the stronger my foundation is for all of my knowledge.

But then the next line says, fools despise wisdom and discipline. So what do you think that means? Who is this fool we're introduced to in Proverbs? And how did they despise wisdom?

Peyton Jones: Well, I've got some bad news. The fool is all of us. Everybody plays the fool sometimes no exception to the rule. We all have those moments where we think wisdom. Yeah. I don't want to listen right now. Wisdom is calling. But we send it straight to voicemail.

Proverbs is asking us to pick up. It's inviting us to listen, to pay attention. And so we're going to head through the rest of the book of Proverbs. We'll meet you back again for the rest of chapter one, and we'll take our journey together as fools on our way to wisdom.

Day 2 | Proverbs 1

Wisdom Set 1: Listen - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs, chapter one today. And after a short introduction in the first seven verses, Solomon opens things up with a direct address in verse eight. Listen, my son, to your father's instruction, and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They are a Garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck. Peyton, what do you see here?

Peyton Jones: Well, from the very first word and repeated over and again throughout the book, Proverbs calls us to listen. It's the same word repeated a billion times a day, all around the planet, from the heart of every parent who desperately desires their precious child to pay attention. Add markers.

Estimate that the average person sees between 4 and 10,000 ads a day, every day, 4000 voices vying for your attention. And you must decide which voice to hear. Which will you skip and to whom will you listen?

Kris Langham: The voice here in Proverbs is a distinct one. Listen, my son, to your father. Solomon is writing to his boy. And we listen in on that fatherly voice of godly wisdom. And I appreciate that. It's personal. It's not to whom it may concern. It's my son. Now, some of us had that wise father. Some of us didn't.

But regardless of our situation here, we get to listen in. And better than just eavesdropping, I think the best way to read this is to hear the Lord, our father in heaven, speaking to us. Let him address you. My daughter, my son.

Peyton Jones: Proverbs is for all of us. That said, perhaps it's fitting to address young men as experience will tell you that young men are far more likely to do something foolish than any other demographic. But the audience is not limited, and neither is the source. Back in verse eight, and do not forsake your mother's teaching. First you have to listen. Then you have to retain.

Don't forsake it. Dad's wisdom. Mom's teaching. Keep it. Just stop and consider a moment. The difference made by one wise mentor, mom, dad, coach, teacher, or more strikingly, consider the consequences of no parent. A teen with no mentor to guide and instruct. That's a life in serious danger of incarceration. Or worse.

Kris Langham: And if that's you, if you don't have that parent, then Proverbs is even more so written for you. The Lord is father to the fatherless. And the first instruction for all of us comes in verse ten.

My son, if sinful men entice you, do not give in to them. If they say, come along with us, let's lie in wait for innocent blood. Let's ambush some harmless soul.

Let's swallow them alive. Like the grave and whole. Like those who go down to the pit. We will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder. Cast lots with us. We will all share the loot. My son, do not go along with them. Do not set foot on their paths.

So the very first warning is about the wrong friends and peer pressure. Every parent knows bad friends can destroy a whole life.

Peyton Jones: The danger here is real and the temptation is powerful. Now the words may be different in your world, but the message is the same. Don't wait for what you want. Take it and notice the belonging the foolish crowd offers in verse 14. We will all share the loot.

Thugs and gangs have roamed the world's streets for ages. And they make the same empty promises they always have. The world will offer you a million different ways to get rich. The easy way to get the rewards without the work. And time and again they land you in debt, jail or the grave.

But here in Proverbs, wisdom is the slow burn. It comes over time. It comes with work. It comes with patience and concentration.

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, Satan was that voice offering the shortcut to turn the stone to bread. I'll give you every kingdom. Just worship me. But Jesus chose the hard road.

Kris Langham: And that road is key here in chapter one. Look at verse 15. My son, do not go along with them. Do not set foot on their paths. That word path is repeated throughout Proverbs. When temptation calls, it's not just about a single decision. Every choice sets you on a path.

Wisdom would have you look down the road to see where it leads. In verse 16, for their feet rush into evil. They are swift to shed blood. How useless to spread a net where every bird can see it. These men lie in wait for their own blood. They ambush only themselves. Such are the paths of all who go after ill gotten gains. It takes away the life of those who get it. So the fools have been silenced. And quite abruptly, another voice rings out verse 20.

Out in the open. Wisdom calls aloud. She raises her voice in the public square on top of the wall. She cries out at the city gate. She makes her speech. The voice we hear is female and it echoes loudly in the public square. Who is she?

Peyton Jones: This voice is wisdom herself. Wisdom is given a personality like a beautiful woman. She's the one you're seeking. And although you can search all your life for the perfect woman, wisdom is not hard to find. She's crying out in the street, at the crossroads in the marketplace where it's already loud.

What a contrast that is to folly. Whereas wisdom calls out loudly for all to see and hear. Folly is whispered by fools and hides in the shadows. Despite the distracting noises. Wisdom is saying. I'm here for any and all who wish to hear me. If you tune in to me. You can hear me above the din of the madding crowd.

But you have to listen. And so that's why the application keeps repeating where she's saying, listen, listen, listen to me.

She's crying out to be listened to. Despite those 4000 messages being shot at us by advertisers, social media and pop ups. It's like adjusting your dial on your car radio. The message is out there. The broadcast is being sent out into the world. We just need to tune in to K wisdom. Turn the dial and listen in at verse 23. Repent at my rebuke. Then I will pour out thoughts to you. I will make known to you my teachings.

Let's turn the dial and listen in at verse 23. Repent at my rebuke. Then I will pour out my thoughts to you. I will make known to you my teachings. So wisdom says, if you listen to me, I will guide you and you'll be okay. Note the promise of safety and security. This is covenant talk. If you listen to me, I'll look after you. All of these same promises were bound up within the law. But here the law goes with you to work, to school, and into your daily lives. And those promises follow us there and everywhere.

That's no guarantee, however, that your life won't still have problems or you won't suffer some of the consequences of other people's foolishness. Like we said last time. Life is so much easier without other people. But wisdom will help us navigate other people's foolishness as well as our own.

Kris Langham: In true covenant style, wisdom also tells us what will happen down the road if you don't listen. Verse 24. But since you refuse to listen when I call and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand. Since you disregard all my advice and do not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh when disaster strikes you. I will mock when calamity overtakes you.

The imagery is jarring, and I am all too familiar with the scene. When you've gone down the road and you knew you knew the right thing to do. Wisdom spoke, but you mocked it. You took the wrong risk, made the wrong turn. And now that voice rings out and mocks you. I told you not to. This is regret.

Regret is the worst. It eats at you now. You're desperate for wisdom. But in verse 28. Then they will call to me. But I will not answer. They will look for me, but will not find me. Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord. Sometimes there's no undoing the foolish mistake.

And notice that phrase again in verse seven. The fear of the Lord was the beginning, the foundation.

Kris Langham: Now, for those who rejected Wisdom's call, she makes it clear it's not just wisdom. You mocked, you hated knowledge, and you chose not to fear God. And this little section is quite personal for me.

For years of my life, I thought I was the smart one, did well in school, smarter than the average bear. And I had a nice set of excuses for ignoring all the God stuff. And I felt good about it, I felt content. Only I wasn't content. I was complacent, and I hid behind my so-called smarts.

But I remember the day I read this chapter and verse 32. Cut me like a knife. For the waywardness of the simple will kill them. And the complacency of fools will destroy them. And that verse was a mirror, clear as day. If I don't listen. Destruction lies down this path.

But in verse 33, one last promise of hope. But whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease without fear of harm. There's still a chance.

Will we listen?

Read Proverbs one and we'll be back here for more wisdom next time.

Day 3 | Proverbs 2

Goonies Never Say Die! - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs as we explore God's wisdom in chapter two. Peyton Jones and Kris Langham with you again with one of the critical passages in my own Faith walk, going back more than 20 years to my first year of pursuing God.

I was in my early 20s, and this chapter spoke so clearly and profoundly to my young and searching soul. It has impacted my approach to the Bible ever since. It's also one of my all time favorite chapters to walk through with youth. What's so special about it? Let's find out together, Peyton. Take us in.

Peyton Jones: Chapter two picks up again. The words of Solomon to his son in verse one reads, My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding. Indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it. As for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

Kris Langham: So the chapter opens with a call again to accept words of wisdom and store up his wise commands. Yet there is more to finding wisdom than just listening. Watch the progression of intensity in verse two. Turning your ear and applying your heart. These are not passive. They require something of you. Move. Respond. Get your heart involved. Care about this. Then verse three steps it up. Call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding.

There's a desperation in these words. A longing to make sense of the world. And this is where my story connects. A 20 years old, I had dedicated much of my young life to understanding how the world works. Physics, chemistry, and other sciences explained so many wonders around me. But when it came to the things of God, I claimed ignorance.

I would say that no one can prove God. So I disregarded faith as unscientific. Yet at the same time, so many parts of my life were a mystery. It was like my life was a bunch of puzzle boxes, and every time I tried to put one together, it was just missing pieces. But at some point, I finally got honest with myself. How can I claim that God is unprovable if I haven't even tried?

So I picked up a Bible with no real intention of believing it. I just thought I should give it a fair chance. And this passage, this one got me. Turn your ear. Apply your heart. Cry aloud. So I did. I began asking questions to a god I didn't even yet believe in. Started writing them down even. And searching for answers. And wouldn't you know, the one place I found so many answers was the Bible.

Peyton Jones: Then verse four steps it up yet again. And if you look for it. As for silver and search for it. As for hidden treasure. Okay, now it's getting good. This is a call to adventure. To a quest. This is a hobbit in search of a dragon. It's Indiana Jones deciphering clues on an amulet. Or Nicolas Cage following a map on the back of the Declaration of Independence.

This is a few kids from the goon docks on a quest to find one eyed Willy's treasure. Only this treasure has no gold doubloons. This treasure is wisdom. And at that I stop and ask myself, do I search for it? Do I value wisdom and understanding enough to really seek it out? Do I follow clues and uncover truths to make sense of this life?

Kris Langanham: And notice the if in verse one, verse three and verse four, if you ask. If you search Solomon's leading up to something here. A reward for the seeking. But have you ever noticed in those classic movies that when they find the treasure, they discover that the real treasure is something else entirely, something they found along the way, usually in the relationships formed with those on the adventure with them. So what about here?

Read carefully. If you search, then in verse five, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. What is the real treasure? What is the reward for all that seeking? God never promises to answer every question or explain every mystery, but you will understand the fear of the Lord.

Now there's a treasure unexpected, the fear of the Lord. Remember where we heard that before in chapter one? It's the beginning. It's like you're playing a Zelda game, and you happen upon a cave with the rarest of all treasures, like the Sword of Link.

For me, the fear of the Lord is that awestruck respect for God that sets my creator in his rightful place and takes me off the throne. That is the perspective that puts every mystery into a different light. Sometimes it gives me the answers I wanted, and other times it just reminds me I don't need all the answers.

Peyton Jones: And there is another reward. Back in verse five, you will find the knowledge of God. This is it. This is the treasure to know your creator and watch the wording, not the knowledge about God. The knowledge of God. This is personal, relational. The truest treasures in every quest are the relationships formed on the journey. And the quest for wisdom is a journey with God. And the quest for wisdom is a journey with God.

Kris Langham: And in verse six, you begin to understand some of the extra benefits of knowing the Lord. For the Lord gives wisdom from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. So knowing God is treasure enough in itself. But then you realize I just made friends with the source. Like discovering your new best friend gets you backstage passes to like everything. All the wisdom, all the understanding.

Peyton Jones: And verse seven has more. He holds success in store for the upright. He is a shield to those whose walk is blameless. For he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.

Now those are some serious perks of success, protection, and notice that he guards the path and the way for the just and faithful. And look at verse nine, then you will understand what is right and just and fair. Every good path.

Have you ever struggled over what path to take? A fork in life's road or a decision over matters of fairness and equity, and you desperately want to know which way is right, what is just and fair.

Here are the grand rewards for seeking. God's wisdom is to know every good path. Pay attention to that word. Path is at the heart of this whole chapter.

Kris Langham: And verse ten is one close to my own heart. For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. I remember reading that as a young believer and it was the perfect description. Yes, that is what happened to me. It is the most apt description of my own experience. I sought wisdom, but found God.

And when I knew God, I didn't just know wisdom. It entered my heart, my internal guide, my inner voice. And the more I sought, the more I found it directing me. And knowledge became pleasant to my soul. What a beautiful feeling that is when truth just feels right inside and the right and the just, sits down comfortably in your heart.

Peyton Jones: The second half of the chapter is all about wisdom and discretion, protecting you and guarding your path. Look at verse 11. Discretion will protect you and understanding will guard you. And here we see that wisdom is a defense. It protects you from your own foolish decisions. You don't have to fall into that old pit or give in to that old temptation again and again. The real key to it is not just seeing the temptation, it's seeing the path. Because that temptation isn't just a decision. It is a fork in the road and it leads down a long road. Six times in this chapter, Solomon describes paths and six more times he lists our ways.

Kris Langham: Three sections follow here in verses 12 to 15. Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men. They've left the straight paths. Their ways are dark and their paths are crooked. Yet wisdom sees through that darkness. And discerns the end of those paths.

Peyton Jones: Then in verses 16 to 19, wisdom will save you also from the adulterous woman. Sexual temptation is a threat like no other, and adultery is a pathway to sure destruction. Solomon describes wicked men and the adulterous woman, but the labels are readily switched.

And whether your temptation is male or female, whether person or pornography, the danger and destruction are the same. And once again, the path is key. In verse 18, surely her house leads down to death and her paths to the spirits of the dead.

Kris Langham: Yet wisdom offers another path. Verse 20 invites us to walk in the ways of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous. And that path of life leads to a land like the Emerald City. Follow the yellow brick road. Yet this is no emerald illusion. The land at the end of this path is a good land to live in and remain in a homeland. And there's no place like home. And as elusive as that promise is for so many peoples, it is the destiny that God promises for those who seek wisdom and find him. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and pursue justice. Those who follow his path to the end will find a homeland. Read Proverbs two. Follow the treasure map and we'll meet you back here next time.

Day 4 | Proverbs 3

Trust the Lord - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the Book of Proverbs and back to the quest for wisdom, chapter three. Today, as we come to one of the Bible's most pervasive themes and one of its most beloved passages, and the chapter reads as though we're listening in on a dad talk. It's advice from father to son.

The father does the talking because his son is leaving, heading out into the world to find his way. It's an endearing moment. Dad's final words of wisdom at the airport before his daughter boards the plane to college, or at the bus stop with his son before his first day on a career job.

Ever listen in on a conversation like that? For a lot of us, it's a reminder of what we didn't have. We listen because we didn't get that from dad and we needed it. Or for us dads, we listen in for pointers on how to be that kind of dad. It's not easy, but here Proverbs lets us listen in on a dad talk from the wisest dad around Solomon. And the best way to read this chapter is to hear it from the heart of your Heavenly Father. He has wisdom for you. Peyton is with us again and ready to open. Proverbs three.

Peyton Jones: The chapter begins again with Solomon reminding his son. Do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart. Solomon knows that his son must leave home, but he's desperate to know that he won't leave wisdom, that he will remember what he's taught, because that truth will bring him life, peace, and prosperity.

Kris Langham: And along that path of life, he gives His Son two Guideposts in verse three. Let love and faithfulness never leave you. Bind them around your neck. Write them on the tablet of your heart. These two guides for life's decisions change everything.

The word love here is also translated as kindness or mercy. It's a devoted and caring love. Be kind, be merciful, and then faithfulness.

That's a loyalty that is true to friends and faithful to commitment. Bind those two around your neck like a chain with these two Guideposts that you consult for every decision. Write them on the tablet of your heart like a tattoo inside your chest, so that everything that comes out of it has to pass these two questions. Is it kind? Is it faithful? Let those two never leave you.

Peyton Jones: And the result of living that way. Verse four then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man. People appreciate kindness. They value loyalty. If those are your Guideposts, people will like you. Think about it. When someone lives that way, you favor them. Everyone cheers for them, wants to help them mention their name and everyone says good things. Even God says good things about that person.

Kris Lingham: And verse five brings us to one of the Bible's most beloved passages and one of its most crucial themes. Dad's voice deepens as the weight of his words sink in. This. This is the one thing. Get this one thing wrong and nothing else matters. Get it right and everything falls into place. Verse five trust in the Lord with all your heart. And lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways. Submit to him and he will make your paths straight.

For me, reading those words back is like remembering the most important conversation I ever had with my father. That's Heavenly Father, of course. A sort of conversation where I knew these words matter. Remember them. And it begins with one simple exhortation: Trust God. Why does the Lord put so much value in this one simple thing? I well recall the first time I taught through Proverbs with my youth group years ago, and I thought it would be interesting to find every Bible story that centers on trusting God.

I started making a list in Genesis and quickly discovered they're all about trusting God, from Genesis to Malachi, from Matthew to Revelation. Even the gospel itself is at its core about trusting God for salvation. So what is so important about trust?

Peyton Jones: Trust is the substance that binds every relationship. The more trust, the closer the friendship. Someone you don't trust is hardly a friend at all. You can believe God with your mind. But trust comes from the heart. And God wants all your heart. And the second part is key. And lean not on your own understanding. Now understanding is a good thing, but leaning on your own understanding can become pride. It is the "I got this" kind of attitude. I don't need the Lord. I'll figure it out myself. A relationship with God will put you in situations where you don't understand and you don't "got this". But in those moments, you choose to trust God and obedience is the result.

Kris Langham: Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways. Submit to him and he will make your paths straight. And here are the ways and paths repeated over and over again. Reach their goal in all your ways. Submit to God. Also translated, Acknowledge God. It's an act of recognizing the Lord, seeing he is there and acknowledging he is right in everything you do. Do that and he will direct your path with a clear road to follow.

Peyton Jones: Verse seven gives us the antithesis of trusting God. Do not be wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord and shun evil. Now, this is a tough one because most of us walk around thinking we're pretty smart. I got this. But when self confidence slips into arrogance, we lose our dependence on God and we dabble with evil because we think we can handle it. But Solomon says, fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

Kris Langham: In verse nine. The dad wisdom gets more practical and personal. Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops. If you want to know what a person values, watch how they spend their time and their money.

Honor means to show that you value something or literally show that it's weighty. Honoring the Lord with your wealth means using your money to demonstrate God's value to you. And don't just use the leftovers.

Solomon says, use your first fruits. That's the top of your budget, your top priority. Financially set God first. And in verse ten, then your barns will be filled to overflowing and your vats will brim over with new wine. There's a simple equation here. God honors those who honor him. Now, if you abuse that equation as a shortcut to make yourself rich, well, that's not really honoring him in the first place. The Lord will not honor greed simply because you veil it in religion or even in Bible verses. But he will honor God honoring generosity.

Peyton Jones: Next up in verse 12, the dad wisdom turns to discipline. It's an essential but tricky topic for a father. Every child desperately needs discipline to help them mature, but discipline can so easily cross a line from guided training into directionless punishment, with the parent simply venting frustration and the child just enduring it, driving a wedge between them.

But watch this father as his son heads into the world. He knows that more training and discipline are ahead, but not from him. Verse 11 my son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves as a father, the son he delights in.

You can hear the tender heart of the father through his words. Son, I know I didn't always get this right and I know you resented me at times. But don't resent the Lord, son. There are trials ahead of you that will push you beyond yourself. Trust the Lord. Know that he loves you through every trial and know that he has a purpose for all of it, a purpose for you because he believes in you, son. Like I believe in you. And I can hear his voice soften at the end. The Lord disciplines those he loves as a father, the son he delights in.

Kris Langanham: The second half of the chapter is a return to the value of wisdom. Find it son. Get it? It brings more profit than silver. Yields better returns than gold. It's the language of investment. I picture a young man who has just gotten his first taste of investment returns.

Wow, my money can actually make more money if I just put it in the right place. But dad has advice. Put your money in wisdom. Invest effort into it. It will pay off with long life riches. Peace.

In verse 17. Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are peace. Notice again the path. Lust had a path for you. Son of destruction. Now wisdom has a path of peace. The whole journey of life. She will guide you. She is a veritable tree of life.

And look at her resume in verse 19. By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations. By understanding he set the heavens in place. Look at what she accomplished working with the Lord. Just imagine what she could do for you son. Dad also throws in a few potholes to avoid in life starting at 27. Do not withhold good. Do not plot harm. Do not accuse falsely. Do not envy the violent. Do those things and you'll just make yourself the Lord's enemy.

Son, don't do it. Be wise, my son. Read Proverbs three. Listen in on dad's wisdom and we'll meet you back here next time.

Day 5 | Proverbs 4

Guard Your Heart - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back friends. Proverbs four today. And once again we have a full chapter of heartfelt dad wisdom. Now, we've been in this setting for a couple chapters, but for this one, I want us to picture a scene, a marketplace in biblical times.

Jerusalem at the height of ancient Israel's strength. The sounds of hustle and bustle and bargaining from all directions. And one conversation catches your ear. It's a father with his sons. But this is not the typical talk of parents in the marketplace. No scolding or demanding, no frustration or fury. The father has his arm over each boy's shoulder as they observe the busy world around them, and he speaks wisdom, and you can't help but lean in to listen.

Perhaps it's because you're desperate to know how to speak to your kid. Perhaps because you only wish your dad had talked to you like that. Or perhaps because you recognized the king. He's in street clothes and no one else seems to have caught on. Thankfully, there's a bench just next to them, so you and I take a seat inconspicuously and listen. Oh, also, Peyton Jones sits down next to us.

Peyton Jones: Okay, I dig this. I just want to know, did we get here by time machine or are we in the Imagination Station?

Kris Langham: You're messing up my illusion, man. Anyway, if the dad sounds like Mr. Whitaker in your mind, you're an odyssey. The rest of us are in Proverbs four and ancient Jerusalem. And as long as we're on time out from the illusion. I want to clarify that the wisdom here applies to sons and daughters, especially my girls. All God's kids are equal here. The language here is not neutral because this is a real son and a real dad talking to him. But as we listen in, we should all take it personally for us.

Peyton Jones: All right. I was just teasing, I love it. Let's do this. Back in chapter one, wisdom cried out in the marketplace. So it's not a strange place to learn wisdom. Remember back in Proverbs 120, we were told, wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the markets. She raises her voice.

The father wants his sons to hear wisdom speaking through him as he takes him on a tour through the bustling market in verse one. Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction. Pay attention and gain understanding. I give you sound learning. So do not forsake my teaching. For I too was a son to my father, still tender and cherished by my mother. And here the wise father takes his own sons on a journey back in time.

He too was once young. He too had a father who spoke to him. Words of wisdom. And those words have guided his life. And listening in, we realize that the grandfather in this story is, of course, King David, and Solomon remembers his words well.

Verse four then he taught me, and he said to me, take hold of my words with all your heart. Keep my commands, and you will live. Get wisdom, get understanding. Do not forget my words or turn away from them. Do not forsake wisdom and she will protect you. Love her and she will watch over you.

Kris Lingham: David's wisdom is simple but profound. Get wisdom. A young man can chase so many pursuits, so many distractions. But this one will protect you. And where do you start?

Verse seven. The beginning of wisdom is this. Get wisdom. Though it costs all you have. Get understanding. I love that wisdom begins with getting wisdom. Sun, don't confuse this. You start by clarifying what you're after. Don't let wisdom be a side benefit as you chase other things. Get it. Chase it directly, measure success by what you learned and not just what you gain.

And David purposefully uses the language of those things that the young pursue. Verse eight, cherish her and she will exalt you.

Embrace her and she will honor you. She will give you a Garland to grace your head and present you with a glorious crown. Exaltation, honor, the Garland of victory. All the passion and effort that a young athlete pours into chasing victory. The gold medal, the crown. Wisdom will give you that, son. Pursue it. And as we listen in, the Lord speaks to us. My daughter, my son, get wisdom.

Peyton Jones: In verse ten, the father breaks from his memory and looks right at one of his boys. Listen, my son, accept what I say and the years of your life will be many. I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.

And in verse 12, he lifts his gaze up and looks out to the crowds. He wants his boys to observe, to see the paths people are taking and discern where they lead. Like any marketplace, this one has all sorts of honest tradespeople and crooked swindlers. Dad wants to equip his sons to stay alert and step wisely through this world. He's not telling them what path to take. He's equipping them to choose their own path wisely.

Verse 12. When you walk, your steps will not be hampered. When you run, you will not stumble. Hold on to instruction. Do not let it go. Guard it well. For it is your life. Dad sees something now. And he directs his son's gaze first. A crooked shopkeeper, then a pickpocket, then an official he knows to be a hypocrite.

And verse 14. Do not set foot on the path of the wicked, or walk in the way of the evildoers. Avoid it. Do not travel on it. Turn from it and go on your way. For they cannot rest until they do evil. They're robbed of sleep till they make someone stumble. They eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence.

Kris Langham: And then something else catches dad's eye. It's an older man, a humble tradesman, honorable, honest. He motions to his sons. Watch him. Watch how he treats people. Verse 18. The path of the righteous is like the morning sun shining ever brighter till the full light of day.

And that's another verse close to my heart. When I was a young man. And the wisdom of God's word first hit me. I remember reading this verse and I could see it. That's the path I want. Like the morning sun. And that was my experience when I finally let God's wisdom in.

It was like, well, have you ever arrived at a campsite late and it's too dark to even see what's there. But the next morning you wake up before dawn and the sun begins to rise. And suddenly the world around you comes alive in the fresh sunshine. And my world was like that. I saw life like I hadn't even known what was there. I saw people and how beautiful and precious they are. That sunrise is the path of the righteous. Shining ever brighter till the full light of day.

Peyton Jones: Sadly, there is also another path. Verse 19 but the way of the wicked is like deep darkness. They do not know what makes them stumble in the dark. Anything can scare you and they're in the dark. All the color and beauty of our world and people goes unseen.

Now don't overdo the analogy. Night time and dark are not inherently evil, and many beautiful sights can only be seen under a night sky. Yet darkness is dangerous. What you can't see can hurt you. And the picture here of those who walk in spiritual darkness is a warning. You stumble and fall and can't even see the cause.

Kris Lingham: Now as the father turns back to his sons, we get the clear sense that his next words are critical. He kneels down to look up into his boy's eyes. He knows the time is coming quickly when he will not need to kneel. Son. Pay attention. Turn your ear to my words. They are life. The boy's focus in the whole marketplace goes silent in their ears.

And in verse 23, above all else, guard your heart. For everything you do flows from it. That's the key. This father knows that on whatever path his sons choose, the heart is their internal guide. It will drive them. If lust takes hold of their heart, they will chase after it. If greed and envy creep in, they will poison the heart and blind his sons to danger.

They will follow the wicked path into darkness. The heart is crucial, so guard it. Set a watch over it and do not suffer evil to pass. But then, how do you guard it?

Peyton Jones: The father tells his sons how to do it. And it's all about monitoring the inflow and outflow points of the heart. Look at verse 24. Keep your mouth free of perversity. Keep corrupt. Talk far from your lips. Remember what Jesus taught us. The mouth is an overflow of the heart. So watching your words is a way of monitoring your heart. Corrupt words are a sign that something's gone bad on the inside. Like termites escaping a hole in the drywall. It's not just the words. It's what's going on inside.

Kris Langham: And in verse 25, he moves to the inflow. Remember that Jesus also said that the eyes are a lamp for the body, like a window letting light into the heart. So dad says, let your eyes look straight ahead. Fix your gaze directly before you. Eyes on the prize, son.

Every athlete knows that your body will naturally follow your gaze. Lose focus, and you will quickly veer off track. And in verse 26, give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways. Do not turn to the right or the left. Keep your foot from evil. That careful thought is a fitting summary from this father, look to the paths ahead of you.

Don't just start walking, son. Know where you intend to go. Consider the path and commit to it. Be steadfast. Run your race to win. Read Proverbs four. Listen carefully to your father and we'll meet you back here next time.

Day 6 | Proverbs 5

Temptation, Lust and the Way Out - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs. And chapter five has a parental warning on it. We will be talking about adult matters. Kids, let your parents check it first. For the rest of you, here's the talking skull at the entrance to Pirates of the Caribbean says properly warned you be properly warned. Now, in Proverbs five, we continue through a set of clear and strong directives from a father to a son and hear warnings. And these warnings are blunt. Peyton, start us out.

Peyton Jones: Verse one my son, pay attention to my wisdom. Turn your ear to my words of insight that you may maintain discretion. And your lips may preserve knowledge. For the lips of the adulterous woman. Drip, honey and her speech is smoother than oil. But in the end she's as bitter as gall. Sharp as a double edged sword. Her feet go down to death. Her steps lead straight to the grave. She gives no thought to the way of life. Her paths wander aimlessly. But she does not know it.

Kris Langham: The warnings here and through the next two chapters are to his sons against the strange woman. The adulterous woman. Literally translated. It just says the other woman that is, any woman besides the one you're married to.

Son, we have the warning in verse three. The lips of the adulterous woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil. Solomon begins the warning with where you meet temptation through your senses. The temptation looks really good and the seductive argument smoother than oil, but like a delicious poison that will kill you.

Verse four tells us that in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double edged sword. And although you may not physically die, she will end your life as you know it. Like Adam and Eve in the garden, nothing will ever be the same again.

So before his son's head down that path, Solomon warns them, nowhere in the Bible will you find any warnings stronger than against this one path, this one small decision that could destroy everything. In verse five, her feet go down to death. Her steps lead straight to the grave. She gives no thought to the way of life. Solomon's words are direct and strong because he knows that infidelity could destroy his kids, ruin their lives. So what's the direction they should take? What path should they follow? What path should they follow? Peyton.

Peyton Jones: In verse eight, we're given advice on what to do to avoid this fate. Keep to a path far from her. Do not go near the door of her house, lest you should lose your honor to others and your dignity to one who is cruel, lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil, enrich the house of another. At the end of your life you will groan when your flesh and body are spent. Solomon warns his sons here that the price you pay for a prostitute isn't really the price you pay. There's a much greater cost.

It will cost you, your friends, your family, your integrity, and anything else in your life that really matters. Not all treasure is silver and gold, mate. In that sense, whether physical infidelity or even through pornography, you will end up paying a price a hundred times over what you think you did.

Kris Lingham: Standing at the crossroads. Solomon is giving his sons a choice, choose your path wisely. The pathway to pleasure today is the way to regret tomorrow. It may look tempting from where you're standing, but becomes a hard, grueling, and uphill climb. And nobody who has ventured down that path would tell you to choose it. In verse 11, at the end of your life, you will groan when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, how I hated discipline, how my heart spurned correction. It says you will groan. Feel the pain in his words.

Regret is an awful feeling. It's like a weight sinking into your heart that just keeps you held down at the bottom. And all you have to show for your life is a jar of dirt. Sadly, too many Christians look down the path of adultery and think I can be forgiven. And that's technically true.

But being forgiven of sin's guilt doesn't always relieve us from sin's consequences. And worse, it does very little to undo the pain you've caused others.

Peyton Jones: We see the young men here. At the end of his life, all young men become old men with time. And I could choose your own adventure story. This young man is faced with the consequences of his choice. Sadly, many people realize only at the end of their life that the advice of those who went on before them was based on life's hard bitten realities. But if you wait to listen when you're old, it's too late. Your bank account is empty. Your family's moved out. Your friends have moved on. All you're left holding is regret. And the ghost of what could have been lingering to haunt you.

The problem with regret is that it doesn't come with a time machine like we had in the last chapter. We can't go back in time and change what happened or what decisions we made. Our consequences can be tough to live with. And the irony is that Solomon had made many mistakes. After all, he'd had 1000 wives and concubines. He'd been dragged away from God by them. But he wanted the life he could never have for his sons. It's possible that Solomon knew this groaning that he hadn't listened to instruction from personal experience.

Kris Langham: True. Solomon messed up a lot in life, and those of you familiar with regret will relate to Solomon's desire for better things for his kids. And that reality should give us pause here. If you only picture this adulterous man or woman as the obvious cheater, the lecherous pagan, think again. Quite often, for a Christian, the real danger is someone who plays the good guy. But as Jack Sparrow warned us, a dishonest man you can always trust to be dishonest.

Honestly, it's the honest ones you want to watch out for because you can never predict when they're going to do something incredibly stupid. And speaking of movies, I want to remind you of the PG 13 warning as we move into verse 15. I'm not saying you need to kick all your kids out of the room. I mean, exactly what PG means. Parental guidance.

These are things that kids need guidance on. They need clear talk. And too often we as Christians make the mistake of talking around important issues instead of talking about them. Well, if the Scripture isn't silent on them, neither should we be either. Solomon is talking about sex here and he's talking directly.

Peyton Jones: Solomon is also blunt with his sons here in verse 15. Drink water from your own sister. Running water from your own well. Now this gets a little poetic, so it takes a little explanation. A cistern was a container of water. It's where you went to be refreshed. And most interpreters believe the cistern refers to your spouse.

Solomon has a high view of marriage here, telling his sons. Get that regular refreshment from your wife. Drink water from your own cistern. Running water from your well. Should your springs overflow in the streets. Your streams of water in the public squares. When you had a cistern of water, you preserved it. Water was a precious commodity. You kept it in that container. And the same way he's saying your sexuality belongs at home, not overflowing into the streets for strangers like a cistern.

Your source of refreshment, the sexuality that a husband and wife share isn't for anyone else. It's a spring of fresh water. Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. May your fountain be blessed. And may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. There's a hint here that sharing your cistern with everyone makes the water dirty and causes disease.

Peyton Jones: But this beautiful picture of the wife, not just as a cistern, but as an endless fountain of refreshment, is something that only a couple that preserves the sacredness of their growing sexuality ever get to know. May you rejoice in her, the wife of your youth.

There's something about a monogamous relationship that causes sex to be better with time, more romantic, and with a history of trust and experimentation. This is where Solomon is going in verse 19, when he compares her to a loving doe, a graceful deer, to a man that values his wife.

She becomes more beautiful and lust gives way to love. In this way, Solomon alludes to something deeper, saying, May her breast satisfy you always. May you ever be captivated by her love. Why, my son, be intoxicated with another man's wife. Why embrace the bosom of a wayward woman? The choice is yours. You can have what is truly yours. Or give it away for what you can. Never hold on to the breast of the wayward woman. Moving on to the next paying customer.

Kris Langham: Okay, here's the reality, guys. These verses may be a bit awkward, but they're crucial. It turns out that the male of the species are attracted to the female breasts. You may not have known that, but ask your teenage son. It's reality. But step back a second. The female breast is also given for the nurturing of children, for the building of a family. There is hardly anything more beautiful than a mother caring for her child, especially when it's your child.

The bond formed between mother and baby is amazing. She becomes the fountain, literally not just of refreshment, but of love for your family. It's hard to put into terms for a young man until you've experienced it. Solomon is painting a picture for his sons of something so rewarding, so far beyond the paltry little excitement he gets from a little glimpse of cleavage.

There's a promise of a reward that only faithful men experience. It's the contentment of being satisfied, not just physically with your lover, but emotionally with your wife. Be satisfied. And like peanut butter and jelly. He puts the physical and emotional connection together, saying, May you ever be intoxicated with her love. This is the right kind of drunk. Be intoxicated with the love of a faithful wife. All right, Peyton, we covered the awkward bits. It was either madness or brilliance. It's remarkable how often those two traits coincide. Steer me out of here fast.

Peyton Jones: Solomon, speaking of love rather than lust, is his way of steering away from the body parts in general. The fact is that sex is about much more than enjoying somebody's body. He's connecting the sexual act of intimacy with the love for that individual.

And I love that he talks about being intoxicated, figuratively, with the wife of your youth and rapture with their love, as opposed to the prostitute, where he compares it to being drunk as in literally intoxicated, making bad decisions and cheapening the whole experience of using another's body parts. Um, I didn't really steer clear of that passage, did I?

Kris Langham: No, man, you didn't. But it's not your fault or mine. We're simply riding in this car with Solomon, and he's pedal to the metal with the awkward to the end of the chapter.

And I love this about the faith of the ancient Hebrews. Literally every area of life was open to the Lord, including sexuality. Western culture is far too influenced by the Greeks, who think of the body as the source of evil and the soul as the source of good to a Hebrew. However, the body is a gift, and so even our sexuality was a gift to be celebrated.

Yet in the Bible, sex is also holy. When Solomon says in verse 21, for your ways are in full view of the Lord, and he examines all your paths, he means that even your sexuality is a sacred gift from God that can glorify and worship God as you celebrate a loving relationship with your wife.

Peyton Jones: That's why there's an entire book of the Bible called Song of Solomon that celebrates sexuality and romance. The problem with society today is that when our culture discusses sex, it seems to only be shouting the message of the foolish, adulterous woman in this chapter. Sex is dirty, naughty, scandalous and titillating. Promiscuity is often celebrated while faithfulness is mocked. But Solomon wants to make sure that he is the first and loudest voice on sexuality that his son's here.

Kris Langham: For you parents listening through, trying to decide whether your kids can listen. Let me encourage you don't make the topic of sex taboo or something that only naughty people talk about. Talk about it with respect and reverence. God made it good and he made it holy. Dirty jokes are only dirty because they sully something pure. Sadly, most of us learned about sex as kids when adults told dirty jokes.

We don't want to do our kids a disservice by failing to speak about sexuality or the Bible isn't silent. It's not a topic to leave to whispers and innuendos or treat as inappropriate fodder for Christians to discuss. Part of training up youth is speaking to the next generation in a way that doesn't steer clear of the issues and push them back into hiding.

The Bible talks about sex, brings its beauty into the light, and exposes the works of darkness. As verse 21 and 23 says, God examines all your paths for the lack of discipline. The fool will die led astray by their own folly. That's a dark ending for a foolish young man. And dead men tell no tales and will be back in Proverbs six.

Day 7 | Proverbs 6

It's a Trap! (Laziness, Lust & Foolish Risks) - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Proverbs chapter six. Welcome, everyone, back to the Wisdom Roundtable. With me again. At the table is Peyton Jones. All right, Jonesy, we're in Proverbs six, and we've got a continuation of directives from father to son. And here are some pretty strong warnings regarding sexuality. Parental warning once again on this one. Listen first, if your kids are young. That said, let's dive in.

Peyton Jones: In Proverbs six, Solomon broadens out the topic from the trap of lust to the other traps that can snare young men if they're not careful. He's been talking about the adulterous woman who lays a snare to trap young men, seducing them into her lair. But in this chapter, he'll also tell us how our own words can snare us. Laziness is also a trap, and finally, falling in with bad company can smuggle you into some pretty bad territory. In verse one, Solomon begins.

My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, if you have shaken hands and pledged for a stranger. You've been trapped by what you said. Ensnared by the words of your mouth. Becoming surety for a stranger means you intervene on behalf of a friend who's in debt. Saying I'll vouch for him. It's like co-signing a loan. You become responsible if your friend can't pay. In the last chapter, it's the adulterous woman who lays the snare. But here it's you. You snare yourself by your own words. Maybe overpromising something that you can only under-deliver on trapping yourself into somebody else's debt.

Kris Langham: It's a trap. The Death Star is fully functional. Okay, my Admiral Ackbar impression is not what it used to be. Back to Solomon, verse two says, you have been trapped by what you said, ensnared by the words of your mouth.

Solomon goes on, give your eyes no sleep and your eyelids no slumber. In other words, deal with it immediately. Get out of it as fast as you can.

This is deadly serious, which is why he uses life and death imagery. Animals awaiting death. Look at verse five. Save yourself like a gazelle in the hand of the hunter. Like a bird from the hand of the Fowler. He uses words like trapped, ensnared. Free yourself. Now we compared it to co-signing on a loan. But that in itself isn't bad. It's when you're putting up collateral that you can't afford to lose. And particularly for someone who can't afford to pay, even if they're your neighbor. Solomon says, don't do it right.

Peyton Jones: You just don't know what's going to happen. They lose their job. They could skip town. You just never know. And your kindness was what cost you everything. It's a hard lesson to learn. But sometimes you can be too kind. You have control over what you do, but very little over the actions of anyone else. That's why this can be so dangerous. You have absolutely zero control over the foolishness of others. So keep yourself out of harm's way here. Take control over yourself and be very careful before you put up security for your neighbor or give pledge for a stranger.

Kris Langham: And the next warning comes in verse six about the snare of laziness. Go to the ant, you sluggard.

Peyton Jones: Whoa, Chris. Calm down. No need to call names.

Kris Langham: Peyton. I'm just reading the verse here. Ahem. I'll continue. As Solomon was saying. Go to the ant, you sluggard. Consider its ways and be wise. It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

I love the term sluggard. It means slug like or someone who moves like a slug. Compare the lackluster activity of a slug to the industry of an ant. The ant doesn't need someone hovering over it to make sure it gets its work done. Verse six. It has no commander, no overseer or ruler. Yet the ant is industrious. It stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

So again, we're seeing wisdom personified, this time in an animal, which really kind of tells us that God hardwired wisdom into the fabric of the universe. You can go into God's creation and observe wisdom at work. Ants are phenomenal little creatures to just sit and watch working. I could sit and watch ants all day. I mean, I could spend the whole day doing nothing at all but watching ants.

Peyton Jones: Wouldn't that make you the sluggard?

Kris Lingham: Maybe. Or an engineer. Maybe a bio engineer.

Peyton Jones: That's true.

Kris Lingham: Now the next snare is being a deceptive person. There are people who love shortcuts, which is another type of laziness. And Solomon warns us about it in verse 12. In particular, this shortcut is deceit and manipulation. Verse 12, a troublemaker and a villain who goes about with a corrupt mouth, who winks maliciously with his eye signals with his feet and motions with his fingers, who plots evil with deceit in his heart. He always stirs up conflict.

Peyton Jones: Eventually, everyone sees right through this type of deceptive person, and after burning and manipulating their way through everyone, nobody trusts them. Therefore, disaster will overtake him in an instant. He will suddenly be destroyed without remedy. After burning all his bridges, he's run out of friends, family and support systems. There is no remedy. There's nobody left to help him.

Kris Lingham: Everything in that passage describes a person who is the opposite of how God is. They hurt people, leaving a trail of broken bodies behind them until finally their own corpse is the final tally in the body count.

And with that, Solomon leads us to a list of the things God hates. Look at verse 17. There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him haughty eyes, a lying tongue and hands that shed innocent blood. A heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil. A false witness who breathes out lies. And one who sows discord among brothers.

Peyton Jones: Pride, lying, scheming, and pitting people against one another. We hate it in the workplace. We hate it in the family. But God hates it. Whenever and wherever he sees it, because of what it does to people, both those who do it and those whom it's done to.

Kris Langham: Right? And we should hate what God hates for us. To fear the Lord is to hate evil. And next we move back into warning and this one brings us back to something else. God hates. From chapter five infidelity, PG 13 on this one. Verse 20 my son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

For these commands are a lamp. This teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way of life. Keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife.

I think we all know that moment when temptation seizes us. When our thoughts become cloudy, our reason falters and we grope around in the darkness for the way out.

Here in that moment, the voice of wisdom spoken here by Mom and dad comes back to us, repeating the commands of God like a lamp in the darkness.

Notice, he says, keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife. In the moment of temptation, dad's wisdom opens up an exit door in a dark theater showing us the way out.

Peyton Jones: Solomon tells them, when you walk, they will guide you. When you sleep, they will watch over you. When you awake, they will speak to you.

Guiding us. Protecting us. Speaking to us. This is what these commands will do. If we hold on to them tight. The Word of God serves as a moment by moment kind of instruction. As we find ourselves in situations we don't want to be in.

Kris Langham: If we can learn to walk in wisdom in the moment of temptation, when the chips are down, that's when it counts. That's why Solomon tells us don't play. Verse 26 reminds us that sexual temptation comes with a low price tag. You can download porn for free, but the real cost is your very life. Don't mess around with temptation. It's too hot to handle. Treat it like a hot coal and don't touch.

Solomon asks us all a searching question in verse 27. Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? Solomon couldn't. I know I can't and I can speak for Payton and say he can't either. The fact is, nobody can. It's absurd and we know that now. But will we know it then in the moment of truth, that's when it's important.

In the moment of temptation, you cling to these words of wisdom, these instructions of God given by a father and mother who love you and find them leading you out of the darkness. And speaking of leading out, we're out of time. So I'll show us the way out. Proverbs chapter six.

Take a read for yourself and we'll meet you back here in chapter seven.

Day 8 | Proverbs 7

The Kiss - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Proverbs chapter seven, and we are back at the Wisdom Roundtable. Our content today is about PG-12. So kids, let Mom and Dad listen first. Today I'm joined once again by Peyton Jones. Welcome my friend, and we have a new guest in the studio bringing wisdom all the way from the nation of Wales. Barry Waters, welcome to the roundtable.

Barry Waters: Hello. Well, it's very much an honor to be here.

Kris Langham: Barry is a good friend, doing fantastic ministry out in Wales. We've been working together for many years now, and I have to admit, I'm not quite certain whether I invited Barry because he is wise or if he just fooled me with the accent.

Barry Waters: Well, I think it's at least 80% accent.

Kris Langham: Well, that works for me. Today we have a story to tell on Proverbs seven. It is a tale of warning, and it takes us to a turning point in a young man's life, the sort of decision you look back on. And no matter how many times you replay that uneasy feeling of woe that you had just before the decision, or the sudden impulse of desire that pushed you past it, you cannot reverse the damage or the stinking regret. Solomon wants to protect his son from one particular danger so subtle and so deadly.

It's like a funhouse with a trap door to hell, he begins. My son, keep my words and store up my commands within you. Keep my commands and you will live. There is again that strong sense that these words are life and death, that they will protect you if you will keep them. And in verse five, they will keep you from the adulterous woman, from the wayward woman with her seductive words. And here Solomon begins a story. So, Barry, why don't you begin the story for us?

Barry Waters: Yeah. So here's Solomon is telling his son a story of a young man who he's seen walking down a street. A street that Solomon knows will end in this young man's ruin. Solomon is looking out of his window down the street below, through the crowds when he spots him, and he spots this young man and sees that this man has no sense. I think it's likely that Solomon recognizes a part of his younger self in this man.

And when I think back to my younger days, I know I had very little sense and it easily could have been me, this young man that is walking himself into ruin. And, you know, just by the grace of God, I didn't walk myself into ruin. Solomon likely made the same mistakes this young man did. And so his warning his son not to make this mistake too.

Gosh, I wish I had listened when people had warned me about certain things. So if you're young and listening to this and someone warned you not to do something, don't do it. And also, if you're an older person who knows someone young who's about to do something stupid, warn them. Because I wish I had been warned once or twice.

Peyton Jones: In verse ten, we meet the woman who throws herself literally on this young man. Verse ten then out came a woman to meet him dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent. This woman here is intent on capturing this young man, or any young man foolish enough to pass by her. She doesn't just hang out at home. She wanders out in the street looking for someone to tempt. Now, it's important to remember this lesson is from Solomon to his sons. So that's why he warns his sons about the wayward woman. But if Solomon was writing to daughters, we would see warnings for them about the temptations of wayward men. This sin goes both ways.

Kris Lingham: And then verse 13, she took hold of him and kissed him. Mayday, mayday, this is it. This is the last stop before the train heads to its destination. And the final destination is not what you're thinking about. Exit now. Disembark. She kissed him. And one kiss can make you stupid in a hurry. If you don't stop now, you are driving into an oil slick down a steep drop. This boy needs to get out. Take a cue from Joseph and run. Boy. Run.

But he stays back. In verse 13 and with a brazen face she said, to day I fulfilled my vows and I have food from my fellowship offering at home. Now watch her words. I fulfilled my vows as in vows to God. This girl is a believer fresh from temple. Beware the appearance of godliness, Christian. The temptation to adultery often comes from someone at church.

Godliness is attractive, but godly hypocrisy is deadly. Don't trust the facade and do not imagine that you can keep your vows to God and not your spouse, or think you can just enjoy the sin and repent when it's done. God is not mocked. You sow to the flesh, you will reap destruction.

Barry Waters: On to verse 16 now and it says, I have covered my bed with colored linens from Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. Come, let's drink deeply of love till morning. Let's enjoy ourselves with love. Once you've gotten yourself to this point, it is going to be very difficult to walk away. We are all capable of succumbing to temptation, even the best of us. And she is making it really hard to walk away too.

She says she has a house full of food, a comfortable place to sleep all night, and a night with a beautiful woman. This is what men really want. She knows it. She's not fighting fair. But that's just how temptation works. It doesn't fight fair. It attacks you where you are weakest. And two of the main things that a lot of people, especially myself, will be easily tempted with, and that is comfort and pleasure. Temptation is gonna come, and the only way to avoid succumbing to temptation is to keep yourself far from it. Don't go down that road of ruin.

Peyton Jones: But he does. Verse 21 with persuasive words she led him astray. She seduced him with her smooth talk. All at once he followed her like an ox. Going to the slaughter. Like a deer stepping into a noose. Till an arrow pierces his liver. Like a bird darting into a snare. Little knowing it will cost him his life. All these animals think they're getting a treat. The ox led to grain, the deer to salt, the bird to seeds or fruit. In the same way, this young man is led away thinking he's gonna have some fun, little knowing it will cost him his life.

A grim warning sexual sin may provide pleasure for a season, but it will bring death, the death of trust, the death of relationships, the death of ministries, and even physical death can be a result.

Kris Langham: And that image in verse 22 is jarring. A deer stepping into a noose until an arrow pierces its liver. And I pray that it will always jar me because that deer is me or you. Then in verse 24, now then, my sons, listen to me. Pay attention to what I say. Do not let your heart turn to her ways or stray into her paths. Notice that the warning is to guard the heart and to watch your path. Keep your path away from hers. Don't even start along that road. And in verse 26, many are the victims she has brought down. Her slain are a mighty throng.

Understand that adultery takes down the mighty ones. Even godly leaders, men and women, destroyed. Jesus reminds us, if anyone thinks they stand, take heed lest you fall. Many are the victims. Too many. And don't misunderstand the word victim here. They are guilty. They are responsible.

And the guilt makes the regret all the worse. Now I know that we are talking right now to someone who is standing at that crossroad at that point of decision. And I tell you, look down the road, read verse 27, her house or his house is a highway to the grave leading down to the chambers of death. So if you are already down that path, there is redemption. The blood of Christ covers every sin.

Call on Jesus, repent and be forgiven and saved for eternity. But know that in this life the damage cannot be undone. So read Proverbs seven. Keep these words and keep your path far away from the adulterer. And a bit of wisdom for you as we close. Never trust the feeling of love without the sacrifice of love. Love is commitment. It is faithfulness. The feeling of love is beautiful.

But without sacrifice. It is an empty shell. And we'll meet you back here next time.

Day 9 | Proverbs 8

Wisdom Calls - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Proverbs chapter eight today, and with me at the round table is once again Peyton Jones.

Peyton Jones: Hey, hey, hey.

Kris Langham: And Barry Waters, welcome, Barry.

Barry Waters: Good to be here.

Kris Langham: We arrive today at the call of wisdom herself. Chapter eight is a bit of poetry and a powerful one at that. As wisdom comes alive right off the page and is personified as a woman. Interesting that wisdom is female here, as I have found many times that the voice of wisdom sounds precisely like my wife.

The Lord was kind enough to make my wife significantly wiser than I am. It is a humbling that I happily accept, and I have to say, it has really taught me something that fits well here. That for me, the trick is not so much having wisdom as it is listening to wisdom. Speaking of which, Barry, take us in to Proverbs chapter eight.

Barry Waters: As Chris mentioned, this passage is in stark contrast to the previous chapter where the woman is portrayed as a force of destruction. But here in chapter eight, the woman is the personification of wisdom. The chapter starts off by asking, does not wisdom call out?

And yes, it does. It really does. And it is easy to hear it, if you are looking and listening for it. It's almost impossible not to hear if you are.

The chapter goes on to say, does not understanding raise her voice at the highest points along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand. She's not hiding. She comes to find you. She's hard to miss if you're looking for her. I love the description of wisdom being where the paths meet. In other translations, it refers to this as a crossroads.

I've had a lot of crossroads in my life. Crossroads where I have listened to the voice of wisdom, and it was obvious it was the right path. In hindsight, I can look back over the other times where maybe I didn't listen to the voice of wisdom and I took the wrong path, and it was obvious that I took the wrong path because it was screaming at me in the face. But I ignored it as I thought I knew better.

Peyton Jones: As wisdom speaks, she calls for people to listen to her words. Verse six, listen for I have trustworthy things to say. I open my lips to speak what is right. It's not always easy to follow wisdom, because we often fail to recognize the difference between foolishness and wisdom. And that's what this entire book is about. Knowing the difference between wisdom and foolishness, the knowledge of good and evil.

Solomon writes about wisdom in verse ten. Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice. Gold for wisdom is more precious than rubies and nothing you desire can compare with her wisdom is more important than actually seeking after wealth.

How great would it be if more people sought wisdom first and foremost, like Solomon, asking God for wisdom, when he could have picked anything on his Christmas list. Instead, Solomon says, I seek wisdom, and with wisdom came everything else. If we seek wisdom first, it will result in transformed lives.

Kris Langham: In verse 12, wisdom tells us, I dwell together with prudence. I possess knowledge and discretion. All of these lived together, right decisions, right understanding, prudence, knowing the right thing, discretion, knowing what to say and not to say. If you get wisdom, you get it all.

And 13 is pivotal. To fear the Lord is to hate evil. Now that is a profound statement. If you respect God, if you fear, stand in awe, you will hate evil. Evil is against God. Hate it. Not hate people, not hate sinners, hate evil. Injustice will stir emotion in you. A righteous anger, not judgmental, not self-righteous, but rather caring about right and wrong with feeling hate evil.

And then wisdom says, I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior, and perverse speech. Think about that. Wisdom hates pride. Sometimes we think, oh, that fellow's very wise. He's got the fancy accent. Too bad he's arrogant. No one in particular. This is a hypothetical fellow from unknown whereabouts. Perhaps somewhere in the UK. But seriously, arrogant. Intelligence is not wisdom. That's worldly. Wisdom is humble. Wisdom hates pride because pride plugs its ears every time wisdom calls out if someone is intelligent but does evil. Wisdom hates it.

She also hates perverse speech. You may be an eloquent brainiac, but that is not wisdom, and wisdom hates it. And then wisdom talks of sound judgment, understanding and power. By me kings reign and rulers issue decrees that are just. Now I think we all know that kings and rulers can be foolish by the dozen. But what she's saying is that if they listen to wisdom. If you lead. And if you love wisdom and seek her, you will find her, and you will lead well. Make decrees that are just and that is good for everyone.

Barry Waters: Between verses 18 and 21, he describes the rewards of wisdom. And I just have to read this out loud, because it's just one of those pieces of scripture that are just written so beautifully.

So in verse 18, it starts, with me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. My fruit is better than fine gold. What I yield surpasses choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness. Along the paths of justice, bestowing a rich inheritance on those who love me and making their treasuries full.

Goodness, what an absolutely wonderful way to describe the rewards of wisdom. And what stands out to me here the most is that the rewards of wisdom don't just benefit you, but they also benefit those who you love. And this certainly is true in my experience.

Peyton Jones: Verse 22 the Lord brought me forth as the first of his works before his deeds of old. I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning when the world came to be. What does it mean here for wisdom to be the first of God's works? It doesn't mean that God created wisdom first, and before then he didn't have any himself. It means that everything that God did create was made carefully infused with wisdom.

Wisdom and wonder are hardwired into the fabric of the universe. To be the first of God's works shows Wisdom's place of importance. Creation tells us itself that wisdom is one of the most important things in the world. Now, a special note here about Jesus. While Jesus exemplified wisdom perfectly while he walked on earth, this passage is not directly about him. It does not say here that Jesus was created despite what people may tell you, he is eternal.

Kris Langham: I love the picture of wisdom in verse 30 as the master workman at the Lord's side, rejoicing before him. The echoes of Wisdom's joy resound from every corner of creation. From the field of flowers to the heavens full of stars.

And wisdom completes her call with a reminder to listen three times in the final verses. Listen and keep.

And with that in mind, I think rather than talk more about it, let's end with Wisdom's words. Verse 32. Now then, my children, listen to me. Blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction and be wise. Do not disregard it. Blessed are those who listen to me. Watching daily at my doors. Waiting at my doorway. For those who find me. Find life and receive favor from the Lord. But those who fail to find me harm themselves. All who hate me love death.

Day 10 | Proverbs 9

The Fear of the Lord - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to through the word Proverbs nine. And today you have two voices calling out to you. And I don't mean Peyton Jones and Barry Walters, although they're here with us, too. Welcome, gentlemen. Hey.

Barry Waters: Good to be back.

Kris Langham: Now, the two voices that I'm talking about are here in the text. Wisdom and folly. And each one is calling your name. It's sort of like. Well, have you ever faced a decision, a fork in the road and, you know, there's a right way, but there's also an easier way and no one's looking. And you stand there and it's almost like you have those little angel and demon characters on each shoulder, like Angel Kronk and demon Kronk, only they're not caricatures. It's a real decision and you've got to make it. Do you click that link? Do you make that purchase? Go to that party. Get in that car. Which shoulder do you listen to and which path will you take? Well, Peyton and Barry, I'm not sure which of you is wisdom and which is folly, but why don't you take us into the chapter?

Peyton Jones: I'll speak for wisdom. Now. Back in chapter seven, we saw the adulterous woman calling out for the young man to come back to her place. But in our chapter today, we see wisdom calling out verse three. She has sent out her servants, and she calls from the highest point of the city. Let all who were simple come to my house. Both are calling out for the simple minded, the fools, but for very different reasons.

Here, wisdom calls out to enrich the simple minded, to not leave them in their ignorance any longer. She invites the fools to a banquet, a banquet, interestingly enough, that includes the very pleasures offered by folly previously, but tempered with wisdom.

This feast would not be a gluttonous, hedonistic Mardi Gras, but be enjoyed how they were intended by God to enjoy all things. Verse six leave your simple ways, and you will live and walk in the way of insight. Wisdom offers you something. Sin cannot. Life wisdom rewards those who follow her with life.

Barry Waters: Here we have two sets of contrasting statements. The first statement is a warning against the way of folly. In verse seven it says, whoever corrects a mocker invites insult. Whoever rebukes the wicked incur abuse and do not rebuke mockers or they will hate you. Well, we certainly live in a day and age where this is relevant.

If you say, write something on social media that is confronting bad behavior, or even challenge someone in the street for being rude, you are likely to receive a bombardment of abuse. She is saying that if you try to reason with a fool, you're likely to get a slap around the back of the head. On the other hand, it says rebuke the wise and they will love you. Now she's telling us that if you correct the wise, they will appreciate you for it. If you tell wise people what you know, they'll profit from it. I want to be one of those people that can be rebuked.

Kris Lingham: And moving to verse ten, our dear friend wisdom reminds us of where we start this journey. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We saw this before at the beginning of Proverbs, and it's also in Job and Psalms. The fear of the Lord is the beginning, beginning as in foundation. You can have wisdom without the fear of the Lord, and you can even build more wisdom without the fear of God. But you're building on sand.

You've missed the foundation. Start with the fear of the Lord. Respect. Stand in awe. Know that He is God and we are not that his ways are higher. And the second part of verse ten is new, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Wisdom begins with fearing God, but understanding comes with knowing God. Understanding is a beautiful thing to get it, to put the pieces together and make sense of it all. And that comes in by examination and analysis, but it is only complete in knowing the one who made it. Let's say I find a handwritten letter. I can make sense of it through language, a dictionary, even penmanship.

But I won't truly understand it until I know the one who wrote it. And wisdom makes one last call through wisdom. Your days will be many. In other words, you can add years to your life by wisdom. How much is that worth? Wisdom rewards. You mock it and you alone suffer. But then another voice steps up.

Barry Waters: This is Follies big sales pitch, isn't it? It's more fun if you get away with it. Don't pay for it. Stick it in your pocket and walk away. Folly is always going to be taking. Not giving. Always selfish. Always ignoring rules and ignoring those who you care about.

Peyton Jones: Again, we see another comparison. Another woman. This time folly. Like the prostitute, woman folly is a loud and careless temptress. A bit of a trollop really. And she's compared to the simple, gentle call of woman wisdom. Both wisdom and folly cry out for the simple to come to them. If the simple turns to wisdom, his folly will be taken away. And he'll be given wisdom. If he turns to folly, his folly remains, and the darkness surrounding him grows even darker.

Kris Langham: The chapter closes with one last word about the woman folly and the invitation to enter her house. It is tempting to try and get away with it. Who's gonna know? It's not like you're hurting anyone. It's just easier. It's like free rent at Folly's house. Verse 18. But little do they know that the dead are there. That her guests are deep in the realm of the dead. If you take that invitation, follow the crowd. Take, steal, cheat. It's a dead man's party. Try and repaint it any way you like. It is not life. It's not living.

Folly only wants to steal, kill and destroy you. Jesus came to give you life. Interesting to note here that chapters seven, eight and nine all end their final verse in death. The warning. The reality of following folly. You can check in any time you like, but you can never leave. And so ends the ninth chapter of Proverbs.

Two paths lay ahead of you. Two voices call out to you. To whom will you listen? Which way will you go? And where will you end up?

Day 11 | Proverbs 10

The Wages of Righteousness - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the Book of Proverbs and the Wisdom Roundtable. We've arrived at chapter ten and with me at the Wisdom Roundtable. Peyton Jones, welcome back to the table. And TeDese Ross, how are you doing? Time to gain some wisdom together? All right. We've arrived at the Proverbs proper. The two line wonders. Chapter ten is where we really hit it. But how do we read it? It doesn't read like the rest of the Bible. It's not a story. It's not a letter. How do we read these Proverbs? Peyton, how do you come at the book of Proverbs?

Peyton Jones: I like to think of it as the way that life actually works. This is like a field guide to everyday life. And sometimes you find that it's very situational. What might work in one situation may not work in another. For example, there are proverbs that say, answer a fool according to his folly. There's an opposite one: do not answer a fool according to his folly. And it's situational. It's kind of like the spirit in everyday life, how to listen to the voice of wisdom that's hardwired into the universe.

Kris Langham: So in that way, proverbs can be seen sometimes as a set of tools, and sometimes you need a wrench. Sometimes you need a screwdriver, but they don't cross over into each other's situations clearly. Sometimes they work to a T, you got to look at some of the proverbs with eternal perspective. You're going to get frustrated if you look at the proverbs like they're laws of science.

They're not strictly input-output machines. My key rule for Proverbs is slow down. You've got to give each one of them time. Now, you don't have time to give every proverb its due time. But as you read through a chapter, one of them strikes you, then you slow down for it. And as you read each proverb, I picture each of them like a small but very dense object.

Like if you picked up a small chunk of gold, it's going to surprise you how much weight there is to it. And the proverbs are like that. You're going to pick it up and say, oh, there's a whole lot more to this than I saw at first.

Peyton Jones: I think of each proverb as like the everlasting gobstopper, or even the chewing gum from Willy Wonka. The longer you chew on it, the more of a different flavour you're going to taste.

Kris Lingham: All right, all right. Now we're going to try to teach this by modeling more than anything. So let's actually get into them. Let's get into chapter ten. Each of us will pick out 1 or 2 proverbs to use. We'll start with you. You picked out a proverb at verse four. So read that for us and tell us what you think.

TeDese Ross: Proverbs 10:4. Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth. The two things that struck me when I was reading that proverb is when your ambitions exceed your work ethic, that's a dream. And when your work ethic exceeds your ambitions, that's a plan. So a lot of times we're teaching people to dream. But the easiest part about a dream is having it.

Now you have to do something that is a pro-verb, not an amateur noun. Are you going to go do it? So, so yeah. So that's what a proverb is. It's a pro-verb. It's a it's not an amateur noun. It's not abstract in the Sky. So if lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth. And also the word wealth and the word poverty are subjective. You can be rich in spirit. You can be rich in resilience. You could be rich in empathy. So it's not all about material things, but it is that need. You need to be diligent because discipline beats motivation.

Kris Lingham: Man. One of the things we're going to see moving forward is that word definition is key. The Proverbs will talk a lot about wealth and poverty, but how you define that wealth is essential.

It's not just talking about physical riches. And we're going to see that more and more as we move forward. All right. Let's keep moving forward. Now the topics in Proverbs change quickly. And that's one of the things I love about them. They bounce around, but they keep coming back. And as you see themes, you want to keep coming back to those themes. We'll see more about work, hard work, and laziness. But let's bounce to a new one. Peyton, what's your first proverb for us?

Peyton Jones: Proverbs 10:21 “The lips of the righteous nourish many, but fools die for lack of sense.” You know, I think about it like this. The wise are nourished from words of wisdom. They feed their lives like fuel to a rocket or wood to a bonfire. But fools die from lack of sense, is another way of saying they're starving from lack of wisdom. When I was a kid, we used to put our hand over someone's head and say, what's this? It's a brain sucker. What's it doing? It's starving. Well, this is like saying there's nothing in their heads. They're starving to death from lack of sense.

Kris Lingham: All right, that's a good one. A 21 brings me to one of those key word definitions. We're going to see the words wisdom and folly throughout the proverbs. And defining those well is key. In the Bible wise, the wise, are intelligent, skillful, or artful. It can mean shrewd or learned. But here in Proverbs, wisdom is not only an intellectual characteristic, but also a moral one.

Wisdom guides you to do right, and thus so is folly. Foolishness in Proverbs is not simply intellectual stupidity. The Bible uses the word simple for a person of less intellect, but the fool is not so much dumb as he is godless. His or her downfall is not a low IQ. It's pride. They think they know. They know better than others. They know better than God. But the wise person fears God. All right, let's hit another one. TeDese, what's your next proverb for us?

TeDese Ross: Yes. So Proverbs 10:26 as vinegar to teeth and smoke to eyes, so are sluggards to those who send them. Now, if you want something done, you have to assign a busy, competent man. I know that sounds controversial, and sometimes it can be deemed subjective. But if you think about the people, not just men, but the people who really are the most competent and the busiest, they usually have the most workload because people trust them to get things done.

God trusted Moses to walk for 40 years. That's a serious employment. And he didn't even get to get a check. Based on his own reactions and still strain out of the will of what God had for him. God told him, I didn't tell you to get mad. Go back up in that mountain. Nobody told you to get mad. And that is serious. So, you know, if when you're thinking about delegating certain situations in your life or being delegated to try to be the most competent version of that. You know, that's all I'm asking. I'm not everybody falls short and we all make mistakes. But try your hardest to be as competent. Seek the wisdom and then carry out the task.

Kris Lingham: Amen. And I love the imagery here as vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes. So is a sluggard to someone who sends it. When you're looking for somebody to do something, you're looking around your classroom for somebody to send. You're looking for somebody you can trust. You get to know those people. We all get to know them. There's a reason they're busy because everybody can spot it. That's somebody you can trust. When people are asking you to do something, it's because they trust you. All right, let's keep bouncing around. We're going to go back to verse 12 and Peyton Jones. What do you have there?

Peyton Jones: Hatred stirs up conflict, but love covers all wrongs. Now this is a verse where both the wise and the foolish are hiding something. We've all met passive aggressive people. They don't have the guts to say what they feel. Or maybe they can't accept that they have hatred in their hearts.

So they hide that hatred. But everywhere they go, they leave a wake of destruction. Hatred stirs up conflict, destruction, conflict, and broken bodies follow them everywhere. You just can't hide the effects of a harbored hatred. But love hides too. It just hides other people's sins, not your own.

It doesn't want to bring other people's sins out into the open, but to see them covered by the blood of Jesus and forgotten like God forgives our transgressions. So love covers all wrongs. Both are hiding. One is hiding your own sin. That's a foolish thing to do. Wisdom overlooks the sins of others.

Kris Lingham: And there in verse 12 we have hatred and love. Another one of the common dichotomies in the proverbs and we're definition is key. Again, what you're going to see with hatred and love is not a pair of emotions in conflict, but they're more often paired with actions how we treat other people. And speaking of key definitions, I'm going to move us back to verse 16. 10:16 says, the wages of the righteous is life, but the earnings of the wicked are sin and death.

Now the key definitions here are in righteousness and wickedness. Righteous means right with God having a right standing in God's sight. Proverbs describes righteousness in the real world, how righteous people act. But keep in mind that the Bible tells us many times that apart from God there is no one righteous. So as we read these proverbs, we can't paint them onto ourselves as, oh yeah, I'm the righteous, I'm the good one.

But Jesus changes that for us. Jesus became sin so we could become the righteousness of God. So as you come to these proverbs that have a duality to them, it's going to be a mistake for you to see, oh, I'm the good guy. You're the bad guy. If you read through the proverbs and you only see what's wrong with everyone else and what's right with you, you're not looking carefully.

Kris Langham: I take each and every one of them as this is who I was and this is who I'm becoming. When you read about the wicked, that's who you were. And that's what you've earned here in verse 16, the earnings of the wicked are sin and death. That's who I was, and that's what I earned. But with Jesus, I'm righteous. He is my only righteousness, and the wages of the righteous is life.

That's what Jesus earned for me, and that's what I'm becoming. That's what I'm moving toward. In every Proverb, I want to see who I was, what I'm moving away from, and who God is making me to be. But only Jesus can do that in me. Well guys, we are all out of time for Proverbs ten. For those of you listening, take a read through Proverbs ten.

Slow down as you find a little bit of weight, slow down. Pick that up and turn it. See that? See that proverb from different angles? Share it with someone else.

If you're in a group together, pick out a couple proverbs a piece, and share what you heard and what you learned and what it speaks to you and gain wisdom from one another. And we will meet you back in Proverbs 11.

Day 12 | Proverbs 11

The Reward of Righteousness - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs. We are at the Wisdom Roundtable in Proverbs chapter 11. Kris Langham, I'm with you and Peyton Jones. Tedese Ross. Well, we got a lot of proverbs in front of us, so let's dive right in. We've got another of those little two line wonders. And our first one is at verse two. And Tedese I hand it over to you.

Tedese Ross: Yeah. No problem. Proverbs 11:2 "when pride comes, then comes disgrace but with humility comes wisdom." And if we sit back and we think about this, who do you want to be like? It's what would Jesus do? Not what would Lucifer do right? What got Lucifer kicked out of heaven? Being prideful. That's one of the things. And he tricked a third of the angels to come with him. Man, there's some dumb angels, but. But on the same token, we want to emulate what Jesus was. And that was one of the most humble people ever to have existed in human form. Right? He rode to Bethlehem on the back of a donkey, when he could have called his angels in and flew in on the wings of angels. He was a carpenter. You know he was of the people. He washed the disciples' feet.

Kris Langham: So pride and humility is going to be one of our key little dichotomies here in the book of Proverbs. And, and we see it. Jesus and Lucifer is the ultimate. And we get in Proverbs is those little insights of what pride and humility look like up close. Pride looks like disgrace. You see it, you line it up. It's two Domino's. Pride comes, then disgrace comes. When humility is the key to. Wisdom is the key to wisdom. It's godly wisdom. All right. And speaking of, let's keep moving on. Give us some godly wisdom. Peyton, what's your verse for us?

Peyton Jones: Chapter 11, verse seven. Hopes placed in mortals die with them all. The promise of their power comes to nothing. You know, I used to live in Britain, where the roads were originally built by Romans, and then they were paved over through the centuries by Anglo Saxons, Vikings, Normans, Tudors or whoever else happened to be in power and each one of their empires in their prime felt like Mike Tyson in his prime. Undefeatable until they died.

Even Daniel saw a vision of all the world empires crumbling. But he saw God alone. The Ancient of Days had a throne that would last forever. By the way, Christ's kingdom 2000 years, is still the reigning world champ for longevity. His reign alone will have no end. Everyone's boast or promise of power comes to nothing when they die. And all empires like people die.

Kris Lingham: Yeah. The heart of this is where you place your hope. Placing your hope is like setting your foot on a foundation, setting your foot on a rock and saying, can I put my trust in this? Will this hold? No matter how strong it is, no matter how firm that foundation seems, if you place your hope in mortals, that hope will die with that mortal. It can only last so long. So where do we place our hope? Where do we find that foundation? It's got to be in the immortal. That's why the resurrection of Christ is so key. Hope placed in immortality will last.

Well, I'm going to bring us to our next verse, and I'm going to turn us back to verse four. Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. Now this one is what I call a balancing proverb. It gives the balance from another proverb that could have left us off center if left to itself, that one is back in chapter ten, verse 15 says, the wealth of the rich is their fortified city, and it is. Riches are a refuge. They can protect you from a lot of harm. So it's tempting to put your trust in your wealth. Protect yourself with it. But 11:4 moves our gaze forward to Judgement Day.

Yes, wealth is a refuge temporarily, but wealth is worthless when God comes to judge. Its protection won't last when God's wrath comes, not his rage. God's wrath is about justice, and when it comes, wealth is worthless. But then the second part. But righteousness delivers from death. There is protection that really lasts in God's righteousness. So be right with God that will deliver you from the greatest foe of all, from death. And only Jesus can provide righteousness for us. All right. We're going to keep rotating around, Tedese What's your next verse for us?

Tedese Ross: Proverbs 11:24, one person gives freely yet gains even more. Another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. You know, to me, I'm a simple person. You give as you would like to receive when your hands are perpetually closed. Grasping the things for individual ownership. How can anyone give you anything else?

It's kind of like when they hunt raccoons. And sometimes they'll put a shiny object in a raccoon trap and they'll stick their hand in there and they'll grab it and they won't let go. So all they had to do was let go to get freedom, but they got something shiny in their hand. So I don't want to be that raccoon.

Kris Lingham: And their fist is too large.

TeDese Ross: And their fist is too large to pull out with the shiny material. So I don't want to be that. And I want to give, I want God to pour into me. So I just pour it out, you know, that way there's always space to pour in. Matter of fact, it'll run over. But if I'm coveting and I'm keeping it all to myself. How can I help God's people? Yeah. You can't do it.

Kris Lingham: Yeah. Generosity, this is one of those Proverbs that strikes you because it doesn't make immediate sense. How can you give everything away and yet have even more?

That's why Jesus said it's more blessed to give than to receive. Well, blessed is a receiving. You receive a blessing. So how is it more and more receiving to give isn't receiving, but the more you give away, the more you're receiving from God. Yeah. All right, Peyton, what's your next proverb for us?

Peyton Jones: Verse 21, be sure of this, the wicked will not go unpunished, but those who are righteous will go free. I love that the proverb says, be sure of this. Sometimes it seems like people get away with stuff, but this proverb is saying nobody ever gets away with anything. People who escape justice on earth don't escape it in heaven. Be sure of this Proverb says like, for example, those who hurt kids are told by Jesus, better to have never been born. Jesus is speaking of the eternal justice they'll face, and he meant it. But the righteous will be pardoned for their sins, but those who are righteous will go free. How well they're made righteous by faith in Christ. Perfect life and innocent death, where he took the eternal punishment for all their sins on the cross. Those who think they've hidden their sin will be punished, but those who have hidden their sin in Christ will go free.

Kris Langham: I like that you focused on being sure of this. I think there's the lead in there, so you recognize, no, this isn't one of those proverbs that works sometimes and doesn't work other times. There are a lot of Proverbs that are like that, that like this is a general truth.

But you know, there's always the, the one case that that breaks the rule, but this one, it might be broken in the short term in this life, you might not see it work out yet, but be sure, know the wicked will not go unpunished. God is just justice will be served. And the righteous, they might suffer in the temporary, but the righteous will go free. This rule will be fulfilled in eternity.

Well, I've got one more to close this out. I'm going to take us back to verse 12. Proverbs 11:12, whoever derides their neighbor has no sense, but the one who has understanding holds their tongue.

Now to deride is to put down, to belittle. If you put down your neighbor, you have no sense. Why? Because you're burning bridges right in your neighborhood.

You're starting conflict immediately around you. You bring trouble to your own home. I picture if you picture your house as the bottom of a hill, you are rolling big boulders up the hill and they will roll back down. Now, the second half of verse 12 says, the one who has understanding. That's the one who gets it. You see reality. You hold your tongue. That means you weigh your words before they leave your mouth. You don't want that boulder rolling back on you. So you weigh your words and hold on to your tongue. If you don't need to say it, don't say it. It will come back around to you.

Peyton Jones: Yeah, I think about it like this. Our mouths get us into a lot of trouble. And here's the problem. My mouth can say something very fast, but I still got to live next to those people. That's your neighbor. If you're going to say something stupid about your neighbor. Consequences might last as long as your mortgage.

Kris Langham: Amen. And it's not just a matter of measuring whether it's true or not. Some people just take a moment to think, well, this is true. So it's okay to say no. You can still do damage with the truth. You got to have grace and truth. Let your words be grace and truth seasoned with salt. Take that moment to season it and make sure it comes out right before you do that damage. Well, guys, we are out of time for chapter 11. As you are listening, take some time to read Proverbs chapter 11 and we'll meet you back here for chapter 12.

Day 13 | Proverbs 12

Wisdom Loves Correction - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs. We are in chapter 12 today back at the Wisdom Round Table. TeDese Ross, welcome back. Peyton Jones. Here and present! Class is in session. And it is in session actually in Proverbs 12. We've got a lot about the wise and the foolish. Now TeDese is known among those who are close to him as a knucklehead whisperer.

TeDese Ross: Yes, yes, yes, I am I, I because I was one, that's why. So I speak knucklehead-eeze, speak it fluently. You know, I am bilingual, not Spanish, knucklehead.

Kris Langham: And Peyton Jones, I believe you know this language as well.

Peyton Jones: Oh, I went to the School of Knuckleheads. The first school of knuckleheads. Yes. I'm still enrolled in some of the courses there.

Kris Langham: Now, this is one of the key rules, as we talked about in the book of Proverbs. You have to apply it to yourself first. You got to look in the mirror before you paint this at anybody else. So, Peyton, get us started. We are going to start right in the middle of the chapter at verse 16. Peyton, what do we find there?

Peyton Jones: Well, verse 16 actually is one that I have struggled with most of my life. Fools show their annoyance at once, but the prudent overlook an insult. Now this is Solomon's way of saying, check yourself before you wreck yourself. Right? Act, don't react. And admittedly, like I said, this has come late in life for me because I get annoyed a lot. But these days, as I'm a bit older, I try to keep my emotions in check and analyze the statements of others just in case I have it wrong.

And that's another thing I do a lot. I get things wrong. So reacting to everything, every imagined, slight, or offhand comment actually betrays a deep or underlying insecurity. So it actually makes you look very insecure because you are when you react quickly. But the flip side of this, it says. But the prudent overlook an insult. And to be prudent means to be careful or thoughtful. To overlook an insult shows wisdom by giving the other person the benefit of the doubt. Maybe they didn't mean it in a negative way in case they meant something different than what you imagine. Plus, when you overlook an insult, you actually outclass the other person.

Kris Langham: Yeah, prudence is one of those virtues that is highly underrated. Dear prudence, it is a beautiful thing. It's knowing the right thing to do at the right time. And the prudent knows, it's time to just let it go, to just let it go. That's the wise thing to do in the moment. You don't need to let them know how much it got to you. Just let it go.

Peyton Jones: I was hoping you would sing right then.

Kris Langham: Well, dear prudence, I will move on to today's. We're actually going to back up a verse with another power packed punch for the fools. Verse 15 TeDese. What do you got?

TeDese Ross: The way of fool seems right to them. But the wise listen to advice. Now listen. I'm not as. I'm not as cultured as my two counterparts here, but I will say that I've had plenty of dumb ideas. Right. And if you have nobody to counterattack or provide an impediment to those, dumb plans, because it sounds good to you. You ever bounce it off of yourself? Yeah. How did that work? It didn't work too good, did you? You ever have a dumb plan? And then you. You went to seek counsel in yourself for the dumb plan that you and your self formulated. And you thought that somebody was going to tell you it wasn't a good idea.

So growing up, man, my grandmother love her, love her grandmama B, she used to say, if you're the smartest one in your friends, baby, you need some new friends. And that's real, you know? So if if if you need to seek counsel and people who may not even be invested in what you're doing, but are biblically and morally astute and, and, and grounded, and they'll say, and if they're really your friends, they will want the best for you, not just on this side of creation. I don't think you should do that, man.

Kris Langham: Sometimes my idea is so bad, all I needed to do was just say it out loud. Oh, man. Just say it out loud. Sometimes I'm just looking at my wife, and all she's got to do is look back at me. I'm like, yeah, yeah, I knew it was dumb the moment I heard it out loud. Yeah, but it sounded great till the moment I said it. And if I don't check it by someone - but the wise listen to advice. And that means, you got to be willing to be corrected.

And with that, I'm going to bring us back to verse one and chapter 12, verse one in Proverbs is perhaps my favorite. And I have to say, having done many, many years, I think I've done about 20 years of children's ministry. This might be the favorite of all proverbs among small children, because it says the word stupid. And it gives them a license to say the word stupid. Every time I bring this to kids, but I always tell them, you got to apply it to yourself first.

So let's hear it. Proverbs 12 verse one. "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but whoever hates correction is stupid." So I'm going to explain to all of you what I always have to explain to the kids. This one has to be applied to yourself first. It is not a license to call anyone stupid. There's only one way that the Bible calls you stupid, if you hate correction.

So let's read it carefully from the beginning. Whoever loves discipline, love it. You have to love to be corrected. Love to be told you're wrong. And that does not come naturally. It does not come in the flesh.

Not love getting it wrong, but truly desire to know when you get it wrong because it's the only way to improve. It's the only way you're ever going to get it right is to want to know that you got it wrong, and genuinely appreciate the person kind enough to tell you.

Now this one separates the men from the boys. This is maturity. If you want to play the wisdom game, you got to love discipline. Because to love discipline is to love knowledge. To love being corrected, is to love getting it right, because that's the end goal. If you hate being corrected, the Bible calls that stupid. It's blunt, but take a good look in the mirror. If you hate correction, this is the best you'll ever be.

Your mistakes. The same arguments you keep having, get used to them. They will never leave you unless you learn to love discipline and correction. That is the game changer. All right Payton, Peyton, which one are you going to be? You're going to love discipline or hate correction. Let's find out. We'll move you back. What's your next verse?

Peyton Jones: Verse 23, “the prudent keep their knowledge to themselves, but a fool's heart blurts out folly.” Now I still don't have a great handle on this one, if I'm honest. TeDese is my nephew. I see him at family gatherings all the time. Kris, you're one of my best friends. This is one that just gets me. And here's why. I often want to enliven a conversation by saying stupid things all the time.

Kris Langham: So I can give you an amen.

Peyton Jones: But here's the thing. They say that a know it all tells all he knows. So when someone's blurting out every fact they know in a conversation, it's usually a sign that their knowledge is just surface level, like a push button response on jeopardy. Whereas if their knowledge of the subject is deep, it's going to take a while.

They might hold back knowing I need some time. I need a bit of a runway to really contribute to this. Now we all have sound bites that we play in different crowds, and the people closest to us can sometimes be like, oh, I don't want to hear that story again. I'm looking at my wife. But Solomon likens knowledge to our blood. That's why he says, a fool's heart blurts out folly. It's just spurting it, you know, our blood is useful when it's inside us, but pretty messy and useless on the outside of us. Like a fool's heart. You're always spurting and spilling your knowledge everywhere. And your knowledge, as smart as it sounds, to everyone else- sounds like foolishness.

Kris Langham: You know, as a as a preacher, I gotta say, this one really hits home because when somebody puts a microphone in front of you or a pulpit in front of you, you suddenly start to think that, you know, maybe I do have it all together and then you're the only one talking. You have the pulpit. I can't tell you how many times I said something stupid that came back to haunt me because you can't take it back. As I got older on the mic and in the pulpit, I got a whole lot better at checking my facts. There are so many things I said as a young preacher that still haunt me, because I know how wrong they are. All right, TeDese you got the next one. Where are you going to take us?

TeDese Ross: So I'm going to take you to Proverbs 12:3. "No one can be established through wickedness, but the righteous cannot be uprooted." So this verse is an explanation about how it's impossible for someone to find stability and tranquility while engaging in bad actions. Right?

So the only thing that can establish the anticipation of this punishment that's coming your way, right? So the situation is once again, I know you guys hear a lot of things that come from my childhood and they're like jewels that are starting to germinate, just jewel studded seeds that are germinating from my grandmother. And she says, when you don't have any business doing something, business is booming.

And that's how one thing can lead to another. And you think about that. You don't have no business being in that room with that girl by yourself now. Now you're a father. When you don't have no business doing something, business is booming, baby. So really think about that. And you can't be established through wickedness. You cannot achieve stability and ethical astuteness through wicked and nefarious means. It will come crumbling down. Period.

Kris Langham: The picture I see here, I love the imagery of it. You cannot be established through wickedness. The righteous cannot be uprooted. It's picturing something being planted.

And you know when a plant is easy to pull up. I actually worked gardening for a year in college, and weeds are easy to pull out because they hardly have any roots. They just grow up, they go all up, you pull it out and there's not much there, and they're just easy to get rid of. A tree digs its roots deep. A tree that's established. It has more roots, more for all that you see above ground. As great as that is, it's got more going on down deep and it takes work to pull that out.

The righteous cannot be uprooted by doing what's right. You're digging your roots deep in the Lord, and the Lord will not let you be pulled up. You do something wicked. It's a flash in the pan. It grows up, but there's nothing. There's no roots there. And it will be easily pulled out. And I'm going to close this out. There we are out of time.

Read Proverbs 12. Take some time to dwell on some gems here, and we will meet you back here in Proverbs 13.

Day 14 | Proverbs 13

Walk with the Wise - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Proverbs, everyone. We are in chapter 13 back at the round Table. Peyton Jones, TeDese Ross. Welcome back guys. And today we are talking about kids. And we've got some proverbs about raising kids and what we do for our children. Let's dig right into these, TeDese take us to verse 22.

TeDese Ross: So verse 13:22, a good person leaves an inheritance for their children's children, but the sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

Kris Langham: All right. Now, this one is actually very personal to me because my child has a child. My oldest has a son. I am a granddad and proud of it. And so I think about this stuff and inheritance. So talk about how this works. What is the inheritance that comes from being a good person? Why does it endure to your children's children?

TeDese Ross: Well, I will admit my folly. At the very beginning, I used to think that, especially coming from a socioeconomically compromised situation, when I heard this, I thought that, you know, rich men leave inheritances to their children and their grandchildren. We look at America. We have a couple of families who have been rich and wealthy for generations. So that's what I was thinking of.

But then I found out when I had my own children that if I indoctrinate, and I use that word intentionally, my, my sons, because I only have sons, with the love of the Lord, then what happens is right there, if I leave my grandchildren with good parents, then I have left them an inheritance. That's what it's about. So now I know... that I haven't, I'm not a grandfather yet. I better not be. If you hear my voice. My son's ain't old enough.

They ain't got enough money to have no babies. But the situation is, if I leave my grandchildren and in my case, with good fathers, then I have left them an inheritance that won't wither. It won't. But if you. If you try to leave them materialistic things that are not and forgo their spiritual fortification. Then everything that they're gathering up is for other people, because they got that without the love of the Lord.

But if I leave them the love of the Lord, if I leave them certain moral, um, pillars, then I'm going to take care of my, my baby's baby because I cultivated a sense of righteousness through the Lord for my son. So now they know to take care of their babies. Then I have left my grandchildren an inheritance.

Kris Langham: Come on, a lifelong inheritance.

TeDese Ross: And that's what I care about. Now. I used to think like, hey, now I ain't leaving them nothing. They didn't give me nothing. Hey, man, it's a cold world out here. But if I leave him with the love of the Lord and I see my grandbabies. I mean, you see it now. I see you and your grandchildren. I see your baby. Your baby. Love the Lord.

Kris Langham: Yeah. There's nothing like seeing your kids raising a child. My daughter is an incredible mom. And I see that was poured in by her mom. My wife poured in love. And we did everything. Everything we could for all them growing up. But wow, it looks different when you see them parenting.

TeDese Ross: Because now you see that's the inheritance that you left.

Kris Langham: You see value like that is more that is worth more than anything I could possibly give my grandchildren.

TeDese Ross: So that's what I see.

Kris Langham: Well, we're going to come back to, uh, to raising kids, the topic of kids, but we're going to skip first to verse three. Peyton, what do you got there for us?

Peyton Jones: Those who guard their lips, preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin.

Kris Langham: Okay. One of the great themes of Proverbs here is your words, your lips, your mouth. And this one is about guarding your lips. So what's this about? Why are there so many proverbs about the tongue?

Peyton Jones: Well, think of all the times that you've gotten yourself into serious trouble. It's usually something you said that did more damage than something you did. Even if you're in a bad situation because of something you've done talking. Uh, like it says, speaking rashly is going to make it a hundred times worse. Those who speak rashly will come to ruin. And if you find yourself in a bad situation, using your words, guarding your lips will preserve your life.

You can talk yourself out carefully if you're in a bad situation. It used to be a psych nurse in the busiest psychiatric facility in Southern California. I learned the value of speaking very carefully, very politely, and talking my way out of situations. So those of us that were younger, maybe were in the principal's office, or we get pulled over by an officer sometimes. This proverb can be literally true. You can speak in a way that will preserve your life.

Kris Langham: That's powerful. And I love the imagery of guarding your lips, of just putting a guard up. Uh, something to, to just put a clench on your lips that'll save your life. Well, we're going to go back to a little bit about raising kids in verse 20. This for me is, is another one of the grand masters among the proverbs in terms of what I want to pass on to my kids. 13:20 walk with the wise and become wise for a companion of fools suffers harm.

How do you become wise? You walk with the wise. If you want to know what your character will look like a year from now, take a good look at your friends, good or bad. It rubs off. Wisdom is contagious. It just takes time to rub off. And the same is true for folly. If you hang out long enough with fools. They will get into trouble. And you will be with them and equally responsible. TeDese, you work with kids every day. How do you see this at work? What does it mean to walk with the wise or the foolish?

TeDese Ross: I said it before. If you're the smartest one of your friends, you need some more friends. So just. Just keep it real. And that goes for me, too. That's why I'm with you guys.

So when you start to walk with people who have a vested interest in your betterment as a human, minus any type of return on investment, they just have invested. They want you to be the best you you can be, and they don't want you to do anything that will damage that and you walk with them so they can really, really. They can really act as a sounding board or a mirror to what you're trying to do. And if they really love you- and I mean really love you, not, not a false pseudo sense of loyalty that a lot of these young men think that we see on TV.

But I want the best for you and Peyton minus me. So if you ask me something and we're all together, like, nah. Like, I really don't think Peyton should have got that cupcake. Brother, you know? But he's a grown man, so I'm gonna let him do his thing. But I don't, you know, I don't think he should have got that cupcake.

Kris Langham: But you gotta walk with people who are willing to correct you, willing to challenge you on the way you're doing things.

TeDese Ross: Willing to challenge you and love you. To challenge you gracefully and love. And then you walk with them, and then you make less mistakes because none of us is smarter than all of us, period. So when you walk with people who really have a vested interest in the betterment of you and they say, no, man, that's not good. Or maybe we should try this.

Kris Lingham: If you have a group of friends and you never get challenged about the way you live in your life, the decisions you make, you either have friends who are too soft to challenge you or don't have the wisdom to know any better.

TeDese Ross: Yeah. And so you're the leader. What I do know is that the shepherd, he guides and redirects the flock. The flock usually doesn't guide and redirect the shepherd. It doesn't work in reverse.

Kris Lingham: Amen. All right. We're moving forward to verse 24. And this might be one of the most important verses for parents. Whoever spares the rod hates their children. But the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them. Now, I want to dig in and talk about this one, but first I need to recognize the controversy, which is the rod, because the rod he's talking about here is the rod of spanking a child.

Now, let me be clear before we dive into this, nothing in the Bible endorses cruelty or injury to children. If you are cruel, spiteful, mean, violent to a child. Do not hide behind the Bible. Do not hide behind this verse to excuse your sin. Repent and stop.

Now some people might say a spanking is inherently cruel and injurious. And therein is the argument. I'm going to set that to the side, because I don't think I'm going to settle the argument over spanking. What I want to say here is that the rod represents discipline, and it says whoever spares discipline hates their children. And I'm going to cut off that conversation there as we are out of time.

But we have the rest of that conversation around verse 24 and parental discipline on the B side. Some great insight there into a critical issue for raising kids. Thanks TeDese and Peyton for sharing your wisdom. Read Proverbs 13. Everyone check out the B side and I'll see you next time.

Day 15 | Proverbs 13

B-Side: Walk with the Wise - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Proverbs 13. This is the B side. Our conversation went long on Proverbs 13:24 and parental discipline. And it was so good TeDese Ross and Peyton Jones are with me on this one. Now, we just got started on this verse when we cut off side A, so I'll catch you up quickly.

Proverbs 13:24 says, whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them. The key is discipline. Careful discipline for your children. We've already made it clear that nothing in the Bible ever condones cruelty, abuse, aggression or violence towards children. The challenge then is just how do you discipline children? As there is some controversy over the issue of spanking. And in the verse the rod indicates a rod of spanking. We'll dig into that and really get to the heart of parental discipline and some practical do's and don'ts. Thanks for joining us for Proverbs 13, the B side.

Now TeDese, I want to ask you, you've got four boys. You work with children every day. Why does verse 24 make discipline an issue of love and hatred? Why is this? Say, whoever spares the rod hates their children?

TeDese Ross: Hmm. So let's get into this. So the situation is, is that the Bible also says in Proverbs 4:7 that this is the beginning of wisdom, though it may cost you everything you have, get an understanding, right? So what happens is that before you discipline your child, if you haven't checked for comprehension and clarity, then that's a direct reflection of your parental and communicative skills. So how can you discipline somebody for something that you never even check for clarity, that they understand what's expected of them? That's number one.

So then and then we got number two. If you don't teach your children discipline, not necessarily corporal punishment, but if you don't teach them discipline, the rod just can be used to strike. But it could also be used to redirect. It could be used to get close. It could be used to change the trajectory of their path. And you have to have disciplinary actions.

My men are the ones who murder. Men are the ones who are murdered. Men are the ones who are in prison. And if you look at most of them, the disciplinary action that was taken upon them was abusive in nature, with no understanding or clarity or administered with them in mind. So we have to know that discipline as a corporal punishment is on the table. It's not off the table.

But the fact of the matter is, it's not the first resort. It should be planned. Alpha Sigma Z, that's the last plan. And you have to check for clarity. You have to check for understanding. You have to recheck for clarity. You have to recheck for understanding. And then when it is disobedience, the only time Jesus been mad is at people in the church. You know, He flipped tables over for that.

So, when it's disobedience, when it's disobedience, that's when we have...because that means you made a concise decision to go against the well wishes or the structure that has been established in your household. And you have to discipline them because if you don't discipline- I'm gonna keep it real with y'all. My grandmother used to give me some whoopings, and as a man, I sit back and I look at them and I deserved every one. And I remember one time I asked her, why are you whipping me? And she said, I whip you so that the cops don't kill you because I know when to stop. Now, some of y'all parents don't know when to stop.

And because you don't know, and you never check for clarity and you don't speak to your children, then with your parental skill, is that you're going to beat them because they made you mad. No, Never discipline out of anger, always discipline from a place of love. Because you want to know what's best. You want to. You want what's best for them. That's it.

Kris Langham: And that's the heart of this here. Yeah. That discipline is an expression of love.

TeDese Ross: Of love.

Kris Langham: Because you love your child, you discipline. It's a sacrifice that you're willing to make, but you spare the rod. It's a, it's a matter of, yeah, this is too hard for me. I don't want to put in the work. As a parent, discipline takes a lot of effort. Careful discipline takes an extreme amount of effort to figure out what works for your child. Now, now, Peyton, I want to ask you. You have adopted two girls, beautiful girls. I know your kids. And you had to sign an agreement in adoption. You cannot spank. So what does this mean for you? It brings me back to the what? That one word in the verse. Careful. The one who loves their children is careful to discipline. So what does that mean to you? To be careful about discipline?

Peyton Jones: Well, not legally being able to spank our children. It means that we've had to get creative. And what I've learned is that the same rule applies. I have to think and stop. It's a protective barrier against my own flesh, but it also has made me patient.

You said something once about parenting that I mentioned today in our conversation that patience, according to Paul, is an outworking of love. And my children know that I love them deeply and I will patiently discipline. We talk things through. We don't quickly go to physical punishment. Like Teddy's pointed out.

We get creative. I think right now, my kids think the worst thing that could ever happen to them is something might get taken away for a short time. But ultimately at the root of our discipline is they don't like displeasing us because they love us. Discipline exists within a relationship of love and trust. And so if we stop disciplining our kids. Um, we wouldn't have that. They wouldn't trust us or feel secure. They need that from us. Discipline. Regardless of what form it takes, is important for a child to trust a parent and to know they're loved. And even in the New Testament, it says God disciplines those he loves. He treats us like children.

Kris Lingham: The book of Hebrews reminds us that God is a father and thus God disciplines, and he does it out of love. We're called to model that to discipline is to make a disciple, to give discipline is to teach someone to follow. We're teaching our kids to follow and become like who we are.

We want them to be mature adults. We want them to recognize there's consequences. You live life. There's consequences. One of the funniest things looking at your kids is looking. They don't realize there's consequences. They'll do anything. They'll stick a...my my daughter when she was little, I found out she was sticking a rod into the light socket. Praise God, she would always put it in the grounding. Yeah, she always put it in the ground. I found out she was doing that, but at some point I had to teach her. There's a consequence to this.

TeDese Ross: I have a question for you guys. So the question is, if there is no fear of what's disciplining you, could you really discipline?

Kris Lingham: The consequence has to be real.

TeDese Ross: It has to be real.

Kris Langham: Your kid can't like it. You can't give him chocolate as a discipline.

TeDese Ross: You really can't. And I mean, I deal with it at school because especially when we have adolescent boys 14, 15, 16, 17 years old and their physical presence has usurped the hierarchy in the house. So now the consequences that are being leveraged against them are worthless because the person that is leveraging those disciplines has no power.

You can't physically do anything. They can't legally do anything. If I throw you out, I'm held. I'm held responsible for you leaving. So what can I do? There's nothing I can do. So if the person who is administering the discipline has been castrated. Then, because the reason that we are so fearful of the Lord. Not only are we supposed to love him, but it says the beginning of all understandings fear the Lord. And why should you? Don't fear people who can't discipline you. Yeah, like imagine if cops had no disciplinary situations. Okay, direction and suggestion is two different things.

Peyton Jones: So I think there's a scale and on one end is craven fear. And probably we start there. That is the beginning of wisdom. We do not want to be punished. But then there's perfect love on the opposite end of that scale. And that perfect love casts out fear. I actually obey God now because I love him. I don't actually fear a guy. I know my sins are nailed to the cross. I know I'm not going to be punished, only rewarded.

But I've walked with Jesus for 30 years. It's my displeasure of displeasing him. That is. That is what I fear more than anything he will do to me. And I think at the end of it, if discipline really is about love, then our perfect love has to... I think our kids... perfect love should cast out fear. I think our kids should be coming from a place at a certain stage of I love mom and dad. I don't want to hurt them and I don't want to betray them.

I haven't finished raising my kids. We'll see how that story plays out. That may not be enough, but that's how it's worked in my relationship with God so far.

Kris Langham: I think discipline when children are young is one of the most essential things you do as a parent. Discipline. When your children are young, it is so difficult to discipline a teenager who hasn't learned cause and effect in their life. At some point, every child is going to learn consequences. Something is going to...if you let them get to the place where they learn consequences from the street. Yeah, from the cops. From...

TeDese Ross: From other people.

Kris Langham: From somewhere they will learn cause and effect because it's in the world and kids are good at learning it. One of the the best, one of the transformational moments in my young parenting was when I discovered that my wife was putting M&Ms out on the table within kids reach on purpose.

So she'd always put M&Ms out. It was just things she did for guests. She just left M&Ms, and she just liked that. It was an entryway table. And whenever guests weren't around, I would always put it up high, and I kept finding it come back down. I'm like, who is putting the M&Ms where my kids can reach them? They're going to eat all this candy. And finally, I found out when my wife challenged me and she said, why are you putting the M&Ms out of reach? I said, because the kids are going to eat them. She said, yeah, they are, and they're going to face consequences and they're going to learn.

And I realized my wife was brilliant because she didn't hide the matches. She didn't hide the dangerous things in the house. She didn't hide the remote control just because we didn't want them to play. She left them there, and when they played with what they weren't supposed to, they got consequences.

They weren't terrible consequences. But if she waited until they were teenagers and everything in the house was safe, they would be touching very dangerous things. So they learn when they were young, because my wife let them learn. The discipline was soft. It was. But it was real. It was consequential. It was painful to their little hearts.

TeDese Ross: You should never be abusive to a child. You should never discipline out of anger. You shouldn't even spank. You should really. But it needs to be on the table.

Peyton Jones: t's funny because, Andrea and I, we do not judge people who spank. We're just not allowed to. You know, so it's like... it's a rough one, you know, but everybody's got to walk their own road, man. Like, you know, we are in a unique position. I think God's will worked out for me.

TeDese Ross: I must say, 4 boys. Two spankings collectively. For boys. 18 right. Two spankings collectively. One of them. Same situation. Playing with the electrical socket. Because you know, because you know who you know, who doesn't know when to stop? Electricity. Electricity would ground them out. And it's not the, it's not the volts that'll kill you. It's the amps that'll throw your heart off.

Second one running out into the street, chasing a ball. You know what I gotta. I gotta get you. And every time that I ever spanked. And a third time. So it was three, three spankings. Hitting my mama out of anger when one of them was three. And my big thing was, I'm going to tell you. I'm gonna hug you afterwards. I'm gonna tell you I love you and I'm gonna tell you why I did it. You know what I mean? And those things were already clear, like I'd rather you get spanked on your little bottom, you know, reasonably, go to sleep and I love you. And we can go to Baskin Robbins. Then you get shocked because the milliamps didn't throw you off on your heart or you get hit by a car.

I have to make decisions for you until you're old enough to deal with the consequences of your mistakes. And that's real. So I want to make it clear. Three, three spankings for boys 18, 17, 15 and 10. Okay. Because it's more the older they get is less direction and more suggestion.

Kris Langham: Yeah. You know, Amen. And that's, that's the thing. The older they get, the less power that you have. Yeah, my kids are all within a couple months. All three of my kids will be adults. I've got one who's a mom already, another one who just graduated college. I got one who's headed off to college. I don't have power over the consequences in their lives anymore, but I haven't needed to discipline them in any kind of punitive way in years. I can't remember the last time I gave them consequences because they understand consequences. I let the consequences happen. You didn't do your homework. All right? You're going to you're going to face natural consequences. It all comes naturally now. But when they were young, we poured in this lesson of cause and effect, and that they get to the place where, all right, I can handle myself. Okay. I don't need to put consequences on you anymore.

TeDese Ross: I'm 100% on board. Let's see. My eldest son is 18. The last spanking out of the three that I gave was when he was four. He was four. So I haven't, there has been no corporal punishment administered in my house in 14 years.

Peyton Jones: But I think that that's something very profound that both of you have pointed to, that discipline is not about power. No, people that make it about power end up abusing. Discipline is about love.

TeDese Ross: 100%, 100%. It's because I love them. It wasn't because they didn't go. So we also have a rule in my house too. Well, it's I guess it's a structure and a protocol. If you dislike something, you have a right to say it in a respectful way. Jesus asked them, why have you forsaken me? He asked his daddy that like, you know what? Let me talk to you, pop. Wait a minute.

Why have you forsaken me? So my sons can come to me and they can say, hey, pop, I really don't. I'm not feeling this. Can I talk to you for a minute? And we sit down and we talk about it. And if you could give me a pragmatic situation, like my eldest, when he was in seventh grade, he wanted his bedtime to be increased because he had the same bedtime.

We had bedtime for everybody. Everybody got to go to bed. And he said, wait, I get straight A's. I'm never in trouble. And I promise you I will wake up. So why do I have to have the same bedtime set down? Totally understandable, big dog. You're right. Run it. But now you wake up. If you don't wake up and I'm gone, you're left. Because this is your transition into manhood. Because you got to be accountable for your own natural consequences. I don't have any problem with that. So you have a right. I would never want to subtract the voice of the voiceless. I always want to give my children a voice. So I said, hey, but you have to be respectful. God said, don't mock me, and I'm nowhere near God.

I'm not comparing myself to him. I'm just saying, he said don't mock me. He didn't say you couldn't ask for things in my name. He didn't say you couldn't talk to him. He, he even one of the disciples doubted, like, you know, I mean, doubting Thomas, like he doubted. He doubted. So God is bigger than everything you bring into him. Yeah, you know what I mean? But bring it with respect and reverence.

That's all I ask. Bring it with respect and reverence, you know, and especially for these young men who, you know, when you're I'm telling I've said this multiple times when the hierarchy of the house is usurped and set asunder, because their physical presence usurps the hierarchy in the house. When a woman is five foot four, 140 pounds, and their baby is six foot one, 190 been playing football. And if that woman has not, unfortunately, unfairly and unjustly, if she is a single mom, what is she going to do to that boy?

What is she going to do? What is she going to nag him to death? Are you going to leave? She going to yell at him? So what? She going to hit him? So what, she gonna throw him out the house? Can't she gonna not feed him, go to jail? What are you gonna do? And you think these kids don't understand that? So, like you said, you can't wait until they are 17 and three fourths to try to discipline, try and potty train an old dog. See how that work.

Kris Langham: And that's why I think that's why to understand discipline. Discipline is not about having power over your child. It's about empowering your child because what you're teaching them is the power of self-control 100%. Before they have self-control, they'll get themselves into trouble. You empower them by disciplining, by teaching them. Eventually, your goal is not to discipline the rest of their lives. It's not going to work. You got to look forward and see. There's going to come a time when I will have no power to guide what you do. So I'm going to do this now, so that, with the goal in mind of giving you the power to have control over yourself. To enact your own discipline, because I've gotten to the place that I, I can't, I don't have that power over any of my kids.

TeDese Ross: I mean, you're a good parent. When you're a good parent, your job is to parent yourself out of a job.

Kris Langham: Yeah. I want to raise adults. I don't want to raise kids.

TeDese Ross: Raise kids. You want to raise adults. So your parents is your way out of it. Now they come to you as a sage, as an advice, as a guide, you know, council, hey, but they deal with the consequences and they have the autonomy to make their own decisions. You have parented yourself out of a position. Good job. You made yourself obsolete, as we should.

Kris Langham: Now I get to be a granddad.

TeDese Ross: Yeah, there's grandpa.

Kris Langham: And that's it for the b side. Everyone. Hope it was helpful for all of you, especially parents. May the Lord guide you in wisdom and love for your children to raise and discipline them. Well, we'll see you back here in chapter 14.

Day 16 | Proverbs 14

Wisdom, Patience, & the Fear of God - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs, everyone. We are in chapter 14. With me today are Peyton Jones and Chase Acuna. Peyton, how are you doing?

Peyton Jones: Doing good.

Kris Langham: Chase. Joining me in Proverbs for the first time. How's it going?

Chase Acuna: Doing great. Glad to be here.

Kris Langham: All right, let's jump right in. Peyton's got our first verse at verse three. Peyton, open up some wisdom for us.

Peyton Jones: Verse three says, A fool's mouth lashes out with pride, but the lips of the wise protect them. This one brings back some memories of a few beatdowns I've received as a kid. I'll never forget the times I heard someone say, if you would just shut your mouth, this would be over. If I had just shut up as they were walking away. But there I was, trying to lash out with my mouth when my fist failed to deliver. "I'm gonna kill you, man." It was usually my mouth that got me into trouble. A fool's mouth lashes out with pride. Whatever trouble I've been in, it was always made worse by saying something stupid. But the lips of the wise. Preserve them, probably because they know when to keep them shut.

Kris Langham: This one is actually really funny for me. I was a teacher for a couple years while I was a classroom teacher for one year, and I had seventh and eighth grade boys. Seventh or eighth grade boys always struggle with their mouths. I had a couple of kids who I had to keep after for detention because they were messing around a lot.

And I remember so well. I had this one kid and he just couldn't stop talking. And no matter what I would tell him, he just kept talking back. He kept digging himself into a deeper hole. And his buddy who was waiting for him to go play, who never got in trouble with me, was just sitting there and he just said he was kind of like quietly saying, just say yes, sir. It was in the South. So. Yes, sir, was the proper response. And the first guy, he just kept talking. Just say yes, sir. And suddenly it hit me. The kid who never gets in trouble. That's all he ever says to me. He always says, yes, sir. And he always kept himself out of trouble. There's great wisdom in simply responding respectfully. All right.

I actually got the next one for us. We're going to go to verse six. Look down a little a few verses later, chapter 14, verse 6, the mocker seeks wisdom and finds none. But knowledge comes easily to the discerning. Now this one is a tough dose of reality.

Earlier in Proverbs, we had the strong encouragements to seek wisdom, to cry out for it. But here the mocker seeks wisdom. But he comes up empty. Why? Well, he's a mocker. Now you know who a mocker is. The type that belittles everything. They don't do anything valuable. They just make fun of anyone who tries.

The mocker doesn't find wisdom because even when it's right in front of him, even when it's right in front of her, she'll just make fun of that too. But knowledge comes easily to the discerning. Now pay attention here. The opposite of the one who mocks everything is not someone who just accepts everything. It's the one who discerns. She listens humbly, considers carefully, and discerns right from wrong wisdom, from folly to find knowledge. How do they do that? Chase, I think you've got a good verse to answer that question.

Chase Acuna: I do. So my verse is from Proverbs 14:8, and it says, the wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways. But the folly of fools is deception.

So this proverb reveals something important about the prudent person and the fool, while the prudent person gives thoughtful consideration to their ways and where it might lead, the fool foolishly walks a path of deception. And as Eugene Peterson put it, ultimately landing them in a ditch. Now, I don't know about you guys, but I've fallen in literal ditches before as well as metaphorical ones. And guess what? It's painful.

So if one doesn't want to fall in ditches, they don't have to. It might be wise to start giving some thoughtful consideration to the paths one is on and where it's headed. I believe this is good wisdom for various areas of life, but the greatest source one could find wisdom for considering these things is actually found in God's Word.

Kris Langham: That one's great. I love the simplicity of this verse. Just give thought to where you're going. Think about the path ahead and don't deceive yourselves. The folly of fools is deception. I think a fool is lying to themselves. I hate being lied to, but lying to yourself is the ultimate folly. To do wrong but convince yourself that it's right is so dangerous, to head down a dangerous path and tell yourself everything's okay. And that's actually a good segue to verse 12. Peyton, what did you find in verse 12?

Peyton Jones: Well, this verse is very similar. And sometimes you'll find the Proverbs actually group similar types of concepts together. Verse 12 in the ESV says, there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

Having grown up on Looney Tunes, I remember the Roadrunner removing the signs leading up to a cliff that said Bridge Out. Wile E Coyote would run off the edge of the cliff with all the confidence in the world and fall to his finish. If only we had signs like that in life. Danger. Wrong way. Dangerous. Cliff ahead. But the way we're going often seems great. We've thought of all the angles. We're confident in our choices, but we often make foolish decisions.

We think we're smarter than everyone else who warns us of the danger we're heading toward. When the warning signs are out in your life or you're not listening to wisdom. There's probably a cliff ahead and you're in for a world of hurt.

Kris Langham: You know, that one is actually quite personal for me because I remember when I first read it and I realized that was me. Now, Proverbs is actually one of the first books I really got into and studied as a, as a new believer. And for me, for my first 20 years of life, I was quite content to follow a path that seemed right to me. It really did. But I never bothered to look down the path to see where it ends. But verse 15 helped me out. The simple believe anything but the prudent. Give thought to their steps. So putting it all together, the simple accepts everything. The mocker rejects everything but the wise discern. They give thought to their steps and plan the path ahead. And verse 29 adds even more. Whoever is patient has great understanding. Patience is wise because it takes time to discern. The fool jumps to conclusions, has a quick temper, a hothead. Patience is a key to wisdom. And it is a key to a peaceful heart. Speaking of which, my perfect transition to Chase. Verse 30. What do you have for us there?

Chase Acuna: Verse 30 says, A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones. Has anyone else ever found themselves envious of something someone else had? And then thought to himself that if you had whatever it is they do, then your life would be so much better.

Well, what's ironic about this proverb is that it says that when it comes to being envious, it actually does the exact opposite of what one hopes for in envy. It instead rots us. And it deceptively robs us of the joy that we're looking for. This kind of reminds me of a time years ago on a fad diet, in hopes of losing my love handles, only to find that after I'd actually gained weight. Although, in contrast, the one who was arrested in and at peace with the God of the Bible. Well, that affects the whole person for the good.

Kris Langham: This one is so good. This is one of those verses that is just so easy to see in your kids. When you look at kids, it's just blatantly obvious envy. That's the bones. It gives them no peace when you see one. One of your kids just staring at your other kid, or staring at any other kid with their toy, and they're miserable. They're miserable because they're spending all their time wishing they had something else. And kids are funny about it. Like whatever they have is never good enough. And that whatever they're looking at is the one that they want.

And we look at that and we think they're so foolish, but man, we do it, we do it. We just spend so much energy just staring at what someone else has. We're looking on social or looking across the street. Envy rots the bones.

Well, I've got one last verse for us in verse 31, whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their maker. But whoever is kind to the needy honors God. What a powerhouse proverb. Take this one to heart. The way we treat the poor says so much about us. To oppress them is to show contempt for their maker. Contempt- that means treating as worthless. And Jesus doubles down on this. However, you treat the person you see as least Jesus says you treat him exactly that way. And back here in Proverbs, if you want to honor God, just be kind. It's so simple. Be kind to the needy. I love this verse so much. What do you guys think on this one? What does the way that we treat the poor say about us and even about our faith in God? Peyton, what do you think?

Peyton Jones: A lot of people are actually surprised to hear that the Bible speaks more about how we treat the poor than about lust in sexual sins. It's kind of a big deal in the Bible. So when I read this, I look at the fact that man without anything is made in the image of God.

So if we need other things, other created things to create value for a human being, we're actually not honoring the image of God. Just their very being has value because they were made in his image.

Kris Lingham: Chase, you have any thoughts on this?

Chase Acuna: Yeah. You know, it actually made me think about how subtly this can creep up in a person. And I was thinking specifically of James chapter 2, where James basically confronts the believers there and tells them, hey, you're showing favoritism to those who are rich, but at the same time, you're treating those who have less as less. And you know, when I read through that chapter, it just made me realize in my own heart the way that that can easily sneak up inside of us. Maybe it's not just for the rich or poor, but I can easily show favoritism thinking that adding assigning value to one person more than the other. And that's just so not God's heart.

Kris Lingham: Yeah, it does so much for us to see the image of God in every person we encounter. That's challenging. It's really difficult to to honor every person in that way, but to see God's image in them helps us to see past the material wealth, the things that we judge people on, just see God's image and love them for that and honor God in the way that we treat everyone. That's all the time we got in Proverbs 14. Take a read through the chapter. Have a great discussion on wisdom with some friends. We'll see you back here. Chapter 15.

Day 17 | Proverbs 15

Anger, Arguments & Responding Well - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs. We are right in the middle at chapter 15, and we begin with one of my all time favorites. Chase is with me, Peyton Jones. And Chase, you have the honor of one of my favorite verses. Verse one. Why don't you read it for us?

Chase Acuna: Yeah. Proverbs 15:1 says, a gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. So I'm going to say something that sounds really elementary, but if there's an existing fire and you add more fire to it, it just makes more fire.

Elementary, but important to remember and easy to forget in the heat of a confrontation with someone else. Yet the wisdom found in this proverb provides a remedy for an otherwise heated situation. Well, a harsh word can definitely make things worse. A gentle answer can often defuse situations. So how does this happen?

Well, imagine for the fire, instead of adding more fire, you do decide to pour some water on it. And I've learned from experience heated exchanges getting more heated is almost never beneficial. But when people are thinking soberly and continue the conversation with a desire to understand the other, this is almost always beneficial.

Kris Langham: You know, I absolutely love that proverb. I know it's totally obvious, but it's so brilliant. Thousands of dollars in relational counseling can be found in that one little verse. This is actually one of the verses that I call Proverbs to prevent punishment. I'll explain that part later, but a gentle answer turns away wrath. That one little insight can save you a lifetime of unnecessary arguments, heartache, and division in your most treasured relationships. You have to learn it. You have to use it.

You have the power to end or extend an argument. So choose wisely. Just give a gentle answer. Practice it with your siblings. Apply it with your spouse especially. And this one totally helped my marriage. Honestly, now a gentle answer isn't weak and it's not disingenuous. It's still honest. You're still speaking truth.

It just chooses words and tone, that don't hit so hard. You can convey the same meaning, but do it gently. But it says a harsh word, stirs up anger. If you choose words that hurt, they will hit you back and you will both suffer the consequences for hours. So choose wisely. All right. Love that one. But we're going to keep moving and keep getting some more wisdom. Payton Jones, why don't you take us to the next verse?

Peyton Jones: A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit. Now I have to read this in the ERV. If you are happy, your face shows it. If you are sad, your spirit feels defeated. I did not know that the Bible had a version of the kids song. If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it. But I'm this many years old when I discovered this. YouTube in the words, "your face caught up with your psychology." And that's what this verse is about. Funny enough, psychology eventually caught up with what the Bible has always known about people.

The Bible has always been ahead of its time. And this verse, a happy heart makes a face cheerful is true. People who are happy wear it on their face, which pulls the face down and creates worry lines, demonstrating that proverbs is full of maxims of an astute observer of life. Now the opposite heartache crushes the spirit, means it saps your energy and weighs you down, and it creates a frown in the process. Your whole face will fall as your heart falls with it.

Kris Langham: Your face will surely show it. Why do I feel the need to clap my hands right now? Like I have a deep set instinct telling me clap your hands and stomp your feet. Now looking ahead, verses 10 and 12 actually work together and they deliver some keen insight on receiving correction.

Earlier I mentioned the proverbs that prevent punishment. That was actually something I used in my math classroom to help kids stop getting in the same trouble again and again. They do something wrong. I'd give them a three by five card, and they would write the proverb on it and keep it in their back pocket until they had it fully memorized.

When the situation arises that got them in trouble the first time they were supposed to get the proverb out and review it. Correction is our primary path to growing in wisdom. It's not about punishment. It's about improvement. So speaking of correction, take a look at 15:10. Stern discipline awaits anyone who leaves the path. The one who hates correction will die. Now, back in chapter 12, hating correction was stupid. But what happens when stupid persists?

It just keeps on leaving the path of wisdom, keeps on hating correction. First, the discipline gets stern in verse ten. But hate correction long enough, and you'll discover that that kind teacher or parent or friend who was correcting you all that time was trying to save your life. The one who hates correction will die, but the fool just won't listen. And then look at verse 12 a couple verses later, verse 12. They resent that correction. So they avoid the wise, the teacher, the pastor, the true friend. They just ghost him because a mocker would rather be smug and wrong than humbled and right.

Peyton Jones: I like the image of leaving the path here. It's a dangerous thing to do out in nature or in life in general. The path represents the well-worn way that people have taken for generations.

Life works a certain way and others before you have figured it out. Whenever I'm on a path and see log steps or rocks move to mark the edges. I think someone was here before me and braved this same wilderness, but they left me a helpful way to navigate me safely to where I'm going.

Kris Langham: I love that imagery. So powerful. You know, I have to admit, this is an area I really struggled with as a young man. I hated correction, I hated it, but this is also an area that I can really see God's work in my own life. He humbled me through a lot of trials, and I'm not the foolish man that I once was. I took this wisdom to heart and I made it my personal goal to love correction. Now I still don't like it or enjoy it. Correction still hurts, but I love it. I value it, and I listen to it. And Peyton, I believe you have a verse that speaks more to the positive side of correction. What verse do you have for us?

Peyton Jones: Verse 31, whoever heeds life giving correction will be at home among the wise. I've never improved in anything in my life without heeding life giving correction. It doesn't matter if it's an athletic coach, an academic tutor, or a mentor guiding me in teaching or something else. If I can take the pain of admitting I could do better, I'll be able to be better.

When Roger Bannister achieved the seemingly impossible four minute mile in 1956, it became the new standard and multiple people achieved it that year once they knew it was possible. Those athletes began to look to Bannister and learn from his example. And in a short time, they too, were at home among those wise athletes who'd reached new standards, receiving life giving correction does the same for us. It shows us a new standard and helps let us know that we can achieve new heights of wisdom and be at home among the wise. I don't know about you, but the Wisdom Club sounds a lot better than the Hall of Shame.

Kris Langham: So good. Chase, do you have any thoughts about accepting correction?

Chase Acuna: Yeah, I think it was something that Peyton said where he basically had mentioned that it's when we recognize that we have a need for correction or growth, as hard as that is. That really is the key and the conduit to being able to become better. And I've seen that so many times in my own life as well.

Kris Langham: That's it. It's our secret of our success. You have to be corrected and get better. If you don't like correction, take a good look in the mirror because this is as good as you are ever going to get.

Peyton Jones: It's like Proverbs has given us a choice. A little bit of pain now or a lot of pain later.

Kris Langham: Mm. So good. And we got one last verse to go to. Chase, take us to verse 28.

Chase Acuna: Verse 28 says, the heart of the righteous weighs its answers. But the mouth of the wicked gushes evil. Words are powerful. As one author put it, words can be either like bullets or seeds, taking life or giving life to the hearer. The righteous recognized the impact words can have, and so they consider the weight of those words before they answer others. The wicked, in contrast, can't help but gush out words that do damage to others. You know, I imagine that as much as they might try to keep it in, it just cannot help but come out of their wicked hearts. So how does someone become one whose words give life to a tier? Here are two things according to the scriptures. First and foremost, we must look to Jesus to transform our hearts. As Jesus said, it's out of the abundance of one's heart that the mouth speaks. And secondly, give thought to our words impact before speaking.

Kris Langham: It's so good. That's so good. This one, actually, I love that we rounded out the chapter, at the beginning was one of my best proverbs for my marriage, this one actually is so good for me right now.

And I love the visual picture there, the heart of the righteous weighs its answers. It's like I can see a scale inside the heart of a wise man that just before he speaks, just takes a moment and sets out those words on the scale and figures out, is this going to hurt or is it going to help?

And if they're not sure...one of the things that actually I didn't implement until about two years ago in my marriage, I just started writing myself notes. If you're not sure, don't say it. If you're not sure, don't say it. And I wrote it on sticky notes because you can't take the words back. Right? And it really is. It's the heart of this verse. You. You have to weigh it out. And if it might hurt, don't take that chance. Wait till tomorrow. See what the words look like tomorrow. You got time. There's wisdom in patience.

But the mouth of the wicked just gushes. Just lets it all go. Just lets it fly. Never turns off the tap. Never takes a moment to weigh out the words. See if they're going to hurt or help. But the wise take time with the word, with your words, with your spouse, with your kids, with your friends. So important. And that is all the time we have. Thanks, Chase. Thanks, Peyton, for sharing your wisdom. You guys listening? Read Proverbs 15. Take some time to take in that wisdom. Maybe write down a couple three by five cards, give you some nice proverbs to prevent some punishment in your life. And we'll meet you back here in chapter 16.

Day 18 | Proverbs 16

My Plans or God's Plans - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Proverbs, everyone. Chapter 16 today, which includes a series of verses about our plans and God's purposes, wherein the two of those meet is a challenge for all of us.

Chase Acuna and Peyton Jones are with me again, and I have to admit, these verses hit close to home for me because I'm a planner. I dream big and I plan big. Vision, ideas and projects are just part of how I'm wired. But the difference between my vision and reality is often a long stretch. Things just don't always work out on my timeline. So how do we walk through that and where does God enter in?

We're searching for wisdom on plans and several other topics here in chapter 16. So I'm going to start us out at verse one. To humans belong. The plans of the heart. But from the Lord comes the proper answer of the tongue. Now this one slowed me down a bit to humans. That's me. And you belong. The plans of the heart. God gives us that. He gifted us with hearts that dream and imagine and plan. We dream up what to say, do to become. But then it says, from the Lord comes the proper answer of the tongue. So what does that mean?

Maybe it means he gives you the right answer, the right thing to say at the right time. Or maybe it harkens back to God speaking the universe into being. Only his word can create. Only his plans will stand. I don't know for sure. I want to dwell on that one a little longer. So let's keep looking for wisdom. Chase, what do you think about this one?

Chase Acuna: You know, Chris, this made me think about the ways I could look back on my past, on things that didn't work out the way I had planned, and recognize that God actually had something so much better than I did. God is really gracious, and he's also gracious in the way that he deals with us, even while knowing our different motives. So right now I want to share from Proverbs 16:2 where it talks a little bit about that. It says all a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the Lord.

This verse would point out that almost as important as what one does is the reason one is doing it, because God knows all. You know, it's always intrigued me how in the Gospels we're given many examples of religious leaders of Jesus's day who are experts in Old Testament scriptures, yet whose piety was not driven by actual love for God, but actually driven by pride, power, selfish ambition, and the approval of others. They spent their entire lives studying the truth, yet completely miss knowing the one who the scriptures were ultimately pointing to. They were doing very good things, but the real reasons for doing them were severely lacking. In contrast, Jesus taught in Matthew six the things that we do for him in faith and obedience to him. He sees that and will reward it in ways that last for eternity.

Kris Langham: It's so good. And that speaks well into our plans, how we go about planning things. We always like to presume that our own plans are pure and noble, but God weighs our motives. What are we really after? And I think verse three adds to that. Commit to the Lord, whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. Commit to the Lord, whatever you do, and he will establish your plans. Think about that one. Commit to the Lord. Whatever you do, you do it for him.

Now, I'm quite certain that doesn't mean you can just take your selfish plans and commit them to God. Sin is always sin and it's always against God. And my selfish ambition is never godly.

Philippians 2 says, do nothing out of selfish ambition. That is idolatry. But here, committing your plans to the Lord means committing them to his purpose, his glory. But the selfish part on the altar and do it all unto the Lord. Let Jesus be your one pure motive. But you still have to plan. God is not generally in the business of just dropping a project plan in your lap. And verse nine really drives that part home in their hearts, humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.

And there's that word again. Establish. You plan. That's your job. You can map out the steps to reach your goal, but only the Lord can establish those steps. He gives them a firm foundation. And those are some great insights on plans. But in the way of Proverbs, we get to change topics entirely. And now we're moving to the middle of the chapter.

There's a series of proverbs here about kings, and it's important to recognize the voice in these proverbs read verse 12 with me. Kings detest wrongdoing, but a throne is established through righteousness. Now you could read that to say that all kings detest wrongdoing. Well, that just isn't true. It is demonstrably false because many kings do wrong both in and out of the Bible. But here in Proverbs, the voice here is one spoken to the king. It's like King David telling young Solomon, this is how a noble king rules a righteous one. Kings detest wrong. Son, your throne will be established by doing right. So with that clarification, Peyton, you have the next verse.

Peyton Jones: Verse 13 says, Kings take pleasure in honest lips. They value the one who speaks what is right. I'm going to read that again from the easy to read version. Kings want to hear the truth. They like those who were honest, how would you feel if everyone always told you what they thought you wanted to hear? That might sound great until you think about being a king, governor, parent, or boss of a company where every decision you make affects people's lives.

Having people be honest with you and give you counsel suddenly becomes very valuable, because it shows that they care about the same things you do as king. That you care more about others than you do yourself. Kings take pleasure in honest lips. That's a person who can be trusted. Of course, I'll tuck this one away in case I ever become king. But until then, I still value people who tell me the truth. I value the one who speaks what is right.

Kris Langham: And of course, that works in the reverse as well. As you have opportunity to speak to, to kings, to your boss, to anyone in power, anybody that you want to impress, they will value honest lips. Be honest with them, even when it's difficult and they will value you. Good stuff. And moving from kings to warriors. Chase has one of my most often used proverbs when I speak to young men. Chase tickets to verse 32.

Chase Acuna: Verse 32 says, better a patient person than a warrior. One with self-control than one who takes a city. Today, our modern world has certain things of values. In these days this proverb was written. This would have been no different. Being a mighty warrior was worthy of honor and what was seen of great value. Now I agree those skills are awesome with the martial arts background myself, for almost the entirety of my childhood and teen years, Bruce Lee was my hero. Yet this proverb says becoming patient and full of self-control is to be valued and sought after even more than having impressive skills on a battlefield.

And this points out something very important- character matters, especially as the people of God. We want others to be able to see the beauty of who our God is. And even though none of us will do this perfectly, a person's character who is being transformed to be more like his is quite powerful in our testimony about him.

Kris Langham: That verse is so good. This is actually one of my go to verses for talking to young men. I like to give a young man that verse and just let them wrestle over it, especially if they're struggling with their temper or they feel like they need to show their strength. How is it that patience makes one stronger than a warrior? How does self-control make you stronger than a conqueror? Such a powerful statement. Just wrestle over that one. All right, Peyton, you've got verse 23 for us. Keep us moving forward.

Peyton Jones: Verse 23, the hearts of the wise make their mouths prudent and their lips promote instruction. Let's read that again in the easy to read version. Wise people always think before they speak. So what they say is worth listening to. My grandpa tried to teach me a few maxim like this one. As a child, think before putting your mouth into gear and better to have someone think you're a fool than open your mouth and remove all doubt. That fortune cookie wisdom may seem a bit trite, but it's true. Wise people always think before they speak. Next time you're wanting to answer. Let it marinate in your mind a few more seconds before you respond or jump into a conversation.

Kris Langham: Think before you speak. That is pure wisdom. Or, as James puts it, be slow to speak, slow to anger, but quick to listen. Now to close out the chapter. Guys, I actually have a little story. Yesterday I was listening to this chapter preparing for this, listening on audio while I was running at the beach. It's a great place to focus. Now on our schedule we were supposed to be done with Proverbs a couple weeks ago, but a whole series of things delayed us all. Unplanned, all threw off my plans. So now I'm actually prepping for Esther while I'm also studying Proverbs. It's not ideal for me, but of course I can pivot. So I cue up both audio before I go for my run.

Now first I listen to Proverbs 16. My plans. God's response. Lots of good stuff. But then comes this verse, the very last verse. And I could never wrap my mind around this one. Verse 33 says, the lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.

Okay, so casting a lot is like the ancient version of rolling dice, only this is for making a decision. Many cultures used it. The Hebrew idea was to find God's will. Now I have to admit, as a math and statistics teacher, throwing dice for God's will just doesn't land neatly in my brain. Is this verse saying that God controls every roll of the dice? Is he forcing me to land on Marvin Gardens in monopoly? I don't think that's what it says. I think you land on chance by chance.

Ecclesiastes says time and chance happen to everyone. God built the universe with chance, possibility, probability, even luck sometimes divine. Fatalism is not a biblical concept. Yes, God knows the end, but I believe that the life he gave us is more canvas than script. But I also believe that God works all things for good for those who love him and who are called according to his purpose. And there's the rub. How does God's purpose come together with my plans and random chance? So there I am, running. I hear this verse again. The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord. It bounced around my mind for a little bit and I let it go. Chapters over. So I cue up my Esther study and I keep on running.

Now I'm not going to tell you how this story ends. But out of nowhere, that verse, that same verse that I was struggling with, cracked open the book of Esther for me, like so much just fell into place. And it's all about God working in the hidden places. And I just sat there and I marveled over the long sequence of random events that went wrong, according to my plans that all lined up those two studies on the same run to give me one phenomenal insight. How does God do that? Now, I like stats and I like probabilities, but I love when God defies them and just brings improbable things together. Now I'm going to leave it there. If you want to know the rest and you want to know the insight, you got to join me on my Esther study. But for now, read Proverbs 16. Make your plans. Trust God's purpose and we'll see you next time.

Day 19 | Proverbs 17

A Merry Heart Does Good - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Proverbs 17 today, and with me at the Wisdom Roundtable are two new guests, very good friends of mine, Mike Bonomo, pastors with me at an amazing little church called Refuge Long Beach. Mike, welcome to the studio.

Mike Bonomo: Hey, Chris. Thanks for having me, man. Good to be here.

Kris Langham: It's good to have you here. Mike and I, we're actually working now on a recovery series for Through the Word. Very excited on that one. Joining us as well is Brad Hornbeck. Brad is a military chaplain, dad, high school teacher. And I have just been informed, the most interesting man in the universe. Congrats on that, Brad.

Brad Hornbeck: Well thank you. It's new to me as well.

Kris Langham: It's an honor. And for that honor, I'm going to give you the honor. Why don't you take us in? You picked verse 1 in chapter 17. What did you find there?

Brad Hornbeck: Yeah. Verse one says, better is a dry crust with peace and quiet, than a house full of feasting with strife. You know, when I look at this, basically I just think of a family meal and sitting around the table, hanging out together, friends there, and just having a good time of fellowship. And we don't want to bring strife into that. We don't want to have conflict that's brought into that. And you know, this literally tells us this better is a dry crust. So I'd rather have a cracker. I'd rather be sitting there eating a saltine cracker, hanging out with good people, fellowshiping, glorifying the Lord than to have this feast. Now, don't get me wrong, I love food though.

Kris Langham: So I can invite you over and it doesn't matter what I serve, I'm good as long as I provide the fellowship. Actually, I love that you picked this because we actually just sat down, the three of us and a couple of other guys just next to the studio here, and I just was sitting back and thinking how great it was just to sit together and have a meal and the fellowship.

Brad Hornbeck: I think there's great peace found in that when you are with fellow believers hanging out and just breaking bread, essentially. I mean, it's scriptural. So I mean, how much better could it get?

Kris Langham: Yeah. And just just don't bring in the strife. Leave it to the side.

Brad Hornbeck: Yeah. You know, God calls for us to have order within our lives and the family structure, you know, the structure with friends and so forth is very, very important. And you bring strife into it. It just starts to cause division. It starts to disrupt the order that God intended. And that's not what we want to do. We want to glorify the Lord in all that we're doing.

Kris Langham: Mhm. Well, I'm going to take us a little bit forward to verse 14. A favorite of mine. Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam. So drop the matter before a dispute breaks out. I didn't plan this actually goes pretty well with verse one. As you're sitting at the table with the family meal. Drop the matter before dispute breaks out. This is brilliant wisdom here. A chance to check yourself before you wreck your relationships.

When something bugs you. Some small matter between you and a friend, coworker, sibling, spouse. You want to fix it or actually you want to fix them. Just check yourself and picture yourself standing in a stream, at like a huge beaver dam. And there's a, it's holding back a river and you just feel like you have to move this one stick right at the heart of it. Just stop and remember that starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam. Just ask yourself, is it worth it?

Or could you just as it says, drop the matter before a dispute breaks out. Let it go. Kids, brothers, sisters. Take note. If you were wronged, be wronged. Take it to the cross and just let it go. You can communicate without the quarreling. Mike, you had a verse for us. Why don't you take us ahead to verse 22?

Mike Bonomo: Yeah. Verse 22 in New King James says, A merry heart does good like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones. And chapter 12 verse 25 says, anxiety weighs down the heart. But a kind word cheers it up. Ever notice that when you're happy, you feel better? Yeah. A merry heart does good. Like medicine. This is so cool. Research has found direct links between happiness and our health. Now, Solomon didn't know this then, but endorphins, serotonin, and dopamine get activated when we're stimulated mentally or physically, right? Good stuff flows through you when you get a good word. It's refreshing when you need some. When you need some good news. You know God's Word has this effect on my heart when I read a verse at just the right time. It's good for the old ticker. And that, it says, is like medicine. But it says a broken spirit dries the bones so the opposite effect can hit when we're down. Dry bones. That's a powerful image of depression. It's hard to cheer someone up whose spirit is broken. But thankfully, Psalm 19 says, the Word of God revives the soul.

Kris Langham: Mhm. Yeah. You think of that picture in Ezekiel of the Valley of dry bones. Our God is a God who can put some flesh on those bones and some joy back on that heart.

Brad Hornbeck: Do you ever see somebody's face when you see him walking down, down the street or down a hallway and they just look bummed out. They look depressed. And just by simply asking them maybe how they're doing and really waiting for an answer, you know, and having that joy in our heart as we ask can just brighten their day.

Kris Langham: Yeah. The merry heart's contagious.

Brad Hornbeck: It makes me think of that, like just that kind of interaction.

Kris Langham: Yeah, those are good. Brad, you got one back at verse three. Take us back to verse three.

Brad Hornbeck: Yeah. Verse three says the refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests the hearts. And you know, it talks about silver and gold in this verse, but I like to think of steel. You know, you think of skyscraper shooting up into the into the sky. And, uh, this concept of iron ore being blasted by the furnace and then carbon added. And in doing this, I'm going to switch gears back over to the other part of the verse.

The Lord tests the hearts. You know, our our hearts are basically blasted in the furnace like iron ore. And it's put through trials and problems and struggles and even the other side, it could be put where we have wealth or success or notoriety. And what do we do with that? You know, it's a testing of our heart in that fire and what our motives are. And so, you know, just like steel, it's filled with carbon, helps it become stronger. You know, I think we need to allow ourselves to be filled with the Holy Spirit, because it's going to allow us to be stronger in serving the Lord.

Kris Langham: Yeah. And you think about it that way. You don't look at the steel. You don't look at the silver or gold. And as it's being refined, you don't say to the refiner, what are you doing? Why are you putting the fire on there? You know, they're at work, they're doing something, they're purifying. So anything goes for trials. You go through trials, you don't say to God, what are you doing? You're tempted to say that, but you understand from the word. You understand from experience. He's purifying, he's at work. He's the refiner.

Brad Hornbeck: And I think also, and I don't know, Mike, if you want to add on this, but you know, when it could be things even serving in the church, you know, why are we doing it? You know, where's our heart at with that?

Just like the religious leaders in Jesus days, you know, standing on the corners, praying long, long prayers and so forth, you know, where is our heart in this?

Kris Lingham: Yeah. And David says, you know, tells the Lord, test me and show me, you know, search my heart and know me. And sometimes the way he does that to show you put you through the trial and the dirt comes up, but he doesn't bring the dirt up so you can feel lousy about yourself. He brings it up so. So you can let go of it and let him take it away. And that's how the refining works. All right. We're going to skip ahead to verse 24. Mike, you had something for us there. What you got?

Mike Bonomo: Yeah. Verse 24. And the NIV says a discerning person keeps wisdom in view, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth. And we need to view life through the right lens. Right Wisdom is what God wants us to seek and to filter our thoughts and our actions through.

When the Bible says wisdom starts with fearing God and it says the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. So the one who keeps wisdom in view is the discerning person who knows God. If I know God, the wise counsel of His Word is in my heart, and I'm going to view the road and all the issues of life with God's instruction in mind. And this helps me stay focused with purpose.

But in contrast, a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth. The fool just can't. You just can't see things clearly. His eyes are everywhere except for where he should be looking. And the ends of the earth reminds me that without direction, people wander aimlessly through life, never finding their purpose, which comes only through knowing God, the source of wisdom and understanding.

Kris Langham: Yeah, I love that picture of fixing your eyes, keeping wisdom in view. There are certain things that you know when you're on a certain job or as a dad. You know what it's like. Whatever's going on, you keep your kids in view, you keep something in view. And the picture here, if you're discerning, keep wisdom in view. Life hits you with all kinds of adventures, but you keep your eyes, like you're looking at wisdom. Make sure you're doing the right thing.

All right, 17:17 I want to close out with an absolute favorite of mine. I actually know this one in Romanian. Long story, but I love this verse. A friend loves at all times and a brother is born for a time of adversity. A friend loves period, all times, unconditional, a friend loves. Whatever you're going through, an adversity, hard times. That is literally what friends are for. A brother is born for a time of adversity. Keep smiling, keep shining. I won't do the rest of the friends song, but you can always count on me.

The interesting thing here, aside from my frequent and random song references, is that the word for has also been translated from as in adversity turns that friend into a true brother, a true sister. And I thank God for the hard times that made us close my family, my wife and three kids. We went through it together.

We had some hard times. We had a stretch of about five years where the finances just kept getting lower and lower. We had a foreclosure. We moved ten times. Moving is stressful when you have little kids, but through all of that, the five of us are the only ones who knew that experience. And thank God it brought us closer. Because that kind of struggle will either drive you apart or drive you closer or drive you crazy. And I praise God that the five of us are closer through it, right?

Mike Bonomo: Last night I was teaching Proverbs 24:10. It says, if you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small. And I just love how this comes in. A brother is born to strengthen you through that adversity. I love it.

Kris Langham: That's awesome. Well, that's all the time we got for Proverbs 17. Take a read yourselves, discuss that with some friends, and the three of us will meet you back here in Proverbs 18.

Day 20 | Proverbs 18

Quarreling Against Wisdom - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Proverbs 18 today, back at the Wisdom Round Table with two of my favorite guests, don't tell Peyton and Jonathan. Mike Bonomo, Refuge, Long Beach. Welcome back Mike.

Mike Bonomo: Good to be back at the wisdom table with the wise.

Kris Langham: All right Brad. Well, you might get the wrong table, but Brad Hornbeck, still raining and undisputedly the most interesting man in the universe. Brad is back. Welcome, my friend.

Brad Hornbeck: Thank you for having me back.

Kris Langham: I wonder what happened to that other guy. Anyway, we're just going to jump in verse one. Mike, you had something good for us here in verse one.

Mike Bonomo: Verse one in the Amplified Bible says, he who willfully separates himself from God and man seeks his own desire. He quarrels against all sound wisdom. This is serious stuff. When someone unplugs from fellowship, stops communicating, I just call him out. Because if you struggle but you willfully separate yourself from community, you're in danger. You're cutting off your life. Support in recovery. Relapse often starts with separation.

Isolation might be a better word actually, a little alone time for some self-care is good, but to isolate for selfish reasons is to shut people out. Because we don't want to hear it right. He quarrels against all sound wisdom. It says. If I feel sorry for myself, I'm not hearing what I want to hear. I'm not gonna listen to anybody and I'll argue with you. So it's easier to just push you away. Even shutting God out.

And there's danger in not inviting God and a friend into the situation for perspective and sound wisdom. We miss the help that we need to move forward. And sadly, many drug overdoses and suicides take place right there when no one's around until it's too late.

Kris Langham: Mike, you and I are working on the recovery series here coming up. And, and it's interesting how, how the issues and challenges of dealing with recovery kind of, um, just multiply and you can just see visibly as somebody isolates themselves. But a lot of times it's the person who looks like they're doing well, and and has it all together, who puts that pressure on and they say, well, they don't deal with any addiction, they deal with issues. But isolation is dangerous and the devil always wants to get you alone. That's a strategy. Get you alone so he can pick you off.

Well, I picked out verse two. So we'll move an entire verse later on down. I got to tell you guys, this is one of my all time most convicting verses. I remember so clearly the day this one pinned me as a brand new Christian. And back at my B.C. days, I was very prideful. I wasn't arrogant about it, I wasn't annoying, I just thought I was smarter than other people. And it was actually a very subtle pride that I didn't get myself. But that pride kept me from the truth. And then now AD knowing Jesus, I found truth.

And I remember so vividly I was on my lunch break at work. I was working at Boeing. I was reading Proverbs 18 two, and it says, fools find no pleasure in understanding, but delight in airing their own opinions. And I was looking at the verse and I thought to myself, that is so true. Some people don't listen. They don't want to understand. They're convinced that they already do. So they just keep talking. And I stared at the verse and this fog sort of slowly moved away and I suddenly realized, that's me. I don't like listening to them because I just want to air my opinion. And for the first time, I remember, I understood that the wise person listens more than they talk.

And that wasn't me. And if following Jesus makes you wiser, it should also make you quieter. Speak the truth, but listen and understand first. Which actually reminds me of another great proverb that Brad picked out. So, Brad, why don't you connect that one to verse 13?

Brad Hornbeck: Yeah. Verse 13 says to answer before listening, this is folly and shame. And Chris, you know this already, but I'm a talker and I love to hear my own voice.

Kris Lingham: Thanks why I invited you, I need somebody to balance me out.

Brad Hornbeck: Thank you, but it's not necessarily a good thing, though. You know, and it makes me think of sayings that I heard growing up. You know, bite your tongue, think before you speak. Or my grandfather used to tell me he's. Brad, you need to slow down and take a breath and give others a chance. So here's my pause. And so hearing these things, you know, it makes you basically a fool if you just start to jabber on before listening and hearing what others are saying.

And you know, also, I just take it to a Psalm 46:10, it says, be still and know that I am God. We need to be willing to listen to others and what God would have them speak to us. We need to sit back and listen to God because in our lives, we get caught up a lot of times in the hustle and bustle and the running here and running there, and we don't take that time to be still and listen to God. But, you know, the other side of it is, if you don't want to talk too much, there's always duct tape.

Kris Lingham: It could be effective, but sometimes you just get in that mode where you're like, get things done, get things done, check them off, off the checklist. And you treat people that way in conversation and they start to share their problem. Let's say your wife perhaps, or your kid.

And they start to tell your problem. You say, I can fix that before you're even done talking. And you answer before listening. And that is folly. And it is shame. And you'll get bitten for it.

Mike Bonomo: Yeah. When I used to do follow up counseling at like, um, you know, the revival events that they would have at big Calvary and stuff. Uh, the person leading the team of counselors would always say something like, remember, God gave you two ears and one mouth for good reason.

Kris Lingham: Yeah. I think as a Christian, we can be so, so foolish. Think, well, I already got all the answers, so I don't need to listen to to what you say, but but you don't know their life. You know what they're going through. And you got to listen and, and listen first.

Mike Bonomo: Another saying is that I learned in drug and alcohol counseling school is no one cares how much you know until they know how much you care. Yeah, that's a good word.

Brad Hornbeck: You know, I think that's definitely true. And I think there's something healthy about letting them just speak. I mean, I think people are healed through their own words. I think a lot of times people figure things out through their own words, and it's just a matter of us being there and being almost a sounding block and not needing to throw words back at them, but letting them figure it out. And I think it means more to them at times.

Mike Bonomo: And they process out loud, like Mike Bonomo.

Brad Hornbeck: Yes, very much so, Mike.

Kris Lingham: Speaking of Mike. Hey, Mike, you got something in verse 14. So why don't you bring us down there?

Mike Bonomo: Yeah. The new King James reads, the spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness. But who can bear a broken spirit? Man, when you're sick and you feel miserable, sometimes all you can do is just cope. You know, knowing that you'll get better if it's not life threatening. But even then, the person who has peace has more than just a coping skill. He or she has an anchor for the soul and for us. That anchor is Jesus, right? Our our eternity being secure in him that will sustain a person's spirit even on their deathbed.

But it says, who can bear a broken spirit? And this, I think, goes back to 17:22, where he said, A broken spirit just saps the life out of you and Spurgeon. I love Spurgeon. He talked about how sometimes deep depression can cause disease and even worsen mental illness. So he said, we ought to tread carefully, like Brad was saying, and use discernment and kindness with people who are dealing with sickness, including a broken spirit, because I don't want to be the one to send them deeper. You know, I want to, I want, I want to bring that good word that makes the heart glad and is good like medicine, like the proverb says.

Kris Langham: Yeah. And you think about Jesus, who would not break a bent reed and you come in gently. You come in with words of grace. But a broken spirit, man, when you're broken on the inside, you know, the other ailments are just, you know, little symptoms here and there, but you got to deal with the spirit, and only God can heal the spirit. Yeah. Hey, I want to back up a few verses. Actually, Brad, you brought out a verse that's got some depth to it. Take us to verse nine.

Brad Hornbeck: Yeah. Verse nine says, he who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is a great destroyer. And that word slothful. It just makes me think of a sloth. And I don't know if you've ever looked at sloths move. Watch them move. I mean, you have to wait a while. It's kind of funny. It's really frustrating. You just watch them kind of barely moving along there.

But, you know, we this is compared to doing our work, you know, and doing whatever job it is you have, whether you're a student, even, you know, or you're working at a fast food restaurant or a teacher or a policeman or whatever it might be. Pastor, you know, are you, are you doing the work for the Lord or are you working in slow motion, half speed? Because if you are, it says you're a brother to him who is a great destroyer. Wow. And I don't want to be on that team. You know, I don't want to be on that side.

And it made me really think, uh, basically of the parable of the servants where they're given, they're given, uh, you know, basically money from their master and he's going to go away on a trip. And when the master comes back, you know, two of them show up and they've multiplied the money, they've taken the means that they were given, and they've basically produced fruit from it. And the third just shows up with what he was given, just sat on it, didn't do anything with it. And that's that slothful living, that's that slothful working.

Kris Langham: And Jesus says to him, you wicked and lazy servant. And, and the guy thinks, well, I gave you back what you gave me. I didn't lose it. I didn't go waste it, you wicked and lazy. The two go together.

Brad Hornbeck: Yeah. No, I think we're given certain talents. We're given certain means, we're placed in certain situations, uh, and basically called to action through love, to share the gospel message and wherever God places you. And, uh, you know, we need to allow that fruit to be multiplied. We need to allow God to use the talents he's given us to go and share.

Mike Bonomo: Yeah. I think that in contrast to, you know, a good work ethic and faithfulness and diligence is a good witness. It glorifies God. You know, people say, hey, that guy, that guy really works hard, man. He really is faithful, does a good job. But hey, isn't he a Christian, you know, and just strikes up conversation, opens the door to bring the gospel in.

Kris Langham: Yeah. Is it Colossians? Whatever you find to do, do it with all your heart and put it into it. But the slothful, I mean, brother to the destroyer. To the great destroyer. Like it's powerful. You're wrecking it by just sitting there. I actually want to bring it to verse 17 to close out another good one about listening, I feel like God's saying something about listening here. So 17 in a lawsuit, the first to speak seems right until someone comes forward and cross-examines.

Now that one is some truth and that goes for court or anywhere. When you hear one side of the story, you only have one side of the story. The first person seems right. Their version is perfectly logical, but hold off on judgment. You don't know the other side. You don't have all the facts. Listen carefully, judge slowly because someone else might come along and cross-examine. Well, that's all the time we got for Proverbs 18. Mike. Brad, thanks for joining me in the studio. I will see you. The rest of you, back here in chapter 19.

Day 21 | Proverbs 19

Discipline Your Children - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham : Proverbs 19 at the Wisdom Round Table, where I am so very glad to welcome two new guests. The first guest is the one person from whom I would say, I have learned more practical wisdom than anyone else in my life. She's none other than my wife of 21 years, Andrea Langham. Welcome to the studio.

Andrea Langham : Oh. Thank you.

Kris Langham : And Andrea and I have quite a story together. Both of us saved around the same time, just before we were married, in fact. And though we'll have to save that story for another time, the one person who probably knows more of our story than anyone else. One of our dearest friends, Bethany Wilson, is with us. Welcome, Bethany.

Bethany Wilson: Thank you.

Kris Langham : Well, we're going to jump right in. We are opening Proverbs 19 together. Bethany, you have the honor of picking out the first proverb. What do you have for us today?

Bethany Wilson: Well, I picked out verse 13, and I'm going to read it from the NLT.

Kris Langham : Now, right before you jump in, just for the record, I'd like to point out that I did not pick the verse about the quarrelsome wife.

Bethany Wilson: Well done.

Kris Langham : Nor would I have any reason to. Just wanted to make that clear for a personal safety announcement. Now back to our originally scheduled broadcast.

Bethany Wilson: Very wise indeed. All right. So verse 13 says, A foolish child is a calamity to a father. A quarrelsome wife is as annoying as a constant dripping. So when a child makes an unwise choice, especially the older they get, the heart of a parent definitely breaks. Now, a wife who seems to make it her job to cause strife in the marriage, well, that's just straight up annoying.

It's exhausting to the marriage. If you've ever tried laying in bed and ignoring the dripping faucet or the shower, it drives you crazy and your only option is to get up and just shut it off. And no good marriage works. If the only option the husband has is to shut his wife off to tune her out, because she's just going to keep dripping.

Kris Langham : I don't know how exactly you can do that. Not that I've been in that situation. I still don't know. It's very good insight, though. I have no reference to relate from, but it does sound terrible. Hypothetically speaking. But seriously, Andrea and I are not prone to quarrel. And I praise God for a peaceful home. It's a beautiful thing, but it took us some time and wisdom to get there. And, and I'll also say a quarrelsome husband is just as bothersome. So for a couple that just keeps falling into quarreling, that just finds themselves in that rut. What do you do? How do you grow?

Bethany Wilson: Well, in Romans, Paul tells not just wives, but all Christians, that if it is possible, as much as depends on you to live peaceably with all men. Husbands aren't perfect because they're the same species as women are. We all have shortcomings, but when we can overlook an offense and choose to turn off the faucet, that's a home. Our husbands would look forward to coming home, too.

Kris Langham : Mm. That's good. Andrea, what do you think? How come you're so good at this?

Andrea Langham : Well, first, you marry a very patient man with a bad memory, and that helps.

Kris Langham : But what did you do?

Andrea Langham : What did I do? Well, I would say that the key is to just be in prayer and always seek to be a better wife, a better spouse, and to work on your marriage like you would working on anything that you want to be good at. Prayer. It's letting the Lord really seek your heart and find those areas where maybe you're causing an issue in your marriage or an unpeacefulness in your home.

Kris Langham : Yeah, I think, you know, it's something that you grow with time. I think asking us 20 years in. Of course we're going to have some insight, but it's a little unfair to say, well, what's your magic ticket? What do you do? Like you grow. You don't. You can't just say, well, I'll just stop being quarrelsome. It takes work. You grow and you're in that commitment. We're going to make it through this and past some of these things. And. And I can say we're better at being married now than we were 20 years ago. I think we've gotten better every year. But it takes work and it's happy work.

But I actually picked out verse 11, a person's wisdom yields patience. It is to one's glory to overlook an offense. I love this one. It says that wisdom gives patience. In the ESV, it says good sense makes one slow to anger. It gives you the long view of things, lets you see beyond the moment. Say you're offended. Insulted, even somebody. Just puts you down, says something stupid foolishness makes you rash and impulsive. You feel like you have to respond. But when you do that, you only empower the one who insulted you. You stoop to their level. But wisdom gives you patience. It lets you overlook.

That's not getting walked on. It's stepping over the tripwire that they've set for you. Verse 14 reminds me that a prudent wife is from the Lord. Boy, do I thank God for that. Prudent is street smart in the right way, knowing the right thing to do, including when to just let it go and drop it. And speaking of prudent wife, that's a perfect segue into Andrea's verse, which I believe is verse 18.

Andrea Langham : Yes. So verse 18, and also in the New Living Translation, I have it as discipline your children while there is hope. Otherwise you will ruin their lives. And we all know the value of discipline in our lives. We know that if we don't practice discipline in an area of finances, school, health, wisdom, work, etc., our lives can become an unbalanced mess.

And if I don't discipline myself to get out of bed and to get to work on what I'm called to do that day, take care of my responsibilities, then not only am I putting my workload on others, but I'm creating a mess for myself and my family. There will be consequences and as an adult, I know and understand this. But what about children? They need to learn. They need to be not only nurtured and clothed and fed and praised, which is easy for us to do, but it's essential for them to be taught discipline.

Kris Langham : And I also think it's interesting that you made the connection between the word disciplined as in self guided, responsible, you know, mature and here where we see discipline as correction, verse 18 says, discipline your children. So when I read this, my immediate thought was, correct them, guide them, teach them consequences. But we do that as it says, while there is hope because it leads to self-discipline, and if they don't learn that it can be deadly. NIV says, do not be a willing party to their death.

Andrea Langham : Right, we want our kids to learn that there are consequences to their choices and actions. It's our responsibility as parents to teach them now so that they don't have to learn the hard way in the world when they get older, right? The discipline of a parent has a purpose.

It's not just punishment for the sake of justice. It should be full of hope and support and rooted and grounded in a fierce love for the child and their well-being. If our kids don't get that, the natural and inevitable discipline of the world will be cruel and heartless.

Kris Langham : Right? And that's where the word discipline is different from punishment. There's a place for punishment in the world, but the act of discipline for a parent is not a getting back at your kids for the frustration they've caused you. It's about forming who they are, their character, and it's about doing it while there is hope because the natural consequences come in the world.

In the world, you very quickly reap what you sow. For laziness, for cruelty to another person, for. For not controlling your mouth. Well, there is certainly a lot more here that we could talk about, but we must move forward. So, Bethany, what's the next verse that you have for us?

Bethany Wilson: All right. So I chose verse 14 in the new King James Version. Here I have houses, and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

So my husband Geoff, and I pray regularly that the Lord will be preparing our children's spouses, even at their young age. We pray for their future in laws as well. We pray these things because we know that we can give physical gifts to our children and one day, prayerfully, an inheritance. The verse says that those things are from parents, but God is the one who knows and can give our children the spouse that he has already picked out for them.

As it says, A prudent wife is from the Lord, and we pray our children seek the Lord themselves when it comes to choosing their mate, that our son looks for a prudent wife and our daughters seek to be prudent and vice versa.

Kris Langham : So. So what do you think that part means? What is the what's prudent?

Bethany Wilson: Well, the scriptures define the characteristics of a prudent person as one who applies wisdom to practical matters. They're observant. They regard reproof. They act with knowledge. And Amos even says that the prudent keep silent when the time calls for it. It doesn't mean that you don't share your heart or your views. It's the idea of believing the best, not assuming the worst, and acting out of that. The prudent wife would then truly be a gift seen as a gift from God if she were to act out that way.

Kris Langham : We're going to move on to one last verse. Andrea, I believe that you have us at verse 27. What did you find there?

Andrea Langham : Yes. Verse 27, and I like the NLT again on this one. If you stop listening to instruction, my child, you will turn your back on knowledge. I think this is one of the keys to a Christian walk, and it's to always be a learner.

I mean, have you ever walked into a Bible study and thought, well, I've been studying the Bible for a while. I don't know what else this could teach me. I mean, of course you don't. Well, we understand and generally are the first to say that we don't know everything, but sometimes we kind of act like we do.

Kris Langham : Yeah, I think I think this one's important for us. We're we're 20 years in with the Lord and, and it says if you stop being a listener, you turn your back on knowledge. You never arrive. There's no standing still. You're either growing wiser or growing foolish.

Andrea Langham : Right. And I think that maybe we hear from a certain teacher or group of people who we agree with early on, and we camp there and we spend the rest of our lives defending whatever we hold as true, which can be good for matters that are non-negotiable, like salvation.

But for matters that are debatable for politics and social issues, or even small matters that separate denominations. The stance of a wise person isn't just right answers. It's the humility to always be a learner, to try and see the other side and gain more understanding, to listen to instruction. It takes humility to consistently have the heart of a student. And if you grasp that your mind and your world will grow greatly.

Kris Langham : That's really good. That's really good. And you mentioned politics, and we as Christians are very prone to get this so wrong when we speak as if there is only one political stance for believers, as if all of us should automatically agree on economic policy. Gun control, you name it. That's not wisdom because it's not listening and considering different viewpoints. These are complex issues that God calls us to wisdom. And the cry of Proverbs is to seek out wisdom and to listen.

And when it comes to denominational disagreements, listen to each other. Consider, understand, be humble. Always grow. You know, I'll say here, Romans 14 has some fantastic insight on how to handle disputable matters. And those instructions are given because there are disputable matters, because there are things that we disagree on and we can handle those in love. Yeah. Well, that's about all the time we've got for this chapter. Thank you, ladies, for joining us at the Wisdom Roundtable. Thank you for bringing your wisdom to the table. And I hope that I was wise enough to listen. I'll say this one of my favorite verses in the Bible hearken unto thine wife, Abraham.

Andrea Langham : I might have made that a plaque, maybe a T-Shirt.

Kris Langham : You whisper it to me while I'm sleeping.

Andrea Langham : Is that wrong?

Kris Langham : But but it is an interesting dynamic that God gave in scriptures that I've heard pastors say before. And I certainly won't disagree that in many cases he makes women wiser than men, or sometimes the wife wise and the man, but sometimes he makes the one the man lead and tells that man to humbly listen and then go and make those decisions. So I'm so glad to have you guys in the studio. We will have you guys back again in chapter 21. The rest of you at home, I'll see you here tomorrow in Proverbs chapter 20.

Day 22 | Proverbs 20

Do Not Love Sleep - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the Wisdom Roundtable. We are in Proverbs 20 and with me at the table this time is my good buddy Peyton Jones. Peyton, welcome back to the table.

Peyton Jones: Hey, hey, hey.

Kris Langham: And joining us all the way from Wales, Barry Walters. How you doing?

Barry Walters: Hey, it's lovely to be back. It's been a little while and it's a pleasure to be back.

Kris Langham: Guys, we are going to dig into some wisdom here in chapter 20. We each picked a couple of verses and I picked the first one because I like verse one very much. Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler. Whoever is led astray by them is not wise. Now this is a tricky verse, clearly a warning against the dangers of alcohol. But I want to start with a little question. The Bible sometimes seems to say that alcohol is terrible and dangerous. Other times seems to say is wonderful and a blessing from God. So which is it? Is it a mixed message? I want to hear from you guys. Peyton, what do you think?

Peyton Jones: I think it's a two edged sword. It's like all things in God's creation, has to be taken with moderation. God might have included things for a certain purpose, but we can distort them or corrupt them.

Kris Langham: The wonderful thing in the Bible is that we see both and both are true. The wine is described as a blessing. That is true. It is a source of joy. It brings joy into a gathering. And that's precisely what you see in both the old and the New Testament.

But then you have these warnings about the dangers of alcohol. And basically what I see here is that God treats his children in such a way that he doesn't childproof the house. He allows us to use sharp knives, which are incredible tools, but he also reminds us that they're dangerous. He lets us light the stove with a match, and he he gives us guidance and wisdom. And that's what Proverbs is for.

So let's dig in here. Specifically, wine is a mocker and beer a brawler. Mockers will get you to do something stupid and then they'll laugh at you while you're bleeding. Wine is that mocker. Wine can be when used inappropriately, will mock you. It will tempt you into doing something stupid, and then it'll mock you after you do it and say, I told you you're an idiot and beer is a brawler. How do you think, Barry, I'm going to ask you, how do you think beer can be a brawler? What's the connection?

Barry Walters: Well, you know, Wales is a very working class place. And, you know, if if somebody has too many pints down the pub on a Friday or Saturday night, you know, there's a good chance that there's going to be fisticuffs. You know, there's going to be, you know, people are going to be throwing, you know, haymakers. Um, so yeah, if you, if you drink too much beer, definitely, you know, and you've got, if you've got that fight in you, um, you're gonna end up getting, getting into fights.

Peyton Jones: Beer makes your mouth write checks that your body can't cash.

Barry Walters: Yes, yes.

Kris Langham: Absolutely. And I love that it says that beer is the brawler. Recognize that that you're stepping in with a fighter and it will fight you and and and it'll win. It'll make you lose the last part of the proverb says, whoever is led astray by them is not wise.

And I think the key there is that when alcohol is doing the leading, then you're in trouble. Paul in the New Testament says, don't get drunk, which leads to debauchery. It's about being led by the alcohol. That's where you lose your self-control, and that's when you're in real danger. All right. We got to keep moving and bounce around, just as Proverbs loves to do. Barry, you picked a verse in I believe, verse four. What do you got for us?

Barry Walters: So yes, I've got this one. And I picked this one mainly because it's got a fantastic word in it. So sluggards do not plow in season. So at harvest time they look but find nothing. And you know, sluggards, what a great word. Um, but apart from that, um, the reasons I sort of picked this one because it sort of spoke to me a little bit because of the generation that I'm a part of, which is the millennials.

I'm one of the, I'm an elder millennial. I was just on the cusp of, uh, missing out on being Gen X, but I am officially a millennial, but would often, uh, would often considered, uh, sort of an entitled generation, a generation of people that don't want to work hard and things like that, and I certainly relate to that. I grew up watching TV and movies where the characters in them, you know, like a Ferris Bueller type character, you know, that just messes around, doesn't really work particularly hard, but at the end of the day, still gets the girl still wins the day, you know? Uh, and, uh, you know, the reality of that is that that's, that's all false.

You know, I, I remember I didn't work particularly hard in school and my first couple of jobs that I had, I would, I would do my absolute best to do as little work as, as well as little as work as I possibly could. And it didn't work out particularly well for me. And I learned a lesson there. And you know, this verse says, you know, the sluggards, they don't plow in season, but then, you know, they're still expecting there to be a harvest. And the more you put into something, the more you get out of it. It's a simple, um, you know, truth of life.

The more you study a subject, the more you'll know. The more you exercise, the more fit you'll be, the more time you put into relationships, whether that be with your wife or your friends and even your time you put in with God and reading the Bible and praying the more you will get out of it. And so, so don't be a sluggard. Uh, and, uh, and I still expect a harvest. Mm.

Kris Langham: Okay. We're gonna keep moving and give Peyton the next verse. Who's taking the end of the chapter? Verse 29. Peyton, what do you got?

Peyton Jones: Yeah. Verse 29 says, the glory of young men is their strength. But the splendor of old men is their gray hair. And gosh, I wish I had hair. I'd take it of any color.

Kris Langham: I don't want it.

Peyton Jones: It. I've always had it. I've always had a joke that ministry to young age made my hair fall out. But church planting turned what little I had left white. And the reality is, to me, being an old soul, I've always been an old soul since I was a kid. I don't really fear getting old. I feel like my body's just catching up. But I love how the proverb just says, the glory of young men is their physical prowess, and we see that a lot on social media. It's impressive to look at and it's often paraded, but the gray hair is showing that a man has trained inwardly.

The soul has been honed and crafted through experiences, lessons hard fought and hard won. And now you can waste your experiences. So you just grow old and don't mature. But Proverbs is assuming that there's an opportunity for wisdom here, that the longer we've lived, the more splendorous our soul becomes. And our gray hairs are like, they're like a crown, like a badge of honor that you've been walking with God and growing in his wisdom all those years.

Kris Langham: Yeah, people will tell me sometimes you don't look old enough to be a grandpa. I'm recently a granddad and proud of it, but I always like to say I earned my years. Don't take that away from me. I don't mind being my age. I worked hard to get here. We're going to do another verse. I'm going to skip to verse five. Back to verse five. The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out. Great verse.

The purposes in your heart. Why you do what you do. It says there deep waters. In other words, there's kind of a mystery to why am I doing this thing? Why am I chasing after what what I'm pursuing? But one who has insight draws them out. A person who can look into things will look into their own heart and draw out the real drive behind their actions and understand why they're doing what they're doing.

Oftentimes, we're going about getting what we want the wrong way. Oftentimes, God has put a desire in our heart, our flesh misdirects it, and we go chasing after sin when what we really need to fill that void is God Himself. But when we draw out the purposes in our heart, then we can go after them and find them in the right way. Well, I would love to discuss that one a little more, but we are running low on time, I got time. I'm going to give time for one more. Peyton, why don't you take us to verse 30.

Peyton Jones: Blows that wound, cleanse away evil, strokes make clean the innermost parts. Now this verse speaks to the importance of learning to suffer well. And I kept this verse close to me. And growing up, it was one of the first life verses I took because it leapt off the page to me. The first time I read it. And you, you both know this. Certain verses become like old friends or, well, well-worn travel companions. And I've ridden shotgun with this one for many years. It accompanied me through heartache with Andrea going through infertility, having my teeth kicked in by churches, suffering the disappointment of people close to me, and betrayal at times.

And all of this sucked at the time, but it made me who I am today. And I suffered a lot of pain and hardship as a kid. Which is why as a teenager, this jumped out at me. But what didn't kill me made me tougher. And if you've ever wondered if that saying was biblical, this is the biblical version of it. Obi-wan's version was, strike me down, and I shall become more powerful than you can ever imagine.

So if you want to be strong, don't dodge the punches. Don't run from every bit of suffering. Take the hits like Rocky said, because it ain't how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward or something like that, because blows that cleanse away evil mean that suffering can be very sanctifying. Jesus suffered. We know that. And he was God's chosen one, so we shouldn't be afraid to follow his example. If suffering is going to help me surrender more to God and cleanse away evil from my soul, I'm in.

Kris Langham: Nice. All right, guys, that is all the time we have for Proverbs 20. Thanks so much for joining me at the Round Table, Peyton, Berry. I hope to see you guys back here at the table soon.

Barry Walters: Thanks for having us, bud.

Day 23 | Proverbs 21

The King's Heart - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Proverbs 21 at the Wisdom Roundtable and back by popular demand is our ladies panel. Wisdom is, after all, personified as a woman here in Proverbs. So back in the studio with me is my lovely and prudent wife, Andrea Langham. Welcome.

Andrea Langham: So prudent. Hello. Thank you.

Kris Langham: And once again, our dear friend of many years, and always a great source of wisdom for the two of us. Bethany Wilson. Welcome, Bethany. So let's jump back in. Bethany, I believe that you chose verse one. So this comes to you first. What did you find in verse one?

Bethany Wilson: I did, and I'm reading in the new King James Version, it says, the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water, He turns it wherever he wishes. And I just thought about how every four years in the US, we as believers in Jesus, have a chance to put feet to our faith, to stand up for what we believe is right, but with grace to accept what God allows. It's our opportunity not just every four years, but each time a new bill is passed, or with each breaking news story to place our trust in God, the one who directs the waves and I was just how fast the globe should be spinning.

Kris Langham: That's a good word. And it's so important for us to understand government and politics as both a place for us to take personal responsibility and to place our personal trust in God who is greater, who is in control. I also want to note that what this verse doesn't say, it doesn't say that the king is God's puppet or robot, and neither is the president nor any government leader. But it does remind us that God is greater, that he is sovereign. The king's heart is in the Lord's hand. God uses good rulers, and uses bad ones, to his own purposes and ends right.

Bethany Wilson: And I truly believe our conviction shouldn't be seared or dead. As First Timothy 4:2 warns us. We should hold to the standards of the Bible and stand up against injustice, but we can't live in fear. Jesus told his disciples in John 16, these things I have spoken to you, that in me you have peace. In the world you will have trouble. But be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world. So no matter who's president, what law is passed, remember that the Lord has the whole world in his hands.

Kris Langham: That's a good word of peace. Now we're actually going to move forward to verse 20. I think that Andrea has something in 21:20. Andrea, what did you find there?

Andrea Langham: I did. Proverbs 21:20 in the New Living Translation says, the wise have wealth and luxury, but fools spend whatever they get. I call this one "working for the weekend." It seems like a simple thing to grasp. It's foolish to spend whatever you get, and it's wise to save your money. But it can be so hard to do. I don't think this is talking just about not having enough money. This is not like shaming us for having bills that we can barely cover with our paychecks. And when tough times come and there just isn't enough.

Kris Langham: Yeah, that's a good balance. Hard times come financially and God uses that. That's actually a very important time for us to place our trust in God. He grows your character, he grows your trust. But when he does provide, the verse says, fools spend whatever they get. Or I'm looking at NIV, it says the wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down. As soon as the fool has something good. It's already gone.

Andrea Langham: Right. The principal issue here is always wanting more and wanting to spend more. This is about the mindset of getting that paycheck and thinking, now I can buy this. I think this is more of a call to contentment, patience, planning, and discipline.

The wise have wealth because they saved it. It's what I need after looking at Pinterest. I just want all the things and yell at them to take my money.

Kris Langham: Don't say it.

Andrea Langham: I won't. It's foolish. Listen to the proverb and your retirement self as well as your children and your spouse.

Kris Langham: Yeah, that's actually a really good one for children. And funny enough, our three kids, our two older have more opportunity to make money, but our youngest is the saver. Shiloh just does not spend her money. She didn't earn more. She just wasn't a spender. She didn't love Legos like our son, right?

Andrea Langham: A Lego addiction is tough.

Kris Langham: But I think with the kids, though, it's actually important to allow them to earn money and to have the freedom to spend that money without you just telling them what to do, because they've got to learn how that decision making process goes and what the consequences are. Yeah, you can get what you want right now. Let them make that decision, but then face what it's like to not have it when they want more later. Within bounds.

At some point, you kind of give them guidelines like save up money because at some point you're going to want to pay for more important things. Yeah, well, there's a lot more there. But we're actually going to move to verse three. And Bethany, you had something for us. What did you find in verse three?

Bethany Wilson: Verse three in the new King James Version says, to do righteous and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. So Geoff and I say to our kids, we want obedience right away, all the way. Slow obedience is no obedience. Partial obedience doesn't work either.

We've been studying in first Samuel. So this was so fresh in my mind that King Saul had a real problem obeying all the way. In 1 Samuel chapter 13, he was told to wait for further instructions from Samuel the Priest, before he made the sacrifice. Before they headed into battle.

Well, Samuel wasn't quick enough for Paul's liking in his arrival. So Saul broke God's command by taking the role of priest and offering the sacrifice. Saul knew that before they went into battle, it was commanded that a sacrifice had to be made. So Saul tries to cover up his disobedience in waiting for God's timing by performing the deed of offering a sacrifice.

Kris Langham: Yeah, I remember that was a powerful story. I remember reading that actually as a new believer, and I was totally convicted by it. When Samuel says to obey is better than sacrifice. Because for me as a kid, I was always the one trying to work the situation, trying to twist my parents directions into doing what I want, but then convincing them that I was somehow being obedient by.

And I was just trying to get what I want. You know, I'd make some sacrifice to appease, so to speak, but I wasn't really obeying. And I carried that over in some ways to my relationship with God. And this one convicted me to do righteousness and justice. That's doing what's right with God. What is truly just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. It's better than saying, God, I'll give this thing up for you and then do whatever I want to do, right?

Bethany Wilson: I mean, how many times have we carried out the deed of a good Christian by sacrificing our time to attend church, our money to tithe, our talents to serve while we are walking in disobedience? God desires that we obey right away all the way. Then the deeds are seen. The deeds that follow are seen as pure and performed at a time that pleases him.

Kris Langham: Right. Right. And actually, I picked a verse that actually fits right in with what with that one. Verse 21, 21:21 whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity, and honor. Now, what I really notice here is that you pursue one thing and find another. He says, pursue righteousness and find life, prosperity and honor. Don't pursue life. Don't pursue prosperity or honor. Pursue righteousness. The word righteousness means something that is right with God or right in God's sight. Jesus said, seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you as well. And remember, that's in the sermon on the Mount. It's in Matthew six, and it's where he's talking about how not to worry.

He says, don't worry. And he says, look at the birds as God takes care of them and the flowers of the field and and they're dressed better than Solomon. But at the heart of that, he says, seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, and then the rest of these things will be added to you. And so that comes in obedience. Seeking him first and seeking his righteousness comes in obedience. So, what do you think? How do we get this right? How do we know if we're really doing righteousness and not just using sacrifice as a cover for our selfishness?

Andrea Langham: I think for me, it's really a matter of making sure I introspectively am checking my motives in an area of not letting myself have excuses or really setting off an alarm in my heart if I find myself making excuses. Of again, praying and asking the Lord to seek my heart and show me those wicked ways that are in me that are coming up. But I think a lot of it is just being really honest with ourselves, no matter the consequence.

Kris Langham: Yeah, honest with yourself about your motives and honest with God. Really opening your heart, because he knows your motives. And so God, show me, and and it's the mirror of the word that he uses to, to show you this is what you're really doing here. And, and then when you come back to his law and you read what's right and you say, that's what I need to pursue.

I'll pursue what's right. And that's where I find life. And, and what I was after in the first place. Life, prosperity, honor. These are the things that we desire. But you don't pursue them by selfish means, right? Well, we had one last verse and Andrea found that one in verse 24. So, Andrea, why don't you read verse 24 for us?

Andrea Langham: All right. I like this one. In the ESV, it says scoffer is the name of the arrogant, haughty man who acts with arrogant pride. And for this, it really stuck out to me. I don't think most of us would call ourselves scoffers, but when you see social media posts and you read any of the comment sections, especially in, you know, a political debate or just something that somebody put up there that has maybe a debatable topic and you'll see people just fulfilling this being scoffers, being haughty, looking arrogant. And it's the most heartbreaking when you see believers do it or when you find yourself caught up in that. Now I know you guys, neither of you are on social media very much.

Kris Langham: Not exactly a social media mouse.

Andrea Langham: Right? But I feel like once we get caught up in that, that it's just such a slam door witness because our number one job is to represent Christ. But when we become scoffers, it opens a whole door for things to come against the name of Christ in the church.

Kris Langham: Yeah. Scoffers, a good word. And the NIV, it says mocker. Both of those are somebody who is always making fun and always, always mocking. And so you can't have an intelligent discussion with somebody who thinks they know better than you already, who is arrogant. And, and the Bible makes a clear distinction between, between genuine wisdom and arrogant wisdom, worldly wisdom that thinks they have all the answers already. And when you think you have all the answers, you don't need to listen. You know, the only reason you listen is to find something to poke fun at.

You can be intelligent. You can be very intelligent and still be... in fact, that's the recipe for a mocker. To have intelligence, but not without wisdom will just turn you into a mocker where you make fun of everyone else. So how do you check yourself? How do you find, how do you stop yourself from being that? Because easy for us to say, right? Those people.

Bethany Wilson: I say post unto others as you would have them post unto you.

Andrea Langham: Such wisdom.

Bethany Wilson: No, I'm reading actually, a book that's all about like before you hit send. And I've heard this before, but before you're going to correspond with somebody or anything and let me see if I can remember the four things. But is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind? And I forgot the fourth one. But asking yourself...but asking yourself those questions.

Kris Langham: You admit in humility.

Bethany Wilson: What was it?

Kris Langham: You admit in humility.

Bethany Wilson: In humility I forgot the fourth one, I haven't gotten that far.

Kris Langham: I think humble would be a good fourth one.

Bethany Wilson: Yeah. Is it humble? Yeah.

Kris Langham: And I think is it grace, let your words be always with grace, which means better than they deserve. Speak to people better than they deserve. Because the question that the mocker says is, is it deserved? Oh yeah, they deserve it. But that's not the question. We speak with grace, right?

Well, that's the time we've got for Proverbs 21. Thank you, ladies, for joining me in the studio and sharing your wisdom. And we will see all of you back here in Proverbs 22.

Day 24 | Proverbs 22

Train Up a Child - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs, everyone, chapter 22. Today, as we dive into issues of justice and equity, along with some essential verses for raising children, as usual, the topics and themes and proverbs bounce around much the same way that daily life does. I'm joined today by two of our illustrious through the word teachers. Chase Acuna and Peyton Jones are here. Chase, you have the honor of the first proverb.

Chase Acuna: All right. Thanks, Chris. So I'm going to be reading Proverbs 22:2. It says, rich and poor have this in common. The Lord is the maker of them all. Rich, poor, male, female, black, white, and the various shades of color in between. The Bible makes it clear that the Lord is the maker of them all. All of humanity has been made in his image, which means all carry inherent dignity. All are equal in value. All are dependent upon our creator for life, and all have sinned and are in need of his redeeming grace and rescue.

Now I wonder how different a culture society might look if it lived in the reality of these things. Or how different one's own life would look if they began seeing oneself and others the way that God does in these matters. My guess is that it would change a lot for a lot of us and be transformative to our cultures and societies.

Kris Langham: You know, it's amazing to me how much our perspective on others and on ourselves is affected by simply remembering our maker and remembering that our maker is the same as their maker. Who am I to judge his creation, his servant? Now I'm going to move us to verse six and perhaps the classic verse about raising children. And I'm going to read this one from the ESV. Train up a child in the way he should go. Even when he is old, he will not depart from it. Now train is a great word for raising kids.

The NIV has changed it to start children off and I think that's accurate. But I really like the word train, because preparing for life is a lot like training for a sport or starting a new job. You go through training so you can do it well. It's more than just classroom learning, more than memorizing a set of facts.

If you want to compete, you build muscle, you run plays, you develop strategies, you run a scrimmage, you get on the field and you learn by doing. But you do all that with a coach there to train you. And raising kids is training, getting them onto the court and into real life. But with us there as parents to train them for it.

As parents, we have a job to give them opportunities to try to take risks, to fail, to succeed, and to learn and grow from all of it. And for kids of faith, we have to let them flex their faith to build that faith muscle, to live real life, to reach real people with real ministry. And I also like that it says train up a child in the way they should go. There's a path we want for them, not just a set of beliefs and not just a destination. Yet we can't take that path for them, nor can we force them along a path. We have to train and prepare them for it.

That means giving them opportunities to make decisions and to walk them out so they'll grow instincts for life. We want them to have gut reactions to situations that have wisdom and faith ingrained in them. An instinct to trust God when it gets hard to pray, when trouble hits, to find good friends, choose the right measure, risks properly, to look for stable footing before placing their weight on a rock. There's so much here in this verse, but I want to keep moving forward. So, Peyton, what did you find in verse 15.

Peyton Jones: Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far away. You know, part of being a kid is to get it wrong sometimes. Proverbs doesn't see making mistakes as bad, but normal to be expected. Folly is bound up in the heart of a child. So this isn't about punishment. It's about driving folly away.

Discipline is a tool to pry folly out of the heart. One way or another, folly is going to come out of that heart, whether through discipline in a controlled way or it's going to keep leaking out of the heart all throughout their lives, hemorrhaging out into adulthood like they never grew up. People who have never experienced discipline end up becoming 50 year old babies who throw tantrums in public and insist on having their own way. Drive that folly out while they're young, Solomon says.

Kris Lingham: You know, I think it's important to see here that this is not a dig on kids. Like they're all good for nothing, fools and deserve punishment. It's simply a statement of a child's nature. Left to themselves, kids will do very foolish things. It's all bound up in their heart. You got to love them and help them get it out. And that takes discipline. But discipline is much more than punishment. The goal of parental discipline is to train kids to reach a place of self-discipline. That means we want them to have control over the self that enables them to resist temptation and choose wisdom and be a functioning adult. Now the two of you each have younger kids than mine. Chase, what are some keys with your kids for driving that folly from their tender little hearts?

Chase Acuna: I think the key for me, when I discipline, is to try to do it in a way that lets them know it's not that I'm angry or that I don't love them, that I'm doing it. It's the exact opposite. It's because I love them so much and care about who they become that I discipline. It's out of my desire for their greatest good. This work as a father has actually helped me to see and receive God's warning and discipline towards me. Also a lot differently, knowing it's out of his love for me as his kid.

Kris Lingham: It's really good. We learn so much about the nature of God's love for us from our experience in disciplining our own children. You know, putting all of this together, the training and the discipline are about aiming for healthy adulthood.

One of the great dangers that I've seen in too many Christian homes is an overemphasis on discipline that pushes these verses beyond their intent. When kids are controlled by a fear of punishment, or when parents are harsh, that keeps the child a child and does not train a child for independent adulthood. When parents operate out of a fear of the world, they fail to empower their kids to live holy and godly in the world.

I've been working with kids for 25 years, and one rule that I have found essential, especially when your kids become teens, I have to want them to grow up. If they perceive me to be holding them back, treating them like a child, or forcing them along a path, even if it's a good path, they will resist. Alternatively, if they know that we are empowering and equipping them for their own path, for their success and their journey, they will trust us. My kids need to know that I am a super fan of their adulthood.

One of my life goals is their maturity and their responsible independence. Go, kid. Go! Now we could take a whole series on training and discipline, but Proverbs changes the subject as it will. Chase, why don't you take us to verse eight?

Chase Acuna: Proverbs 22:8 says, whoever sows injustice reaps calamity. And the rod they wield in fury will be broken. So I don't know much about gardening, but after moving to a place with rich soil and where it rains a lot, my family and I eventually aspire to. Yet, in spite of being a novice, it was not long before realizing that if one plants cherry seeds, they won't eventually end up with a lemon tree. Nor will watermelon sprout from a jalapeno plant. Why?

Because the fruit that comes up is not based on wishful thinking, but based on the type of seeds that have been sown. Well, similarly, one can't so injustice time and time again and think that ultimately will turn out good for them.

In fact, in the New Testament book of Galatians, Paul uses similar imagery when he says, if we sow to the flesh, we'll reap from there. But if one sows to the spirit, then they will also reap from the spirit. The reality is, when it comes to sowing, sooner or later the fruit of what we have sown will come to fruition, for better or for worse. And this is sobering. So this proverb warns the reader that the fruit of injustice ultimately brings about calamity, not tangerines or roses.

Kris Langham: I love that repetition from the Old Testament to the new. That theme of sowing. You sow seeds and that forces you to take the long view of life, to have the faith of a farmer, to see that the seeds you sow in life will come back. They will sprout. Now moving ahead, Peyton, take us to verse 28.

Peyton Jones: Do not move. An ancient boundary stone set up by your ancestors. Is it me or does there seem to be an extra amount of hubris by the current generation? Don't get me wrong. Every generation thinks they know more than the generation before them. But when you go and remove ancient boundary stones, you're going to cause problems.

A boundary stone is a way of defining something. The start of something in the end of something else, like a boundary or a border between lands. We find our definitions changing in the modern world and it gets a bit confusing. The more we think we're smarter than the generation before us, the stupider we sound. We shouldn't refuse to change things that need changing from the past, but this proverb is telling us to respect the wisdom of those who went before us, and give them a little credit that they may have been operating out of wisdom as well.

Kris Langham: And once again, I think a key there is balance. The wise person doesn't reject everything simply because it's old. Neither do they accept everything simply because it's old. But the wise discerns and has respect for their ancestors.

Take time to think through why did they set these boundary zones? Why were these limits set on life? If they were wrong, then reject them, but take time and respect them. Do not move an ancient boundary stone set up by your ancestor. And that's our wisdom for today. Take some time to read Proverbs 22. Maybe have a wisdom discussion with your friends as well, and we'll meet you back in the next chapter.

Day 25 | Proverbs 23

The Sayings of the Wise - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Proverbs 23. Welcome back to the Wisdom Roundtable with me today, pastor Mike Bonamo from Refuge Long Beach. Welcome back Mike.

Mike Bonamo: Hey, it's great to hang with the smart kids. I hope I learned something all right.

Kris Langham: I think you picked the wrong table. Mike and I are working now on a recovery series through the book of John. I'm excited about that one. Also in the studio, Barry Walters is back from the land of whales. Welcome back. Barry.

Barry Walters: Hello. Thank you for having me back, sir.

Kris Langham: Chapter 23 continues a section of Proverbs, quite simply called the sayings of the wise. Now these sayings are a little longer than the two line proverbs. They NIV separates the sayings out for you, but the numbering there was added. The sayings here have a common theme. Each one presents a point of decision with a path ahead of it, and the wisdom of each saying comes in looking down the path and seeing where it leads.

A couple examples. The first saying brings us to the place when you sit to dine with a ruler, but it warns us to look out. Do not crave his delicacies, for that food is deceptive. Don't let wealth and power fool you and don't give in to gluttony. And verse four gives us a similar warning. Do not wear yourself out to get rich. Look down the road. Cast but a glance at riches and they are gone.

So as we're searching for wisdom here, I had us each pick out some proverbs. And funny enough, you guys both landed on the same verse. Must be something important for us. So, Barry, why don't you start us out?

Barry Walters: Verse 12. Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.

Kris Lingham: Now I have to tell you, when you say that, it sounds incredibly wise, but I have to clarify for the audience. It says your ears.

Barry Walters: Yeah, Welsh people say ears as years.

Kris Lingham: Apply your ears to words of knowledge.

Barry Walters: It's just a Welsh. I'm sorry. Anyway.

Kris Lingham: Go ahead. You can be Welsh.

Barry Walters: So this command suggests that we should be determined to pursue wisdom. From my own experience, you cannot become wise if you are not dedicated to the pursuit of it. The word wisdom is roughly about 46 times in 31 chapters of the book of Proverbs. That suggests to me the pursuit of wisdom seems to be awfully significant. Unfortunately, in today's culture, the pursuit of wisdom is given little value, and it's all about the pursuit of happiness. But happiness is fleeting. While true wisdom, the wisdom that comes from God is eternal.

Kris Lingham: That's good. It says to pay attention to what you're pursuing and to what you value. So what do you think, Mike? You chose the same verse. What do you think verse 12 means by. Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.

Mike Bonamo: Well, throughout the proverbs you read, incline your heart, incline your ear. Give attention to my wisdom. Listen to my sayings. It's repeated. So it's important to apply your heart and ears to instruction and knowledge is to have the heart and the ears working together. To apply is to give attention, to work hard at something, to give it your all. The dictionary has this word struggle as a synonym.

Now, I love skateboarding as a kid. I wipe out like 200 times, bleed and break bones, attempting to land just one trick for hours. If I had to, I wouldn't stop till I was exhausted. I applied my heart to it with discipline. I wanted to go pro, so I'd listen and watch those guys intently. And I struggled through the fails, cuts and bruises and all that until I got it. Solomon says, listen to what I'm saying. I have some life experience under my belt. Don't wipe out through life and learn Godly wisdom the hard way like me. Apply your heart. Listen carefully.

Kris Lingham: I didn't know you skated, Mike.

Mike Bonamo: Not anymore.

Kris Lingham: We need a board. I want to see some tricks right here in the studio. It is actually funny, though, because I learned discipline through basketball. I used to go to the gym like 3 or 4 hours a day. I could shoot free throws for an hour straight, but I couldn't focus on homework for more than ten minutes. But basketball actually taught me diligence and discipline, and the reason was that I valued it, so I invested in it. It meant something to me.

And I think that's how we tune our ears to something. We value it, so we pay attention to it. We have to value wisdom, understand that it affects our life. It affects our families, our kids. Maybe the kids you don't even have yet. Your work, your everything. So apply yourself to it because it's so incredibly valuable.

So I chose a saying that follows that one nicely. It stands out from the rest. Actually, in this chapter, these are words from a father to a son. Verse 15, my son, if your heart is wise, then my heart will be glad. Indeed, I think that there is in the heart a God given desire to make your dad proud. You watch any small child. "Dad, look at me."

Now that desire has been twisted and scarred and wrecked. A thousand ways from Sunday. By bad dads and broken relationships. So we have to redirect that need to make dad proud. To our father in heaven. But the need is still there. It's ingrained in the heart. Verse 15 tells you how to fulfill it. My son, if your heart is wise, then my heart will be glad indeed. My inmost being will rejoice. When your lips speak what is right.

A good dad wants his kid wise. Not just brainy wisdom, but from the heart, emotions and desires that are governed by wisdom. When I see one of my kids make a good decision, when one of them speaks truth, man, it just feels good inside.

And this father goes on. He tells his kids how to do it. Do not let your heart envy sinners. Kid, if you want to keep your heart wise, you got to guard it. Don't let envy get in. If you see what sinners have. Don't want it. Back in 17. But always be zealous for the fear of the Lord. You got to fill your heart with zeal for God. That zeal will keep the envy out. When you have God, sinners wealth just isn't appealing. 18 says there is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.

Daughter, son, fix your hope on the future. Look ahead. Sinners goods don't last, but God is forever. And I think 19 holds the key. Listen, my son, and be wise and set your heart on the right path. Wisdom is more than just brains. It's about the heart. Guarding your heart. Setting your heart on the right path. Choose your path. Don't choose steps.

Choose paths and know the destination. And set your heart to it. We follow our hearts by nature. The trick is to set your heart on the right path. Jesus told us how to store up treasure in heaven. For where your treasure is, your heart will be also. After that, the chapter moves back to examining more paths. Barry, you've got another one for us, so why don't you take us to verse 22.

Barry Walters: So yeah, in verse 22 it says, listen to your father who gave you life. And do not despise your mother when she is old. By the truth, and do not sell it. Wisdom, instruction and insight as well. So this section again is partially talking about wisdom.

But before I go on to talk about that, I want to say that it is so important for young people to listen to the advice of godly parents. I know, I wish I had, I honestly could have saved myself and my parents a whole load of heartache if I had. Your parents have so much wisdom you can gain from them. I believe that learning their wisdom is genuinely one of the best ways you can fulfill the command to honor them.

Mike Bonamo: Amen.

Barry Walters: We're moving on. Just listen to this beautiful bit of fatherly advice in verse 23. By the truth and do not sell it. Wisdom, instruction and insight as well. There must be a deliberate effort to listen for wisdom. It says buy the truth, which means there is a cost. When you are pursuing wisdom, you should always have the mentality that you are willing to gain wisdom, but gain it at a cost.

Moving on to verse 24, it says, the father of a righteous child has great joy. A man who fathers a wise son rejoices in him. May your father and mother rejoice. May she who gave you birth be joyful for me. One of the reasons I pursue godly wisdom is it makes my parents glad. They know that the wisdom from God will lead me down a good path, a path of righteousness.

Having a son who's giving his all to lead a life of righteousness, I feel, is a fitting reward for those who gave me life and a wonderful upbringing.

Mike Bonamo: Amen. Through the Proverbs, we see the writer saying, my son, my child, listen to this. Catch this. You've got to get this. Now, you may not have godly parents to impart wisdom to you that way, and that's okay. If you're a believer, you have a father in heaven. So hear these words directly from your Heavenly Father's heart to yours.

Kris Langham: Yeah, that's really important. And, and you have the last saying, Mike, take us to verse 29.

Mike Bonamo: I get to have the last word. Awesome. Verse 29, verse 29 starts out, who's got problems? Sorrow, arguments, injuries, weary eyes. He says, those who linger long at the wine, who go searching for a drink. Proverbs 20 says alcohol leads an unwise person astray. It mocks a man, it brawls with him, impairs his judgment and turns him into a mocker and a brawler.

Now there's a strong appeal to the senses because it promises pleasure, but it's temporary, he says. Don't be mesmerized by its lure. Verse 32, it bites like a serpent. It stings like a viper when the occasional social drink turns to excess and abuse. It eventually bites, it stings, and it poisons its victims back in. 27. The adulteress traps her prey. In chapter nine, we saw a man get lured to his own deathbed with a false promise of pleasure.

Here, alcohol mocks its victim, leading him into shackles of addiction that are impossible to break without help. As a counselor in recovery, I know the dysfunction, the suffering, and the death that alcoholism can bring without discrimination. I'll talk more about that in our recovery through the word series. But now the last few verses explain that your vision, your emotions, and your thoughts will become twisted and deceive you.

The sign that reads Wine and spirits doesn't refer to good spirits. There's danger in yielding yourself over to substances that alter your mind, making you dull to God's Holy Spirit. The writer paints this picture of being unsteady and vulnerable. Verse 35 describes the cycle of the enslaved alcoholic's path. It only leads to seeking the next drink.

Kris Langham: Yeah, that becomes the whole life. And, Mike, I know your story. I know you were in that pit. Your life is now dedicated to getting people out of it. We're going to tell your story in our recovery series coming soon. Pray for that. Watch for that. But what would you say now to someone who's in that pit right now listening?

Mike Bonamo: I'd say, look up. There's hope. Jesus said this if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Oh man. He brings satisfaction to the thirsty soul who seeks him. So take a look at your path. Where is it leading? The wisdom from Proverbs can be applied to any situation and they work, pray and read a chapter a day. Calling a friend or a pastor to help you navigate your way back to the right path of freedom, found only in Jesus.

Kris Langham: That's good. Man, I'm feeling wiser. Everybody take a read on Proverbs 23. Enjoy. Dig in and strike up a discussion on wisdom with somebody. Walk with the wise and grow wise today. Mike, Berry, thanks for joining me here. I will see the rest of you in chapter 24.

Andrea Langham: Join us next time as we continue the journey one chapter at a time. And remember, faith comes by hearing and hearing through the word.

Kris Langham: I'll feed it to him. Having a son who is giving his all to lead a righteous life, I feel is a fitting reward to those who gave me life.

Mike Bonamo: That wasn't bad.

Kris Langham: Okay.

Mike Bonamo: Oh, I thought he was really gonna.

Kris Langham: Do that was your lead.

Mike Bonamo: Oh my goodness. I'm sorry.

Kris Langham: I'm actually gonna copy over his because I think I did it really well.

Mike Bonamo: Yeah. Did a better job of having a Welsh accent. Yeah. Okay. Are we doing that again or what?

Barry Walters: Shall I do the... I'll do the I'll do the lead in. I'll do the lead in.

Day 26 | Proverbs 24

How to Build Your House - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs, chapter 24. And today I have two young men at the Wisdom Round Table. Both of them, faithful members of the through the word team. Good to have you both in front of the mic at last. First up is my one and only son of 17 years, Kaleb Langham. Welcome to the studio.

Kaleb Langham: Thanks for having me.

Kris Langham: And with you, just a couple years on top of that, 19 years young, our good friend Noah Short. Noah, welcome to the studio.

Noah Short: Thank you for having me as well.

Kris Langham: Now, my daughters will be in the studio in just a couple chapters, and I decided to bring the kids in for a number of reasons. One, they're awesome. Two, they work cheap, and three, they've got some wisdom to share. And I love opening the Bible with these guys, and I hope this will provide a helpful example for families. My kids have been doing family Bible time with me since they were tiny and Noah. Well, you know how the saying goes. Keep your friends close and your daughter's boyfriend closer. Did I mention he's dating my daughter? Well, Noah, as long as I've got you on the spot now, why don't you start us at verse three?

Noah Short: All right. So by wisdom, a house is built. And through understanding, it is established.

Kris Langham: Nice. I gotta say, I like that you picked this one since your dad literally builds houses. So what do you think? It means that by wisdom, a house is built. Are we talking literal house here?

Noah Short: No, house in the Bible is not just a building to live in, but it actually describes a home, a family, or even a legacy. And wisdom, that's what Proverbs is all about. It's about understanding knowledge and the fear of God, making good choices, planning ahead and measuring risks. And all of that goes into building a family.

Kris Langham: That's good. So do you think there's a connection between what goes into a construction project and starting a family? What do you think, Kaleb?

Kaleb Langham : Yeah, for really both of them, you have to go in with a solid plan. Like, for example, a financial one. If you start building a house and you don't have that financial stability starting out, then you'll go like halfway through and then be like, well, we don't have money left. We're just gonna have to keep this framework here without an actual house.

Kris Langham: Half house doesn't do you a whole lot of good.

Kaleb Langham : No. And same thing goes with the family. You can't just go in and have a couple of kids and be like, well, I don't have enough money to feed my family. Guess we're going on the streets.

Kris Langham: So? So what's the planning that goes into family?

Noah Short: There's a lot of things that go into planning a family. I mean, it's like starting out with an empty lot of a house. You have to think about it financially, as Kaleb pointed out. But then you also have to pour into your wife or a husband, or if you have kids, you have to think of a place to live. There's all these different aspects that can build what a family really is and what it incorporates, and that's where Proverbs comes in. And it really explains a lot of that by wisdom.

Kris Langham: Yeah, it gives you a lot of wisdom for how to go about these things. And I started a family really young. You guys weren't there. But trust me, I was very young. But but wisdom was really essential. I actually got saved right before we started a family. But when we were brand new, there was a lot of, oh my goodness, what are we going to do? And I had a direction for a career, but started realizing there were aspects of planning, like how we were going to get along in the house and how we do discipline and how we are going to school our kids and everything that goes with it. Well, what do you think the established through understanding what about that part? Through understanding it is established. What does that mean?

Noah Short: Well established being a foundation. It's it's all about stability in this. And how do you go about being stable in something? Well, by understanding it and knowing it, the aspects of it. Yeah, and.

Kris Langham: That's a cool picture. When you think of the construction project, what if you built a house without a foundation?

Noah Short: Well, that house is going to come crumbling down.

Kris Langham: Yeah. And remember, Jesus talked about that. He said, those who hear my words, but don't put them into practice, right? What happens when the storm comes?

Kaleb Langham : Right. Because Jesus told us to build our house on the rock, not on the sand. By hearing his words and putting them into practice, that shows understanding.

Kris Langham: That's good. That's a good connection. You understand it. If you're not actually doing it, then there's no understanding. You may have heard it and all of your ways Acknowledge him, and he'll direct your paths, right? Yep. So that's good.

But how about verse four? Verse four adds to this through knowledge. Its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. You know, it's funny, I was actually looking at this verse back at home, and I was trying to make the analogy work by considering what rare and beautiful treasures we have in the house, which is.

Kaleb Langham : I have a Nintendo Switch.

Kris Langham: I don't know if it's rare and beautiful. We're not exactly art collectors. We don't have a gallery anywhere in our house, and I think about half of our furniture is either clearance or a gift from somebody who knew we were in ministry. So it's hard. I was trying to make a connection with this. And then as I was thinking about it, I was actually sitting at the kitchen table and I had this flash as I was thinking around the house, trying to think of treasures of memories, and was thinking of where I was sitting, of dinner time together and in the kitchen when my kids dance randomly, when music comes on and in the family room when we have family Bible time and Shiloh laughs uncontrollably for no apparent reason. Almost every time we have family Bible time, something gives her the giggles.

But all those things are rare and beautiful treasures and. And how do you get that? It really struck me that a joyful family is a rare gift and it takes knowledge. You know, we're not perfect. You guys argue, we struggle. But that's why keeping joy in a family takes wisdom. All the proverbs about humility, avoiding strife, overlooking an insult, gracious words, discipline, prudent choices. Those things work and they're worth the effort. And for anyone who doesn't have a family like that, step one is to get wisdom. All right, enough of my sappy soapbox on family. Let's actually move on to the next verse. Kaleb, what do you have in the next verse for us?

Kaleb Langham : All right. 24:10 if you falter in a time of trouble, how small is your strength?

Kris Langham: Nice. I like this one. It sounds like something for our manhood talks, strength. So what do you think this part means? The falter in time of trouble?

Kaleb Langham : I think a really good example would be Job, because a couple of times it says in the beginning chapters, it's in all this Job did not sin with his mouth.

Kris Langham: So he's somebody who did not falter.

Kaleb Langham : No, he's a good example to follow because struggles are meant to build your faith, not break you down. So if you just get into something and immediately curse against God for the things he's putting you through, that's just weak.

Kris Langham: And struggles and trials actually do break you down. But it's like breaking down a muscle. They're meant to break down the muscle the same way that a workout breaks down your muscle, but you build it back up again by eating good food, by doing the right things, by putting your faith back in God, you take in the word and it builds up your strength again. Well, let's move on to a saying in verse 11. Noah, how about you read this one?

Noah Short: All right, verse 11 says, rescue those being led away to death. Hold back those staggering towards slaughter.

Kris Langham: Wow. Okay. Rescue those being led away to death. So what does that mean?

Noah Short: So if you see someone heading into danger. You essentially want to stop them, rescue them. Don't wait. It's like a lifeguard's job. At the beach. You see someone drowning. They swim out to rescue that person.

Kris Langham: Right? You should help. It's the right thing to do.

Kaleb Langham : Yeah, and if you think about it, in Christianity, everyone who's an unbeliever is really being led away to death and ultimately, hell. And I think this is saying it's our call to get them out, to spread the gospel.

Kris Langham: I remember when I was a brand new Christian, I had this very strong image in my mind that a blindfold had just been removed from my eyes, and I could see everything. And one of the first things I saw was that everybody I knew still had the blindfold on. And because of it, they were hurting each other and they were staggering off into dangerous things and ultimately towards death. And we got to share the gospel. We've got to to rescue those.

In verse 12. It brings up a question if you say, but we knew nothing about this. In other words, what about people who never heard about Jesus? If you put this in the gospel context. We knew nothing about this or somebody who didn't know about God. Sin, judgment, salvation, eternal life. You know, it's the classic question: can God judge those who didn't know, who haven't heard the name of Jesus? So what's the answer? Look back in verse 12. If you say, but we knew nothing about this. Does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? In other words, the one who judges is the one who weighs your heart.

His judgment is not just outward, and he knows. He perceives whether a person knew the gospel and it says, does not he who guards your life know it? God guards your whole life. Of course, he knows whether you understood the gospel or not.

And last it says, Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done? Now we get to the judgment part. God, the fairest judge possible. Who knows your heart, your deeds, your hardship, your ignorance, your knowledge. And he will repay everyone according to what they have done. Perfectly fair. Hell is never described as a place of undeserved torment in the Bible. It is always precisely what we deserve. Hell is fair by definition.

The amazing truth of the gospel is grace. Jesus took what we deserve, paid the price in full for every sin, and he offers us the free gift of eternal life. There's no unfair in the story. This is exactly fair. You either get exactly fair or much better. But verse 27, we're going to move on. Kaleb, how about you read this one.

Kaleb Langham : Put your outdoor work in order. Get your fields ready. After that, build your house.

Kris Langham: Now, I like this verse because it gives an order of operations to life. I'm a math guy. I teach math, so I like, "Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally," this is like PEMDAS for for life. Life involves a lot of juggling, a lot of priorities press on you and you got to figure out what comes first. Verse 27 sets two important priorities in their proper order. Work and house. The picture here, I think, is of a young man starting a family, dreams and plans for a nice home to provide for his wife and raise his kids.

But first things first. Put your outdoor work in order and get your fields ready. We're not farmers, but the analogy still works for us. Get your fields ready. What you're working, what you're going to live on, career, all that stuff. Put that in order. And then after that, build your house, which I think goes back to Noah's verse earlier. Now speaking of Noah, did I choose this verse because I happen to be sitting across from the guy who wants to marry my daughter? Maybe I did, maybe I didn't. But seriously though, I know this is an important principle. Well, ingrained in your family. No. How do you see this one?

Noah Short: Well, my family, especially my dad, is very big on financial security, especially when considering such a big thing as marriage.

Kris Langham: That's a wise man.

Noah Short: Yes.

Kris Langham: Hearken unto your dad. So what does he tell you?

Noah Short: So he tells me to be a good steward of my finances when taking on something like marriage, you have to understand that you're not just supporting yourself, you're supporting your wife, future wife, a family in the future, a home. You have all these new responsibilities that are being put upon you. And so there's a calling to be a good steward in using knowledge and wisdom to overcome such challenges that could be brought with a poor financial decision.

Kris Langham: And I think there's a balance here. It doesn't say wait forever to get married. A husband and wife can work the fields together. The principle is work first on the stuff that will provide long term. Noah and Caleb, thanks for joining me. I'll see you guys tomorrow for manhood talks. And for the rest of you, we'll be recording a series on manhood talks with these two and several other young men coming soon. Biblical manhood examined. We're looking forward to that. And please, all of you, read Proverbs 24 today and I will see you back here for chapter 25.

Day 27 | Proverbs 25

A Word Fitly Spoken - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham : Welcome back to Proverbs on Through the Word, chapter 25 today and here at the Wisdom Roundtable. Once again, back by popular demand are the ladies of Wisdom. First, my bride of 21 years, Andrea Langham. And returning again with her, is our dear friend, Bethany Wilson. Welcome, Bethany.

Bethany Wilson: Thank you.

Kris Langham : Now, let me ask you ladies a question. Looking here at wisdom, what do you think is the importance of wisdom in the work of a mom?

Bethany Wilson: The importance of it is, it's needed daily.

Kris Langham : So all the time.

Bethany Wilson: It's extremely important. Just. I just remember bringing Abby home as an infant. And just that verse in James came to me where the Lord said, or James said, if you lack wisdom, ask the Lord, and he will give it to you. So that has been my mantra all through raising kids.

Kris Langham : I think you need wisdom every day. Your job never stops.

Bethany Wilson: Yes.

Andrea Langham: Yeah. And you get these little kids that come into the world, all with their own personalities and sets of problems that you might have never dealt with before, so you don't have a manual for your specific kid. Yeah, there's good parenting books out there, but they don't necessarily deal with your trial, what you're going through.

So you just need wisdom. Like I've never dealt with, you know, night messes before kids or, you know, tantrums besides my own.

Kris Langham : And the danger of the parenting book is the one size fits all that doesn't fit your kids. And so that requires wisdom as you read through them so they don't just become a guilt trip. I think moms require a special brand of wisdom just to be a mom, because the daily activity of motherhood is intensely demanding, and it always puts you in the role of problem solver. Kids run into problems constantly, mostly with each other, and they come to you to fix it. Mom, this isn't working. Mom! Johnny! Hit me! Mom, the dog has fleas. Sally won't stop. Math is lame. Flea bit me. Johnny bit me. And you become the solver. And there's entirely too much biting going on in your house. All of that requires wisdom. So thank you, ladies, for bringing your collective years of problem solving wisdom. Let's jump into Proverbs 25. And speaking of moms, let's begin with the mother of my kids, Andrea. You have the first verse.

Andrea Langham: Okay. Proverbs 25:20. Whoever sings songs to a heavy heart is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day. And like vinegar on soda. And I think this is such a practical proverb in such a practical chapter, really, how do we come alongside someone who is in deep pain or mourning?

And as humans, I think there is a tendency to try to make the hurting just stop or go away. And I've heard stories of people trying to comfort others, say, with dealing with the death of a loved one by saying things like, rejoice, they're with Jesus now. Or quote a scripture in an attempt for like a quick fix, if you will. It's singing songs to a heavy heart, and I get that.

But trying to just be cheery or tell the hurting person to cheer themselves up is like taking someone's jacket on a cold day. They need to grieve. And you're taking that from them. Or like vinegar on soda. It's painful and only deepens the hurt.

Kris Langham : So what do you think? How do you come alongside someone with a heavy heart? I will offer my solution, which is something I like to call stop it therapy. It's entirely a joke and not good for helping anyone. But it is a hilarious sketch. Look up Bob Newhart. Stop it! Therapy.

But my serious answer, though, is from the Bible weep with those who weep. Rejoice with those who rejoice. The Bible calls us to compassion. That means we suffer with someone we serve the father of all comfort. Comfort means come alongside the pictures of someone who is down and you sit alongside them. We comfort others with the comfort that we also received.

Bethany Wilson: I think for me, I have learned so much from Andrea in that she just listens. She just listens. She doesn't offer solutions, really. She's just like, I'm sorry, there's that empathy or sympathy or both that goes with it when she's listening to what you're sharing from your heart and it's just like, I'm sorry that's happening, you know? And that brings comfort.

And the other thing that I think of is Bill Feris, amazing marriage and family counselor. I was talking to him and just like seeking wisdom for how to help somebody who is grieving. And he said a lot of it is you do, just like Andrea was saying in that verse, is you do have to allow people to ride the wave of grief. Allow them to be sad, allow sometimes of anger, you know, all the steps of the grieving process, allowing them to go through that and listening to them, just being there for them.

Kris Langham : Yeah, the entire process is important. Well, we're going to move on to Bethany's verse. Bethany, what did you pick out for us?

Bethany Wilson: So I chose verses 6 and 7 which say, do not exalt yourself in the presence of the king and do not stand in the place of the great. For it's better that he say to you, come up here, then, that you should be put lower in the presence of the Prince whom your eyes have seen.

So we recently went through, um, the book of 1 Samuel in our women's study, and I was doing a study on humility because we were talking about Saul. So he was looking for leaders that were actually humble in their leadership. So I googled the term humble leaders, hoping to find a story about a great leader who is characterized by humility. What caught my attention was a study that was done on successful businesses and their leadership. And the number one attribute in the leaders of these successful companies was humility.

And these were secular companies, not churches. Jesus echoes this proverb in his parable in Luke 14, where he warns us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought. He tells them, whoever exalts himself will be humbled. He who humbles himself will be exalted. When we choose to take the lowest places out of our true humility, James tells us that the Lord will lift us up. He'll use us to glorify his name in his way and in his time.

Kris Langham : Yeah, I love the picture that Jesus paints of showing up at a banquet, taking the lowest seat. It just makes life so simple. We are freed from the burden of being our own hype man. Let someone else do it and we can simply honor others and consider ourselves with sober judgment.

Just be yourself. It allows you to be comfortable in who you are because you don't have to hype yourself up. And. And if somebody honors you, great. But just be yourself. Yeah. Right. Well, Andrea, you have the next verse for us. What do you find in verse 28?

Andrea Langham: So I have a man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls. And I think I picked this one because self-control is such a key in our walk with the Lord. Jesus has given us freedom, right? But we need to use that freedom for his glory and not just to run wild. I think in our walk, all good things come.

We have given so many good things in our lives that we have. We're now free to do, but it must come in balance. Balance in our money, our time, our food, etc.. God gives us all things richly to enjoy, but when we lose self-control in any area, it tends to throw everything off. Like for example, the cell phone, right? People are probably listening to this on a cell phone right now.

Kris Langham : In a balanced way.

Andrea Langham: In a, in a balanced way. I mean, self-control, self-control.

Kris Langham : They're not on Candy crush, are they, right now?

Andrea Langham: Well, terrible. While listening. I'm actually on Candy Crush right now. Right this second. Yes. No, but phones are great. But if we don't practice self-control with our use of it, then it kind of throws all kinds of things off, from relationships, even to money. You know, if we get sucked into searching certain apps, shopping apps that will remain nameless in my life or whatever, it can throw off our money and things in our home lives, we need to find balance. And that takes self-control because without it, it says that our lives become like a city without walls and are ripe to be broken into.

Kris Langham : I think the danger of lacking self-control is the whole world. Everything becomes dangerous. The word picture in the proverb is perfect. In Bible times, a city without walls faces danger in every direction. Nothing is safe. Without self-control, every temptation can kill you. I remember back when our kids were young.

I remember that you set out M&Ms out in a dish, and you left them where the kids could reach them. And they were little. And I remember I put them away, and you stopped me because our kids had to learn self-control. And I thought my philosophy was, keep dangerous things all out of the way. But it was an important lesson that we gave them.

We let temptation sit out there and taught them how to control themselves and gave them consequences when they ate what they weren't supposed to eat.

Well, I picked Proverbs 25:2. It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, to search out a matter is the glory of kings. It's a beautiful proverb here, and an essential truth for every scientist, philosopher, theologian God conceals. We search out. It is his glory to conceal. The mysteries of the universe. Are God's glory, glorious means weighty, eternal, having substance that lasts. Our runs with glory are like touching the eternal plane, and that happens when we search out the mysteries that God has hidden. That it says is the glory of kings, the glory of leaders and pioneers among us who dig in, who ask, seek and knock.

And after several thousand years of exploring our world, what's amazing is that there's still so much to discover. And now this is important. There is supposedly a separation between science and faith in God, but I think that's thoroughly unbiblical. It's a construct of religion gone wrong, and it's of course supported by atheists. But too often it's also supported by a fearful and controlling church. For a believer, there is nothing to fear in truth and in the honest scientific pursuit of it, God calls us to search out mysteries.

Now, I was a scientist before I was a believer, and I became a believer when I finally got totally honest and humble about my science, and I let my pursuit of knowledge become a pursuit of truth.

And suddenly I found faith and science to be fully compatible. In fact, they are necessary companions in truth. And I learned that lots of my science heroes were strong Christians. Kepler, Galileo, Pascal. Isaac Newton, a brilliant man, adamantly defended the Bible and wrote commentaries on Daniel and revelation.

You know, I'm recently reading a fantastic book. I'm enjoying evolution 2.0. Perry Marshall, he's an electrical engineer, information scientist. But aside from that, what I really like about the book is the fearless approach to evolution.

There is a danger for a Christian to think fearfully about evolution. Evolution is a very broad theory. Parts of it I fully agree with. I see sound evidence and verifiable evidence. Large parts of atheistic evolution I find totally unfounded by evidence and the hypotheses pressing on scientific absurdity. We see that the code nature of DNA does support adaptations in living things, but zero evidence that random or accidental mutations are ever beneficial. In fact, the idea of randomness is scientifically unverifiable, and we've never seen it happen in nature. And how did the code language of DNA create itself?

We have great evidence that bacteria actively adapt, but monkeys to humans is pure theory. Similarity does not prove ancestry, but there's no fear in searching it out. And that brings me back to the verse. To search a thing out is the glory of kings. God has called us to it. Well, we have plans for a series on science and the Bible coming up, so I will save the rest of my rant on that for another recording.

Please pray for that one. Bethany. Andrea, thank you for joining us in the studio again. For everyone else, we will see you back in Proverbs 26.

Day 28 | Proverbs 26

Wise in Their Own Eyes - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Through the Word and the book of Proverbs. I am Kris Langham, but today they call me dad because my girls are here today. I've got two of my three favorite kids in the entire world in the studio with me. Only one of them's not actually a kid anymore. Daisy is my college girl facing all the challenges of adult life. Daisy, welcome to the studio. And next up, my youngest daughter is here with us in the studio, Shilo Langham. Welcome to the studio, Shilo.

Now we're walking through Proverbs 26 together. And one thing I hope to do here is provide an example for moms and dads how to do Bible time with your kids. So here we go. Proverbs 26 is actually a little different in that the subject doesn't bounce all over the place like popcorn usually does in Proverbs. We have four topics ordered very neatly: the fool, the sluggard, the gossip, and the deceiver. And we begin with the fool as verse four advises us, do not answer a fool according to his folly. Well, we're actually going to go to our first verse. Daisy, you have a verse I think you picked out verse nine.

Daisy Langham: Yes. So it says like a thornbush in a drunkard's hand is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

Kris Langham: A thornbush and a drunkard's hand. So what do you, what do you picture there? A thornbush and a drunkard's hand.

Daisy Langham: I imagine some maniac running around the street with a thornbush, just swaying it wherever he can. Not with any purpose or thought. It's just going.

Kris Langham: He's drunk.

Daisy Langham: He's drunk.

Kris Langham: Which is a weird picture, of course, but it would be very dangerous if a guy swinging around a thornbush. Oh, yeah. Okay, so how does that connect with the rest of the verse? Says if that is like a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

Daisy Langham: Well, I think of someone who takes like, well, for us a proverb is some biblical wisdom, and it's someone taking their version of this biblical wisdom to their own understanding.

Kris Langham: Yeah, I think it could be applied to false teachers, those who teach the Bible and twist it, whether it's the, uh, the health and wealth gospel or any kind of bad teaching a proverb in the mouth of a fool. They're doing damage, they're hurting people with like thorns as they're using the word. Well, I actually picked out verse 11- as a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly. What do you guys think that means? Why does a dog return to its vomit?

Shiloh Langham: Because it was good the first time, and it's probably just as good the second time, right?

Kris Langham: Does Luigi ever do that?

Daisy Langham: Yeah.

Kris Langham: I think George does it the most. George Macduff.

Shiloh Langham: He tries to eat it while it's still.

Kris Langham: He hasn't even finished throwing it up yet. It is quite disgusting. Okay. We've been thoroughly disgusted. Now, how was that? Like a fool repeating their folly.

Shiloh Langham: It was good the first time, but it's. It'll just leave them, lead them more into sin.

Kris Langham: Right, you throw up because your stomach says, this is poison. This is bad for you. Get rid of it. And a dog doesn't connect the dots and say, my stomach got rid of it, I shouldn't eat it again. It's bad for me. And the fool doesn't connect the dots. That's good stuff. Verse 12 closes the fool's story with the most dangerous fool of them all. Shiloh, you pick this one out. Why don't you read verse 12?

Shiloh Langham: Do you see a person wise in their own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for them.

Kris Langham: Mhm. After all the warnings and dangers of folly, this one is the worst of all. Pride being wise in your own eyes. Now, what do you think that that means? What does it mean for something to be wise in their own eyes?

Shiloh Langham: I think they're all that in being full of themselves. Having a big head.

Daisy Langham: Yeah. Or to think that they know what's best and they're right. Whatever they think, no matter what other people actually say is true.

Kris Langham: Right? They don't. They don't listen. So it's actually really interesting here. After you get a set of 11 verses about fools, the one who's worst of all, it says there's more hope for a fool than for this person is the person who doesn't realize that they can actually be foolish. But we're all foolish at some point, and the only way out of that is to recognize it humbly. And the first step of wisdom is humility. Well, next in our lineup in verse 13 is the sluggard. Girls, what's a sluggard?

Shiloh Langham: Isn't that a baseball term?

Kris Langham: No, I think you're thinking of slugger, which is somebody who hits the ball really hard. So what is. What do you think, sluggard? I think the key part of it is slug.

Daisy Langham: I think a sluggard is a lazy person.

Kris Langham: Now, we had a sluggard back in chapter 24 when the boys were in here, and I liked the word so much. I found a synonym and found a fantastic old English word. A scobberlotcher is someone who avoids hard work like it's their job, and a whiffle waffle is someone who wastes a lot of time. But their English words. So it's scobberlotcher.

I think we need an actual accent. I think we need to bring Barry in. All right, Barry, we need to really capture... the word of the day is. Now I feel like I've really been put down. Or you could call somebody a whiffle waffle.

All right, we're gonna keep you. You stay. You stay in here. Okay. We'll bring you back. That was good. All right, so what first grabbed your attention, guys?

Shiloh Langham: I got 13A sluggard says there's a line in the road. A fierce lion roaming the streets.

Kris Langham: There's a lion in the road, a fierce lion. Why does a sluggard say there's a lion in the road?

Shiloh Langham: Just to make excuses so they don't have to do anything.

Kris Langham: Ah. Ever make excuses to get out of work?

Both: Oh yes.

Kris Langham: I was the king of excuses when I was your age. I was always had a reason for not doing what I was supposed to do. So. So what does this verse actually say to you?

Shiloh Langham: It says that we're always trying to get around things and not have to do things by making excuses or lying. But it's not good because you're just a sluggard if you do that right.

Kris Langham: Daisy, what else do you pick?

Daisy Langham: I chose 16. It says a sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven people who answer discreetly.

Kris Langham: A sluggard is wiser in his own eyes. That actually brings us back to the subject we had before. The worst fool of all was the one wise in his own eyes. How do you think a sluggard is wise in their own eyes?

Daisy Langham: I think a lazy person. They think they know how to do it best, and the best way to do it is to do it with the least effort possible. And so I think of the smart kid in school who doesn't do a lot of work because they think I can get by because I'm smarter than the rest of you here, which I've definitely fallen into that category a few times myself.

Kris Langham: Yeah, that was actually the nature of my sluggard-ness, but it really hit me in college that I could not pull that off and thankfully cured me of it. Well, we were going to move on. Next topic. In verse 17, the topic moves on to quarreling and gossip. Now siblings wouldn't know anything about quarrelling, right, guys?

Both: Oh no, no, no.

Kris Langham: We'll have to improvise here. But the truth is, disagreements happen to everyone. You guys know that it's human.

But how you handle a disagreement can either start or prevent an all out quarrel. And getting it right requires wisdom. So what do you like? Which verse did you pick out?

Shiloh Langham: I chose 18 through 19, like a maniac shooting flaming arrows of death is one who deceives their neighbor and says, I was only joking.

Kris Langham: Like a maniac shooting flaming arrows of death. Okay, so how is how is a crazy person setting everything on fire like a neighbor who deceives and then says, oh, I was just joking, man.

Shiloh Langham: They're both really dangerous without trying to get repercussions or anything like that.

Kris Langham: Oh, they're ignoring the repercussions of what they're doing. They're just starting fires. And somebody who lies and then calls it a joke won't take responsibility for the person they've hurt. Right. I liked verse 17. Like one who grabs a stray dog by the ears is someone who rushes into a quarrel, not their own. This one is a meddler. Meddling in a quarrel is like grabbing a stray dog. You will get bit. And I discovered there's an old Irish term for a meddler. But I'm going to invite Barry for this one. Barry, what's what's a meddler?

Barry Walters: Gobermouch

Kris Langham: It's Irish. Is that your Irish accent?

Barry Walters: That was an attempt at it anyway.

Kris Langham: It's pretty good. Well, it's pretty good in Welsh too. So if you two have a disagreement and Kaleb tries to butt in, you just have to say, would you quit being such a gobermouch. Was that Irish-sih?

Barry Walters: That was pretty good.

Kris Langham: I was confused, all my British isle accents there. But. But don't mess with a quarrel already going on. It's not your business. All right. Daisy, what did you get?

Daisy Langham: I chose verse 20, which says, without wood a fire goes out. Without a gossip, a quarrel dies down.

Kris Langham: That's good. So what does that mean? Without wood, a fire goes out. What's the connection with gossip?

Daisy Langham: Well, so for fire, if you don't have any wood or anything, any sort of fuel, then it's not going to burn. It's going to go out and just like that. Um, just as the same with quarrelling. A lot of it is gossip. So gossiping, talking about people behind their back sort of thing. And often I think gossip can be very discreet and we don't realize it's gossip, but when we talk about someone talking about someone else's business, that's not our own business, especially when it's in a negative light. That often causes a lot of quarreling, a lot of people to take sides and to argue against one another. And if we decided to not gossip and to just let people's business be their own business, then there wouldn't be anything to quarrel about.

Kris Langham: Yeah, I think that's good. You just picture in your head as you like. Should I say this about this person? Picture in your head. Adding another little stick to the fire. And that's what it does. You just keep adding a little bit more onto the fire. At some point, you just have to stop talking about it and let other people deal with their their business and gossip is dangerous. Verse 22 is another one. I think you like that one. What's what's in 22?

Daisy Langham: Yes, as the words of a gossip are like choice morsels, they go down to the inmost parts.

Kris Langham: Gossip is tempting stuff, but the danger of it is that it goes down to the inmost parts that it gets in. When you get juicy information about somebody, or when you share that, it goes into somebody's heart. You can't take that back again. You want to know what a cool word for a gossip is a flibbertigibbet.

Barry Walters: A flibbertigibbet is nosy and a gossip.

Kris Langham: Good work Barry. Our final character meets us in 23. The deceiver. I hate being lied to. Girls, what do you think? How do you like being lied to?

Daisy Langham: It's no fun.

Shiloh Langham: Nope.

Daisy Langham: Unless it's about birthday presents.

Kris Langham: It's about birthday presents. Well, we're low on time, so we're just going to pick a couple of verses. Shiloh, what did you pick out?

Shiloh Langham: I picked out 28. A lying tongue hates those. That hurts. And a flattering mouth works. Ruin.

Kris Langham: Mhm. Lying is hateful towards the person you're lying to. Flattery is something that works. Ruin. You're destroying people. It's recognizing the damage that you're causing with lies. All right. Daisy, would you pick?

Daisy Langham: Verse 27 says, whoever digs a pit will fall into it. If someone rolls a stone, it will roll back on them.

Kris Langham: What does that mean?

Daisy Langham: Well, it means that whatever you do is going to be done unto you. It's kind of the second law of gravity. The second or third.

Kris Langham: Object in motion tends to stay in motion. You're talking about Newton's laws.

Daisy Langham: Newton's.

Kris Langham: Equal and opposite reaction. Third law of physics.

Daisy Langham: I just finished.

Kris Langham: Yes, the picture there is digging a pit because it's in the verses about deceivers. The pit there is to trip somebody up, right? And if you dig a pit, you're going to be the one that falls into it. Well, you know what you call a person who does something like that.

Barry Walters: A flim flamer

Kris Langham: Nicely done, flim flamer. Don't trust that con man. He's nothing but a low down flim flamer. And that's all. My kids love my accents.

Barry Walters: Listen, you old fozzle, it's time to end the show on the old thingamabob. Hit the stop button, old man.

Kris Langham: And I'll do it for us. Thank you, girls, for joining us in the studio. Everyone out there, read Proverbs 26. I'll see you back here for 27.

Day 29 | Proverbs 27

Iron Sharpens Iron - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Through the Word Proverbs 27. Today, Peyton Jones is back again, and we are joined by through the word co-founder and CEO Ryan McCarter. Ryan, welcome to the Proverbs team.

Ryan McCarter: Hey guys. Thanks for having me today. I'm super excited to be here.

Kris Langham: Fantastic. Well, let's jump right into chapter 27. Peyton, how about you get us started with the first proverb?

Peyton Jones: All right. Proverbs 27:12, the prudent see danger and take refuge. But the simple keep going and pay the penalty. This is one of my favorite proverbs, actually, and one that the pastor I trained under directly quoted to me and applied to ministry.

There's a big difference between the wise and the foolish. When danger approaches, a wise person will see the danger and run, while a fool will rush right in. They may see the danger and ignore the warnings, or they may be so blinded by wisdom that they don't see any warning signs at all.

This is a case when I had my head beaten in by a rugby player on the juice in a back alley in Wales. Everything should have told me I was about to get a pounding, but I walked up, confident in his higher self. Like an idiot. It's surprising how much asphalt tastes like tar though.

And in hindsight, I learned it would have been better to use the age old fighting technique of running the other direction. The simple. They always think they're the exception to the rule. They won't get hurt.

They're not like everyone else, and they pay the penalty with a metaphorical mouthful of street. This is Solomon's way of saying the wise. They're prepared.

Kris Langham: You know, I think one of the absolute essentials of wisdom that I want my kids and my grandkids to grasp is risk assessment. Recognize, risk, measure both the cost and the likelihood of paying that cost, and decide if you can afford to lose. If you can't afford it, don't risk it. But the fool doesn't stop to think. They just leap. Years ago. My little girl and I were out hiking when she was a little girl, and we were crossing a stream. Rock by rock and my daughter stepped on a rock, but it gave way.

Now I caught her and I told her, test the rock before you put your weight on it. And ever since then, it's become one of my favorite analogies for risk assessment. You have to test the rock before you put yourself. Before you put your weight on it. Look for danger signs and heed the warning. Only the fool puts their full weight without checking first. And our next proverb comes from Ryan. Ryan, what do you got for us?

Ryan McCarter: Hey Chris, thanks a lot. So I have verse two out of chapter 27 today. And the verse states, let someone else praise you and not your own mouth, an outsider and not your own lips. You know, Chris, in today's cell filled world, personal brands and self promotion and all that sort of stuff, it's easier than ever to become your own biggest fan. You know, this proverb takes us back. Back to the basics. And the basics are always a blessing. True accolades. They're even sweeter when they come from someone else.

Now think about it. Would you rather throw yourself a surprise party or have your friends throw it for you? Man, you know, some of the most precious moments in my life are when one of my daughters praises me. Now trust me, it doesn't happen all that often. And they aren't exactly outsiders.

But the blessing is so pure and powerful because we all know our kids really see everything. True value and authenticity shine on their own, you know? Now don't get me wrong, self-confidence is crucial. But hey, let's also allow some space for others to recognize our own achievements. Let your actions speak, and when they do, the world will take notice and sing your praises. And man, when it does, it just sounds so much sweeter.

Kris Langham: You know a genuine compliment can be so healing. But praise is tricky business because it's like chocolate when you give it away. But it's poison when you give it to yourself. And don't do the opposite. Don't put yourself down. You are God's creation. It's healthy to know your strengths and skills. Just don't brag about them. And verse 21 adds a little twist. The crucible for silver and the furnace for gold. But people are tested by their praise. So praise is a test. How you respond to a compliment shows your heart. Do you take credit or do you acknowledge God?

And I'm going to switch things up. Back to verse five, which really struck me. Better is open rebuke than hidden love. There's something wrong with a love that's never expressed or spoken. Parents take note. Your kids desperately need to know that you love them. They need the hug, the words, the time. And it says better is open rebuke. Correcting is part of caring for any friend. The best of friends are those who can rebuke with love. And look at verse six. Wounds from a friend can be trusted. But an enemy multiplies kisses. That one is worth memorizing. Wounds from a friend. That correction.

That open rebuke. It might hurt. But if it comes from a true friend, then you can trust it. Take it to heart. The pain of the wound is worth enduring. But what do you guys think it means by an enemy? Multiplies kisses?

Peyton Jones: When I heard that verse, my mind goes to Judas as he's betraying Jesus. He does so with a kiss. An enemy may heap on a person praise, but it's two faced, vindictive, and hides an ulterior motive.

Kris Lingham: That's good stuff, but we're going to keep on moving. Peyton, what's your verse for us?

Peyton Jones: Proverbs 27, verse 14. If anyone loudly blesses their neighbor early in the morning, it will be taken as a curse. The older I get, the more this rings true. I'm an early riser, but I need to thaw out. We all know those people that are just a little too cheerful in the morning, and this is a place where timing trumps content.

You may be blessing your neighbor loudly, but it's the right message at the wrong time. It's possible to be well-meaning, but if our timing is wrong, it will come across as obnoxious. I can tell an awesome joke at a party and make everyone laugh, which is a good thing. But if I tell that joke at a funeral and send ripples of shaking shoulders down my row, it's considered bad taste. Timing again. See? Pick your moment. Consider your audience. Pay attention to people's receptivity to your message before sending it. That is wisdom.

Kris Lingham: That's so good, man. Good intentions are not an excuse for rude behavior. Get to know the person you want to bless and bless them on their own terms and on their timing. Good stuff. And Ryan, you're up next. What wisdom have you found?

Ryan McCarter: Thanks, Chris. I'm going to look at verse 19 here and it says, as water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart. Now, you know, this may sound like an old kung fu movie right here, but picture standing by a calm pond gazing at your own reflection. And you know that water, it's unbiased, right? It's always giving us a true image. And in much the same way, our lives, the choices we make.

You know, the love we give, the words we share. These are all the canvas that paints the colors of our heart. The water doesn't lie. It simply mirrors back. And that is the simple profoundness of this proverb.

Okay, I'm going to stick with the P theme here. It prompts this soul searching question what do our daily actions and choices reveal about our heart's true state as we navigate life's journey? Are we presenting a clear or muddied reflection? And who is experiencing that reflection? Today, I want to encourage you to take a moment and think about it. If our lives are the mirror, then what tale is our heart weaving? And as we seek clarity within, may our external world radiate the same genuine reflection.

Kris Langham: Good stuff. All right, I'm going to get to the last proverb because this is one of my all time favorites. I'm going to read it in the ESV, which is a little more classic. You've probably heard this one before. Proverbs 27:17 iron sharpens iron and one man sharpens another. This is a classic manhood verse. Of course, the same concept applies to women, but the Hebrew word here is male. And men especially need this, just like iron sharpens iron.

Now it's interesting, the technology of iron had just hit Israel in Solomon's lifetime. It was a big step up from bronze and the process of an iron hammer pounding out an iron sword to flatten it. And the iron file that sharpened that edge was a new and essential part of life for a man. And Solomon took that image as a metaphor for man sharpening another man for good or bad. Bad company corrupts good character and good company.

When you walk with the wise, you grow wise. So here's my question for you guys. What does this look like in real life? I'm looking at two guys who have sharpened my character and my ministry as much as anyone else has over the years. So how do we go about sharpening one another?

Peyton Jones: You know, for about three and a half years, I met with a group of pastors and we would meet and we would talk through what was called RPMS, relationships, physical, mental and spiritual, and we would just give an update on how we're doing now.

The rule was you couldn't talk about ministry and you couldn't give advice. We would simply say how we're doing and we would pray. And that got me through some of the roughest times I've had in the last ten years.

Kris Lingham: Yeah. I think that rule of not talking about ministry that applies across the board, whatever your work is, men have a tendency to just roll back into talking on work. That's our rut, how things are going at work. And sometimes, you know, that's the junk that you get to talk through. But it's so important to make the time and guard the time. So you actually talk about what your heart's going through, what your relationships are going through. Ryan, how about you? What do you think are the practicals of iron sharpening iron here?

Ryan McCarter: Yeah, I love what Peyton said there. You know, I think planned and planning it is very important as well as having a purpose to it. So one of the things I borrowed from my family is a high, low buffalo format. So when I'm meeting with and talking to my, my mentors or accountability partners, we basically want to talk about something that's really high just to, to bring that gratitude, something that's low and the buffalo is the, the sin struggle or the tendency or really the accountability piece.

And that helps it say purpose. It helps it stay really practical. And also it kind of guides that conversation to make sure that you're, you know, what's coming up and you can't skirt out of the conversation. And that's where the sharpening really happens. Um, and getting it off your heart is just such an important piece to that.

Kris Lingham: That's good. And I think the plan, I think you guys both said it, but the plan is essential. You got to make time for it. Don't just wait for time to happen, because if you don't make a time where you regularly confess your sins and share your struggles, you're likely going to wait until you've caused damage with those sins and struggles.

If you make time for it regularly, you can cut it off before you've hurt someone. And for me, I just got together with a friend. It's been friends over the years, but usually I've got a list of either the common struggles of men or common struggles of pastors or ministers, and I add my own and we just walk down the list. Hey, how are you doing with this? This, this, this usually make it pretty quick, you know, but I, I make a pact with a friend saying, okay, whatever I struggle with, I'm going to tell you.

And just knowing that at the end of the week or end of the month, I am going to say something to my friend really holds me back when I'm sitting there with the clicker in my hand and, and knowing what I'm going to do, I'm going to share with a person and not just God. And now God's accountability is good. But there's something about having accountability from a friend that sharpens. And it's so good.

Peyton Jones: You know, I think that's why, uh, James says, confess your sins to one another because there is something about dragging it out into the light. When you have a temptation and you're struggling, part of what you're struggling with in that temptation is the guilt feeling cruddy for even having that temptation.

And when I disciple, people always tell them, hey, to be tempted is not to sin. And when James says, confess your sins to one another, it reminds us of the grace that we all need. And be it kind of nips that temptation in the bud. The other day I had someone I'm discipling text me and say, hey, I'm getting ready to go on a trip.

They were a new convert and they said, you know, uh, I'm always at my worst before I go on a trip because Satan starts just running around the playground. In my mind, of all the opportunities, I would have to go back to my old ways. And I said, you know how you kill that?

You tell your wife and you invite her into that temptation and you talk to her about it. And I guarantee that accountability. You're not going to do it.

Kris Langham: That's really good. And the confession of sin is such a powerful thing. One of the absolute critical turning points in my early walk with God was a simple confession. I was wrestling over thoughts invading my mind for so long, and it wasn't quite the level of sin. And sometimes it would kind of get there. And I finally just said something to someone and the healing was phenomenal. It was surprising, but it is absolutely biblical.

Ryan McCarter: Yeah, that's really good, Chris. You know, one other, um, example I have is, is this concept of spiritual constipation. And I learned this early on in life is as, as men, we take on so much and we try to bear that burden. And what happens over time is without a release or without a cleansing of that or a flow of just in and out and having someone to confess to, to live life with, to, to be discipled with and to mentor, it builds up and it starts affecting other areas of your life that you don't expect. So one of the most important things is to take in, but find these channels and these opportunities to let out. Because if you don't, it's going to start percolating through the cracks in your life.

Kris Langham: That's so good. And I also want to put a more positive spin on this. We've talked a lot about confessing sin, but also encouraging one another to spur one another on to love and good works. The power of mission together, of pushing each other forward, of challenging each other, and even a little healthy, fun competition in there.

Not in the wrong sense of I'm better than you, but you know, being guys and being a little competitive to push one another forward in our mission. And I really want to encourage you guys, one of the simplest ways you can do this is just in your time in the word, to use through the word together.

To walk through the word and just use that, that daily opportunity as a place to encourage someone to sharpen someone, to strengthen someone. So much wisdom is grown as we walk together through God's Word. And I think that's all the time we got for this one. Guys, thanks so much for hanging out with us. In Proverbs 27. Read through the chapter. We will meet you back here next time.

Day 30 | Proverbs 28

Walking in Wisdom - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Through the Word and the book of Proverbs, chapter 28 today. And joining me again are Peyton Jones and Ryan McCarter. Welcome back gentlemen. Let's jump right in. Peyton, why don't you start us out with verse six.

Peyton Jones: Proverbs 28 six, better the poor whose walk is blameless than the rich, whose ways are perverse. In most cultures, wealth is a desirable outcome. We see the wealthy as accomplished and successful. And if this is true, then wealth is the final goal in life. But this verse says not so fast. Integrity is better. In some ways. It's harder to achieve than wealth. But integrity is free. By the way, wealth and integrity are not mutually exclusive.

You don't always have to pick between them. But if you do, Proverbs says it's best to opt for integrity. Wealth is good. Integrity is better. In a real life situation. It might be a case where a company asks you to do or say something dishonest. Proverbs is saying, don't sacrifice your integrity for financial gain.

Kris Langham: So good. A good name and an intact integrity is so much more valuable than whatever else you're trading it in for. All right, Ryan, what verse do you have for us?

Ryan McCarter: We're going to be looking at Proverbs 28:13, which states, those who conceal their sins do not prosper, but those who confess and renounce them find mercy. You know, how can a beautiful flower grow if the soil is tainted?

I used to go to these tulip fields in the state of Washington when I was growing up, and I was always amazed at the effort that was put into just the soil alone to cleanse it and prepare it and get it ready for spring. You know, if that soil was full of contaminants, those flowers could just never prosper. They wouldn't cover the entire hillsides. And the same is true in your heart.

Concealing sin is burying it in your heart. It's poisoning your heart. Those who conceal their sins do not prosper. You know, sin all bottled up creates a ton of havoc, not to mention a ton of pressure. It's when we release it through that confession that amazing mercies are always found. It's tough, you know. We all have that feeling of guilt inside of us. But the beauty of the cross is that it absorbs that burden and frees our soul. Today, challenge yourself. Let's get honest. What are you holding on to? What sin is poisoning your soul? And who are you going to talk to? To let it go?

Kris Langham: You know, there is a very powerful sense of freedom when you confess a sin and renounce it. It's like chains broken, like a heavy weight. Just let go. And notice there are two parts to letting it go. Confess and renounce. That means admit it and stop it. And James says, confess your sins to each other. Pray and be healed. That's where you find the burden fully removed.

And I'm going to jump us over to verse 19. Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies will have their fill of poverty. Now, this one's personal for me, and it really convicted me at a crucial point in my life when through the word was just a dream. Two simple options work your land, get food, or chase dreams and fill up on poverty. So what do you think, Ryan? For as long as I've known you, you've been turning opportunity into business. So how do you know the difference between working the land and just chasing after fantasies?

Ryan McCarter: Well, you know, the differentiator is in the word. Everybody overlooks. And it's that word work. Working the land isn't just about farming. It's about putting in the genuine effort. Let me say that again, the effort right into our goals, be it in relationships, work, or personal projects. It's all about the effort. It's about the patience, consistency and reaping those rewards from that dedicated labor.

You know, a farmer who cultivates his land, he sows the seeds he waters. You know, he tends to them regularly over this period of time. You know what his reward is? It's the abundant harvest. There's no shortcuts in farming. On the flip side, chasing fantasies. Ah, it's that lure of the shortcut. That too good to be true scheme. It might sparkle, but it's fleeting, leaving us always empty handed. You know, ask yourself what would have happened if Jesus took a shortcut? That's a tough one.

So a nugget to chew on today in your own life's field, are you diligently sowing seeds or being sidetracked by shimmering mirages? Remember, true abundance comes from purposeful, grounded effort, and the difference is always found in the work.

Kris Langham: Peyton, how about you? How do you apply this to ministry work?

Peyton Jones: I love the idea of hard work. Ecclesiastes 9:10 says, work hard at whatever you do. And the apostle Paul, who wore young men out and ate hirelings for breakfast, wrote, we must not be idle. You'd have to be a hard worker, go getter, an indefatigable missionary, to keep up with the Apostle.

And to this end, Paul once said, I worked harder than any of them. Think of that, Paul is saying. I outworked them all. Similarly, John Wesley was a hard worker and look at what God accomplished through him. Within 30 years of his ministry, 10% of the English population had been converted.

He preached multiple times a day, rode thousands of miles on horseback every year, filled volumes with his writing, trained tons of circuit riders and leaders, started charitable institutions, catalyzed movements, and gave copiously to the poor. He's an inspiring figure and I struggle with my inbox.

Kris Langham: I think the key for me is the difference between dreamer and visionary. And the difference here in the verse is the land work, the land, clear plow, plant water, weed. It works in farming, in business, and in ministry. And speaking of work, look at our next proverb in verse 20. A faithful person will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished. So there is a reward for faithfulness. Be true to your boss, to God, to your friends. Be faithful about your work and you will find rich blessings.

The contrast, though one eager to get rich, also translated hasty for riches. But look at the contrast, one hasty for riches. Haste is when you want the prize without the work. Jump to the finish line. Get discovered, get your big break without paying your dues. That kind of person is the opposite of faithful.

There's no perseverance, no sticking to it. If it doesn't work fast, just give up. You don't care about people, you just care about money and it says it will not go unpunished. So, Ryan, how do you see this one in the business world?

Ryan McCarter: Well, you know, I've heard story after story after story about men who just mow over everything in life to gather those riches. And usually it's as quickly as possible. The outcome is always the same no family, no friends, no faith, and all alone with just a bunch of stuff.

But there is something wonderful about being faithful and working consistently and consistently hard over a period of time. You enjoy the tremendous blessings along the journey and it's all about the journey. The blessing is never the money. That's just a byproduct.

You know, when we are faithful to our employees, our bosses, God and friends, we are richly blessed during the journey, and even more so at the end.

Kris Langham: Nice. And you also have our next verse. So let's skip ahead to verse 26.

Ryan McCarter: Proverbs 28:26. Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe. Ah, the age-old battle between ego and wisdom, trusting solely in ourselves, can lead us into a maze of confusion and missteps. But walking in wisdom. It's like having the ultimate GPS guiding us on a clear, safe path through life's winding roads. And with God as the service provider, you don't have to worry about not having that signal.

You know, wisdom often comes from a lifelong blend of experience, from learning, learning from others. And yes, even those moments when we pause to seek him. And speaking of him, I would encourage you to seek Jesus and His Word first when others paths may let you down. That is really what keeping it safe is.

So a question for you today. Where in your life might you be leaning a bit too much on your own understanding? And where could you invite in a little more wisdom? Remember, it's not about discarding self-trust, but balancing it with the timeless compass of wisdom.

Kris Langham: Good stuff. And we got one more verse. Our last one at 27. Peyton, what do you have?

Peyton Jones: Proverbs 28:27 those who give to the poor will lack nothing, but those who close their eyes to them receive many curses. Over the years in ministry, I've found that if I go where the need is and not where the money is, God always seems to give us whatever the mission required.

I remember a treasure at Refuge Long Beach, a church that you and I planted Kris. Our treasure used to pull his hair out every month saying, I don't know where this money is coming from or how it got here, but more comes out, it seems, than comes in. And yet we always have what we need. But I like the second part that says, but those who close their eyes to the poor receive many curses. It may not just be the curse of the poor who cry out like James says, against your greed.

It may actually be the curse of a lifestyle that's not generous. I found recently the more generous I am, the more it comes back to me. And that just seems to be a mystery of how life works. The more you give, the less you lack.

Kris Langham: It reminds me of one of my old favorite sayings. There was an old man they said was mad. The more he gave, the more he had. And we'll close it out with that. Read Proverbs 28. Discuss it together. We'll meet you back here next time.

Day 31 | Proverbs 28

B-Side: How to Successfully Ruin Your Life - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: And welcome back to Proverbs 28. This is the B side of our discussion on this wisdom packed chapter. We'll jump back into that recording just where we left off in our discussion with Jonathan Ferguson, Ryan McCarter, and yours truly.

We're at verse 20 of chapter 28. So take it away. Me can I do that? Can I introduce myself? Maybe I should get somebody else to do this. Anyone want to record the intro for me? My dog Luigi is just staring at me, so I'm going to take that as a no. Anyway, let's get back to it. Maybe I'll figure out a better plan for the next one.

Jonathan, I want to know about you. You and I did youth ministry together. Great ministry. We had stable work. Both of us chased missionary ideas out into the field. Yeah. Mississippi. Nairobi, family in tow for both of us. We both had major financial crises on the mission field. So looking back, what does verse 19 say about ministry and mission?

Jonathan Ferguson: All right. Before we get into that, I think we need to make sure that we remind everybody who's listening that Proverbs, they illustrate general principles, not laws. So hard work will bring abundance. Most of the time, right? General rule. Right. There's there's times where disasters, crime, or other forces outside of ourselves can ruin all of our plans and hard work.

That being said, when we were there in Kenya, there were times we struggled financially, but we had to learn to rely on God for our provision. We never knew what we'd be getting in each month for our support. So from month to month, there were times we might have plenty coming in for over a period of months and we're like, this is great, but you never quite knew what was happening the next month. And so we had to learn to trust in God for it.

And so that was what we had to learn to do. We had to we had the plans. We had all those things like Ryan was talking about. And we just had to trust that God was going to provide for us.

Kris Langham: Yeah. There's a combination of trust in God and planning. When we started through the word, I wondered many times if, uh, if I was chasing fantasies because I was going broke. So I seemed to fit that part of the verse pretty well. But if you look back at 19, it says those who work their land. See, I was always a dreamer since I was little. But ministry taught me the difference between dreamer and visionary.

I think the difference is the land in the verse. The one working the land and the one chasing. The fantasies are the same, are the same in that they're both after something that isn't there. The land starts bare, but it has potential. But the fantasy chaser, it's all in his head. It's just a dream. Get discovered, get my big break. I'm just going to get rich. Out of nowhere. The one working land sees opportunity, understands soil and seed. Gets to work. Clearing, plowing, planting, watering, weeding. It works in farming. It works in business. Works in ministry. You see opportunity and you work towards that. But you know how the land works and you're not just chasing something that is completely unrealistic.

Now I actually want to connect that in the next verse. 2820 A faithful person will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished. Again, this one's about work. There's a reward for faithfulness. Be true to your boss, to God, to your friends. Be faithful about your work and you will be richly blessed.

The contrast, though one eager to get rich, also translated hasty for riches. You see, haste is when you want the prize without the work. Jump to the finish line. Get discovered. Get your big break without paying your dues.

That kind of person is the opposite of faithful. There's no perseverance, no sticking to it. If it doesn't work fast, you just give up. You don't care about people. You don't. You just care about the money and it will not go unpunished. Ryan, what do you see in the in the business world? I'm curious what you have to say on this one.

Ryan McCarter: Oh, man. I mean, I've heard story after story about men who just mow over everything in their life to gather as much riches as they possibly can. You know, the outcome is always the same. No family, no friends, no faith. They're all alone. I'm talking about, you know what they should have, could have, would have done.

You know, there's something wonderful about being faithful and working consistently hard over a period of time. You enjoy the tremendous blessings along the journey. It's a little cliché, but there's so much value in that, and there's so much that we can glean from the journey along the way. The blessing is never the money.

That's a byproduct. And when we get that straight, things start to unwind. When we are faithful to our employees, bosses, God, our friends, we are richly blessed continually during the journey and even more so at the end.

Kris Lingham: Nice. Jonathan, what do you think about this one in mission and ministry? How does this apply?

Jonathan Ferguson: I would say that we need to make sure that we're taking the time to properly be trained as if we're going out onto the mission field. There's so many people that rush out in haste, whether it's on a short term trip or a long term trip, without being properly prepared for what's going to be happening out there.

From the time that we knew that we were called to go out there to the time we actually moved was over four years. Four years of prep work because God wasn't quite done working on us, and obviously he still is always working on us. But we spent that time trying to learn the culture, trying to learn some of the language if we could, understand proper ways of, you know, relating back to our home church back here.

But we have to take the time in order to do that, you know, and being faithful in those little things over those times of preparation, there will be a rich blessing for those who do that, but those who are eager or hasty to just, I'm just going to get out there and, and just give them Jesus. I'm just going to go love on them. You end up burning out overwhelmed culture shocked.

Offending everybody. You're offending the people who support you back home. You're offending the people you're trying to minister to, and you end up getting totally burned out and you wipe out.

Kris Lingham: Well, let's move on to verse 26. Ryan, what you got there?

Ryan McCarter: Absolutely. So in verse 26, those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe. I see this every day in the business world, people trusting only in themselves. You know, I live this for far too long also, and I still have a tendency to do it and always bet on myself.

And you know what happens? I inevitably make a fool of myself. It just is going to happen. I love this verse because of the wisdom we can walk in through Jesus. Since Jesus is wisdom. Who better to walk with to keep us safe? There's such a wonderful connection in these proverbs between Jesus and wisdom. Just watch out for it. It's there.

Kris Lingham: Yeah, it's throughout Proverbs you got to be looking for. For Jesus. Those who walk in wisdom.

Well, the walk with Jesus is a walk in wisdom. He leads us in that. And it has to be grounded into our walk. And we don't trust in ourselves. That's part of following Jesus, trusting in him. Well, we got one verse to go just a verse later, verse 27, Jonathan, what you got for us, right?

Jonathan Ferguson: Proverbs 28:27, those who give to the poor will lack nothing, but those who close their eyes to them receive many curses. You know, we. A couple of us at least. You know, Kris and myself, we live here in Southern California, home of the perfect weather, which means we have a very large population of homeless people who are looking to avoid the extremes of, say, Texas over here.

Ryan McCarter: It's not that extreme.

Jonathan Ferguson: Okay. Right, right. But with.

Kris Langham: So many.

Jonathan Ferguson: Yeah. With so many poor people around, it's easy to become jaded to them, though. I mean, we've already discussed the idea of hard work bringing abundance. And here we have these men and women on the street that are there just dealing with the consequences of laziness and drug use, right?

But look, all the excuses that we make about why we're not helping them, they're often just us trying to justify not helping. We just want to justify why I want to keep that five bucks or want to keep the extra burger that they put in the McDonald's bag for me instead of helping somebody out. And yes, there are a lot of people on the street by choice or because of results of drug use or things like that. But what happens when they actually want to get off the streets?

You know, here at the church, we see a lot of people coming in that's genuinely want to get off the streets. Are we going to just say, well, you made your bed and now go lie in it? Or are we going to actually help them? When we give to those who are in need? We ourselves will not experience that need.

Kris Langham: The homeless problem is a complex problem. Yes, it requires wisdom. If ever there was a problem that required some wisdom, because you're going to run into all kinds of stuff, you're certainly going to run into lazy. You'll run into a lot of mental illness on the street. So our church Refuge, Long Beach, is an interesting place. I'd say about 60% of our people are either recovering from addiction or homeless, or were homeless when they started with us or in a shelter.

And it's a it's an interesting ministry, beautiful place to go to church. I love it, but when somebody who's listened to through the word shows up, sometimes a little surprised. Interesting. They run into at our church, but man is an adventure in God changing lives. But it is tricky business because I am not a person who gives to panhandlers. I'm not because. And I was I think when I was a brand new Christian thought because I gotta help.

And then when I actually got involved in their lives, realized I was not actually helping. And when I talked to the people who were involved with the homeless, that handing out money is not a way to fix problems. In fact, you often encourage more of it and, and you encourage, you know, for some people, they need the help. But a lot of the time it's not. So it's a complex problem.

But the, the solution is not to close your eyes to them, right? He who gives to the poor does not necessarily mean handing them some money, right? But it means genuinely helping them out. And that takes more work than just handing them some money.

It means working through a program, helping out a program. There's a lot there are a lot of ministries who do help. So if you think to yourself, I want to hand this guy some money, I'd say log that thought and give to a program that really makes a difference in lives, because it takes a lot more than five bucks to make a difference in their lives. But we should make a difference. We should do something about it. And people do. And there are programs that make a tremendous difference. There are churches that make a tremendous difference. Be a part of that.

For me with especially with my kids, it was really getting to know them, talking to them, having a conversation, caring about some someone means a lot more than five bucks. And occasionally I go buy a burger for them and we'll do something. I don't have it down perfect. There's not a great. It requires wisdom and it's tough. Well, thanks guys, for, uh, for joining in, in chapter 28, I'm going to close out here and we will meet you all back in Proverbs chapter 29.

Day 32 | Proverbs 29

Rulers and Justice - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to the book of Proverbs. We are in chapter 29 as we head towards the end of the book. Joining me once again back in the studio, Peyton Jones and Chase Acuna, two of my favorite Bible teachers. We got a chapter full of wisdom. So I'm gonna let Peyton start us off right at the top. Verse one. Peyton, what do you have for us?

Peyton Jones: Whoever remained stiff necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed without remedy. Stiff necked is a term that refers to cattle. When an animal's stiff necked, they can't be guided, so they end up as hamburgers. Farmers don't mess around. If an animal is not useful in one way, they'll be useful in another.

This proverb is a warning that if we remain stiff necked after many rebukes and can't become. A good example will be made an example of. In other words, will become an example of what not to be, what not to do. Your life can be destroyed without remedy at any moment. And if you've been going down a path ignoring many rebukes.

It only takes one moment, one bad decision, one fitted temper, one act of rage, one indiscretion, one flash of dishonesty to completely destroy your life. Ask anyone who's in jail and they'll tell you they didn't listen to the advice of others. And then one day, one decision ended it all.

Kris Langham: Now, of course, that doesn't mean there is no room for redemption. But there are consequences for being stiff necked. Again and again there will come a time. Powerful verse. Chase, you're going to skip us ahead. A few verses. Take us to verse 11.

Chase Acuna: Verse 11 says, fools give full vent to their rage. But the wise bring calm in the end. Now, no matter who we are, the truth is, we can all get angry at times. Sometimes for justified reasons, sometimes not so much. I realize even as I mature, I still get angry at times. It's just usually for better reasons than it once was. Now, I love how this proverb makes it clear, though, that it's not wise to let go of one's anger to the full extent. Or as the proverb says, rage. Why?

Well, James says, because the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. And when someone is at the state of rage, they're not usually thinking about the consequences that might follow ahead. The wise, on the other hand, consider things from a longer view with an aim to win the relationship rather than just the argument.

Kris Langham: It's really good. I think it's important to remember that anger itself is not the sin, it is how you respond. Anger is an emotion. It's a natural response to some of the events of life.

Fools give full vent to their rage. I love the visual imagery that Proverbs gives us. There is a vent control on your anger, a valve that you can open or close when you get angry. And we do need that valve. We all realize that burying our feelings can make them worse.

But if you are the kind of person that cranks that valve to full open vent at any time, you are a fool. There is the right time and the right way to process the anger. If you hit full vent, guaranteed, you will say things that you regret. But the wise bring calm. We've all seen this at work, at the game.

Sports can really bring out the anger in us. The worst sometimes, sadly, are the parents. We do this, we let the competition get the better of us and we let anger fly. But we've all seen when that one wise person speaks calm. There's something so graceful and powerful about the calm words of the wise.

Now, moving forward, chapter 29 has a few strong themes that weave throughout. One of them is kings and rulers, and the focus here is on how the king's rule affects the people. Let's start off at verse two. When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice. When the wicked rule, the people groan.

Now at the heart of this one is the people. The people of the kingdom rejoice when the righteous, the ones doing right by God, are thriving. We want the good guys to win. But when the wicked rule, when corruption gains power, people groan.

It's so frustrating. It's miserable for everyone. Makes everything more difficult. And look at verse four. By justice a king gives a country stability. But those who are greedy for bribes tear it down. This one really hits the heart of it. Justice gives a nation stability. And what a gift that is. Solid ground. Just leaders give this to their people.

But then it says those who are greedy for bribes tear it down. Corruption destroys. Greedy leaders literally tear down their own country from the inside like termites. And the nation under their rule has no stability.

Now, each of us may be more or less politically inclined. And that's okay. But the lesson here affects all of us because the character of the ruler affects everyone. Life is better with just leaders, and first world nations should not point the fingers too quickly. When so much of the world's corruption started with imperialistic greed.

As for the Bible, kings and kingdoms form one of the mega themes of the whole book and the bigger Bible picture is Jesus, Lord of lords and King of Kings. His throne will be established forever, and he will rule with a scepter of righteousness. No corruption, no injustice. That is God's plan for us.

Chase Acuna: So good now. Maybe because of bad leadership or maybe just pride. But I think many of us struggle at times, including myself, with being under authority. Yet I love how you pointed out, Chris. God's rule has no corruption, no injustice, and rules in complete righteousness.

Heaven is heavenly because of his complete kingly rule over it. And maybe to many of our surprises, I think we'll find being completely under his rule is actually the best thing ever for us.

Kris Lingham: That's good. And speaking how we respond to God. Chase, why don't you take us down to verse 25?

Chase Acuna: Proverbs 29:25 says, the fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts the Lord will be kept safe. Think about this as fearing what someone else might think, do, or say ever kept you from honoring the Lord somehow. If you guys are anything like me, that's a yes to all three.

Maybe this fear has kept you from praying for a coworker who was going through something challenging. Maybe from calling out a friend who was slandering another friend behind her back. Or maybe sharing about what Jesus has done in your life when a relative asked if you were religious or not.

This is because the fear of man works a lot like a trap, this proverb points out. Do you want to escape that trap? Then our fear of God must become greater than our fear of others.

Kris Langham: That one is wisdom 101 and I love the visual imagery again of a snare. When you fear man, it's like something is wrapping around your ankle. It will trip you up. Good stuff. Peyton, what do you think on this one?

Peyton Jones: Well, I go back to church history where John Knox was a walking, talking example of this. Mary, Queen of Scots, once remarked about John Knox. I fear nothing more than that man's prayers. And John Knox used to have a maxim that said, Fear God and you will never fear anyone else.

Kris Langham: That's very good. And actually speaking of an audience with a ruler. Peyton, you have the very next verse at 26.

Peyton Jones: Many seek an audience with a ruler, but it is from the Lord that one gets justice. So often we seek from people what we can only truly get from God. Religious people aren't immune to it either. Said of the Pharisees that they sought the approval of men rather than God.

Many seek the audience of a ruler or someone who can advance our cause or career, or give an easy win. But Proverbs gets us realigned with God Himself. We can depend on men, or we can fully trust the Lord. And besides, men can only get us so much justice. A ruler can make someone pay for their crimes by finding or jailing them. But nobody will ever escape the full justice meted at the hands of God.

Just as may come at the end of the ages and not before. And no man can bring that about. No, it is from the Lord that one truly gets justice. When God is the ultimate judge at the end of time, he will see to it that justice is finally and fully meted out. That means nobody ever gets away with anything.

But also true for us as believers, we have the amazing knowledge that in Christ, justice was met fully at the cross and justice was fully satisfied after Christ paid the full penalty for our sins.

Kris Langham: You know, this one to me is much easier said than done when you need justice. When we feel driven to find it and we seek audience with the ruler. But it reminds me of that beautiful passage, Psalm 121. I lift my eyes up to the hills. Where does my help come from? My help comes from you. Maker of heaven, creator of the earth, you know. Seeking a conversation with the person in charge. It's understandable.

The right person can really change the whole situation for you. I don't think the verse speaks against that, but true justice is from the Lord. We have an open invitation to speak directly to the one in charge. And I have two final verses that speak again to rulers about justice and what righteous rule looks like. Starting at verse seven, the righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern. The righteous care. Plain and simple. It starts with caring care about justice.

To be righteous is to be right with God. It is the goal, the purpose of the gospel. Jesus died for our sins to give us his righteousness. And now our life is about becoming righteous. So as a believer, we care about justice for the poor because that's righteous. It matters to God, so it matters to us. So check yourself. Do you care when you hear stories about refugees being ripped off, the poor being taken advantage of, sweatshops that sacrifice their workers at the altar of greed? Do we care? And of course, we can ask the question, does God care?

Absolutely. I think verse 14 speaks both of good kings and of the one truly good King. 29:14 if a king judges the poor with fairness, his throne will be established forever. That should be any good king. But most importantly, that's Jesus. His throne will be established forever, and he does care for the poor and he judges with fairness. Well, guys, that's all the time we have for wisdom in 29. Take some time to read Proverbs 29 for yourself, and we'll meet you back here at chapter 30.

Day 33 | Proverbs 30

Every Word of God is Flawless - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Proverbs, everyone. Chapter 30. Today in the home stretch. Back at the table with me today are Ryan McCarter, Peyton Jones. Welcome guys. What do we have here in today's chapter?

Peyton Jones: Well, in chapter 30 we move from Proverbs to sayings. We finish up the two line wisdom pack wonders. And these are, according to verse one, the sayings of Agur son of Jakeh, an inspired utterance. The sayings are a bit longer, generally 3 to 5 verses each. And we're not sure who Agur was, but we're told his words were an inspired utterance. Or, in the ESV, an oracle. In other words, prophetic or given by God, for you less charismatic Christians.

Kris Langham: Right, and they're not only longer, they're also different. In approach. The proverbs are statements of wisdom, insights on life wise decisions, righteous living. But here these sayings are more like philosophical ponderings, Observations of the world of life and just things that make you go, hmm. And not in the CNC music factory way. So this time we're each going to pick one and give ourselves some time to hum about it. And Ryan, which one got your attention?

Ryan McCarter: So I have Proverbs 30 verse 5, which says, every word of God is flawless. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him. What a well-timed reminder. God's words are absolutely pure. Not one single flaw. And for us, he stands as a mighty shield when we trust him. We all know the warmth of a protective embrace. Like a hug from God that shields you from the world. And it also makes you feel safe. Well, that's him with a capital H. Shielding us. His words shield us and we can take refuge in that.

So take a moment today to reflect. How have his words been a shield for you? And how does His Word help you take refuge in him? Keep those thoughts close. And remember, in a world of noise, His word stands out.

Kris Lingham: And verse six completes the saying, do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar. That is a stark warning for anyone who would use “thus saith the Lord” to give more authority to their own personal ideas. Do not add to God's Word.

Every time you teach or share God's Word, make clear lines of distinction between the Bible and your teaching on it. Hearing through the word. The audio guide should never be confused with the audio Bible. Add to His Word and he will prove you a liar.

And I'm going to move us back to verse one for one of my favorite sayings in the whole book of Proverbs. Now I'm going to read this one from the ESV because I just love the way this reads. It starts halfway through verse one. The man declares, I am weary, O God. I am weary, O God, and worn out. Surely I am too stupid to be a man.

Now I have to stop there, because that is one of my favorite lines in all the Bible and a very personal verse in my own story. Now your translation might say, I am a brute or I am ignorant, but I just really like I am too stupid to be a man. Now it appears to be something that Agur overheard someone else say, and it just struck him.

The man declared his weariness. He's worn out and realizing his own ignorance. Too stupid to consider himself human, he says. I have not the understanding of a man. It is a moment of reckoning.

Why? What ignorance is he suddenly reckoning with? Verse three? I have not learned wisdom, nor have I knowledge of the Holy One.

The reckoning here is the realization that God is real, and I don't know a thing about him. How can I even call myself a man? This should be humanity 101. It's the basics to know my own maker. And I have to admit, this passage is powerfully personal to me in my story. Because that man, that was me too ignorant.

Now, I actually called myself agnostic in my younger days, which happens to literally mean ignorant, but for me it just meant I don't know. I was studying engineering, I was at a top ten university and suddenly I had a reckoning. I don't know my maker now. I was a science geek and I hid behind my science. And I claimed that you can't prove God. But for me, the reckoning came when I realized that I really wasn't being intellectually honest. How could I say that? You can't prove God. When I had never even bothered to try.

But back here on our story, look at verse four. Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists. Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth. What is his name and what is his son's name? Surely you know. And that is the humble and honest cry of a heart that suddenly realizes its own ignorance.

Someone has to know. So please tell me, what is his name? At some point we look at the great wonders of our universe and the fantastic magic of life all around us. And for me, I finally got honest with myself and realized that the science I hid behind was one great wonder after another, pointing to something greater. Who? Not just what did it, but who I want to name. I want to know personally. And did you catch those curious little questions?

Remember, this is Old Testament who has ascended to heaven and come down. That sounds a whole lot like Jacob's Ladder. And like Jesus' conversation with Nathaniel in John 1. And not only his name, but what is his son's name? Did the Old Testament just tell us that God has a son?

Agur wants to know. I want to know. But no answers just yet. These are just ponderings. So, Peyton, where are you taking us next?

Peyton Jones: Proverbs 30, verses seven through nine. Two things I ask of you, Lord, do not refuse me before I die. Keep falsehood and lies far from me. Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise I may have too much and disown you, and say, who's the Lord? Or I may become poor, and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God. I love Agur humility here. I love Agur's humility here. Agur admits his own weaknesses, both his tendency to forget God when life is easy and his tendency to walk away when life is difficult. Because of these tendencies, Agur asks God for two things. Do not give me poverty. Do not give me riches.

Why? In times of ease, it's pretty easy to ignore God, especially when we equate wealth with success. We know the phrases. He's doing well for himself and self-made man. Wealth can lead us to think that God is unnecessary, or to think that he is okay with all of our choices. But poverty can also lead us away from God when we struggle. It's easy to assume that God is either not able to help us or he's unwilling to do so. Most of the counseling I do with people involves this question. If God loves me, then why? I think it's time we drop the idea that wealth is an indicator of godliness. There are wealthy people who honor God and there are poor people that do so as well.

But Agur knew that the tendency of most people is to allow both wealth and poverty to lead us away from God, and so he simply asks for his daily bread. Now, that phrase sounds familiar. Maybe that's why Jesus taught us to pray for our daily bread. Seems like having that with contentment is enough. Even at the end of the book, we see that we are still quite foolish. But God likes us to keep it real.

Kris Langham: And that does it for the sayings of the wise in Proverbs 30. Take a read through for yourself and we'll meet you back here next time.

Day 34 | Proverbs 30

B-Side: Give Me Neither Poverty or Riches - Kris & Friends

Kris Lingham: Welcome back to Proverbs 30. This is the B side on through the word. Now the audio here was edited out as we were discussing verse five. Every word of God is flawless. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Powerful verse on the flawlessness of God's Word and a humbling verse about how we approach the Bible.

Now we'll jump back in with Ryan McCarter and Jonathan Ferguson in the midst of that discussion, as we move forward to verse six, to consider how we present the Bible, how we teach it. So here we go back at verse six.

Kris Lingham: And verse six as a good follow up here. It's part of the same saying, do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you, and you be found a liar. Now, this is a good challenge for any Bible teacher. Jonathan, I'm looking at you. So if he says, do not add to his words and you stand up and read the Bible, and then you start talking about it, are you adding to God's Word?

Jonathan Ferguson : Well, if we were, I think every preacher for the last 2000 years is going to be in serious trouble.

Kris Lingham: And what if we are?

Jonathan Ferguson: We're not, and I'll tell you why. Well, we'll say this most preachers over the last 2000 years are not going to be in trouble. Yeah, I think there's some danger there. Yes, there's some danger for some of them out there. But no, it's there's a big difference when in how you present the Word of God in your own word.

So when I'm teaching, I make sure it's very clear. The Bible says in the book of Matthew, and this is this is the Bible. And then what does that mean?

I can explain it. I can give interpretation, I can give application. But I make a very clear distinction when I'm teaching on what's me and what's the Bible. I don't personally preach from an iPad or anything. I have my notes all written out, but I have a Bible always, no matter what I'm teaching from, I have a Bible in my hand.

So as I'm getting ready to read a verse, I'm not just still looking at my notes. I will pick up my Bible and make it very clear that I'm turning the page to this and say, this is what the Bible says. Yeah. Then when I put it down and I'm teaching, it becomes more clear than that this is my explaining it. But that was the Bible, right?

Kris Lingham: Your authority as a teacher comes from the authority of God, and it comes through the authority of Scripture. That God's Word is flawless. And you make that clear to your audience. And I'll say clearly is, I'm a Bible teacher. And as everyone's listening now, my word is different from God's word, but part of my job, my essential job, really as a Bible teacher is explaining with clarity what the Word of God expresses. And this is the essential element for the Bible teacher.

Your job is not to teach something interesting, solid, great application, and then use the Word of God to back it up. That lacks authority because you can find a scripture that will back you- back it up. But your calling is to teach the Word of God and use your words to explain it.

The Word of God itself has the authority and the Bible teacher comes and explains at a level. That's what you see in the Nehemiah 8 passage where it says that the teachers were explaining it and making it clear, giving the sense so that people could understand. Understand what? Understand God's word.

Jonathan Ferguson: Right. You had Ezra reading the law and then the people there, the Levites there that were then explaining it and making it clear. So there, even there, there was this major distinction between this is the scroll that we have here. This is the Word of God. And then, hey, this is what it means for you two farmers over here, or this is what it means for you merchants over here.

Kris Lingham: But the word is the authority.

Jonathan Ferguson: The word is the authority that backs up everything that is the source of authority, a source of, of, of all truth there.

Kris Lingham: Well, let's move forward to verse. Jonathan, move us into verse seven.

Jonathan Ferguson: All right. Verse seven. Two things I ask of you, Lord, do not refuse me before I die. Keep falsehood and lies far from me. Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise I may have too much and disown you and say, who is the Lord? Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

Now I love Agur's humility. Here he admits to his own weaknesses, both his tendency to. To forget God when life is easy and and his tendency to walk away when life is difficult. Now, because of these tendencies, agar asks God for two things, don't give me poverty, don't give me riches. Now why?

You know, in times of ease, it's so easy to to ignore God, to. Especially when we have equated wealth with success. So we, you know, we all know the phrases are he's doing well for himself or this guy's a self-made man, you know, it's we both mean that they've, they've, they've accumulated some wealth for themselves.

Wealth can lead us into thinking that God is unnecessary to think that he's okay with all of our choices because hey, we're blessed, right? I mean, we've changed the meaning of that word blessed to. If you have a big house and a big bank account and a fast car. You're blessed. That's not what the word meant in the Bible originally, but we've made it this way. So if we're doing okay, then it's like, hey, God's, God's okay with me.

Kris Langham: I think that's the difference between hashtag blessed and actual blessed.

Jonathan Ferguson: Yes, yes. But we use the hashtag blessed on everything. It's like, here's a picture of my breakfast. Blessed. Here's a picture of me doing this fun thing at the beach. Blessed

Ryan McCarter: Blessed should be like hashtag first century blessed.

Jonathan Ferguson: Yeah. Oh yeah. Yeah. There's a big difference between first century blessed and 21st century blessed. So but you know, that's that's what can happen if we have too much wealth. But even when we struggle, if we're in, in, in poverty, it's easy then to assume that either God is not able to help us or that he's unwilling to do so.

It's that classic thing if there's evil in the world, you know, if there's a loving God, he's either not powerful enough or he really doesn't love us. And I think that applies here to this situation. People are like, well, I'm poor. Everything's going wrong for my life. Where's God?

I'd say most of the counseling that I do involves that. Big question: If God really loves me, then why? Why is this happening? If God loves me, why am I losing my job? If God loves me, why is my husband or my wife acting this way? Why am I running out of money?

Kris Langham: But the heart of it, there's the call to just ask for your daily bread.

Jonathan Ferguson: Right. I think it's time that we drop the idea that wealth is the indicator of godliness. There are wealthy people who honor God. There are poor people that can do so as well. But Agur knew his tendency was the tendency of most people that wealth or poverty could lead him away from God. And so he simply asked for his daily bread. And it sounds familiar. Jesus says that exact thing in Matthew chapter six, give us this day our daily bread.

Kris Langham: So we're going to wrap it up with that. We are out of time. Thank you Jonathan. Thank you, Ryan, for joining me here at the table. We will be back here with the women once again in Proverbs chapter 31.

Day 35 | Proverbs 31

A Wife of Noble Character - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Welcome back to Proverbs. Our last day at the Wisdom Roundtable. Chapter 31 is a classic for women's ministry, the wife of noble character. So it seemed only right to invite the women back to the table to discuss this one. My beautiful and noble wife of 21 years, Andrea. Welcome back.

Andrea Langham: So sweet. Glad to be back.

Kris Langham: And our good friend and noble wife to my friend and pastor Geoff Wilson. Bethany Wilson is here again. Welcome back, Bethany.

Bethany Wilson: Thank you.

Kris Langham: Well, it is good to have two moms in the studio because this was in fact written by a mom. It begins the sayings of King Lemuel, an inspired utterance his mother taught him. So the chapter, the grand finale of Proverbs are prophetic words from a mom, an important reminder that several women in the Bible were prophetesses, speaking God's Word to the people, and in this case to a son.

Now we don't know who King Lemuel is. Some say another name for Solomon, but I have my doubts on that one. But no matter. The salient point is this is life advice from God through a mom to a young man with an important destiny to lead a people. Listen, my son. Listen, son of my womb. Listen my son. The answer to my prayers. And from verse ten to the end, we have a poem, each line in Hebrew, beginning with successive letters. Lemuel's Mom wanted him to remember. It begins: a wife of noble character who can find, she is worth far more than rubies.

Now what follows is a powerful description of a good wife. Now I want to make clear what this is and what this isn't. I believe this is still mom talking. And she wants her son to marry well. She wants him to choose wisely and look past charm and beauty and see character and see that a good wife is worth more than all the riches you'll ever work for.

Now what this is not. I don't believe that this is a manifesto for every wife to follow to a tee. The danger of this chapter is presenting this woman as a standard by which a wife can compare and shame herself. In Christ we are not called to a life of shame. So what do you think? How do we avoid reading it that way?

Andrea Langham: Yes, I think it's important that we don't bring our insecurities to this chapter and try to measure up against this woman like we do far too often in our lives, comparing ourselves to others. We've got to approach this by abiding in Christ, confident that our identity is found in him, rather than see here how we fail to measure up. See what God is making us to be. Christ in us, the hope of glory. Hope for who we are becoming.

Bethany Wilson: And we also need to see that this is a portrait of one virtuous woman, not the blueprints for the only virtuous woman. Every woman is different and God honors our individuality. This woman is a role model, not a cookie cutter. And I don't believe that this chapter is an average 24 hours of any human being because it would be impossible.

Kris Langham: It would be impossible. Up early, working late at night. Never stop working and do everything in one day, right? That's not what this is. That's good.

And the first verse that strikes me is verse 11. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. In other words, he trusts her. And how full is the heart of a man who can trust fully in his wife?

And what follows what I see is that a husband's trust empowers a wife. The noble woman in these verses is industrious, hard working, faithful, diligent, compassionate, entrepreneurial. And her husband has full confidence in her. He doesn't second guess. She buys a field. He trusts her.

In the biblical roles for husband and wife, it's essential that we recognize what is biblical mandate and what is tradition and culture. The husband is the head of the wife. A picture of Christ. Ephesians five. But headship does not mean controlling.

It means empowering and headship should not force roles of breadwinner and housewife. That stuff is tradition and it can work well. But every house is different. Men, you are the captain. But the team captain is not always the point guard.

You can trust her with the ball because verse 12 says she brings him good, not harm all the days of her life. If she's a good woman, she is for you. So trust her. Now let's walk through this picture. What do you see about this woman?

Andrea Langham: Well, starting in verse 13, she is hard working and industrious. She buys material, works with it, sells, starts early and provides food for her family.

Kris Langham: Now, I have to acknowledge here that my mom was the breadwinner in our house and she worked hard for years to provide for us. My mom is amazing. And here verse 16 says she considers a field and buys it out of her earnings. She plants a vineyard. Never strikes me because buying a field is a major decision, and her husband trusts her to make that decision on her own and he doesn't undermine her authority.

Bethany Wilson: Right. And in verse 17, she sets about her work vigorously. She's diligent and strong. She trades her goods and she puts her hands to work.

Andrea Langham: And in verse 20, she opens her arms to the poor. She's compassionate and generous. And in 21, when it snows, she has no fear for her household. In other words, she's prepared. A tough winter doesn't scare her. And I think for mom, this is important. When you have a baby, this little fragile, helpless soul entrusted to your care, fear can become overwhelming. There's so many dangers. But in Christ, we are called to be strong and courageous.

Bethany Wilson: Verse 23 says her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. And the city gates was where civic business was handled. And this is I just see this as like the power couple when we're talking about these two. Not because of their wealth or position makes them the power couple, but because they seek to fulfill the roles God has given them, and in turn, they have an honorable testimony to others.

A wife who is diligent and faithful in her God given role makes it easy for her husband to do his job well. When you love someone, you want them to succeed in what the Lord has called them to do. And when you extend that love and grace by ironing a shirt or taking a phone call for your husband, hosting a dinner with a boss, making your home a safe place for your husband to land. At the end of the day, you're helping him succeed.

Kris Langham: I have to add, one of a husband's deepest needs is for his wife to believe in him, to trust him, and respect is the language of that trust. He's respected at home here. He's respected in the city gate.

Now back to the wife. Verse 25 says she is clothed with strength and dignity. She can laugh at the days to come. Now I know my wife loves this verse. So Andrea, what is the strength and how is she clothed with it?

Andrea Langham: So the woman who is clothed in strength and dignity knows that she's not all that, but in Christ she is confident that she is growing and that he is molding her. That is her source of strength. That is her dignity.

She doesn't get caught up in insecurities because she knows that she doesn't have to be more than enough, that she is enough. She who abides in Christ know that she is being conformed into his image and can therefore just let go of her own failings and cheer on those around here who are doing great and have grace with those who are struggling.

Knowing who she is is to me, the definition of dignity. And it's not a dignity that she has to put on to look like she has it all together. But it's a humility and an honesty coupled with love for others. It's having self-confidence while having the confidence of others.

Kris Langham: Verse 26, she speaks with wisdom. Husband, listen to your wife. Faithful instruction. It says she's a good teacher. 27 shows us her authority and responsibility in the household. She watches over the affairs of the house and she's not lazy. And in 28 her children arise and call her blessed her husband also and he praises her.

Men take note. He praises her. Say nice things to your wife and about your wife. She earns it. Don't just feel it. Use words out loud, kids. Same for you. And I can read the next verse wholeheartedly about my bride. Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all. Also, no offense Bethany, I know that Geoff speaks very highly of you.

Bethany Wilson: None taken. But it's true. A woman who is praised by those she serves desires to serve them more. And round and round the energizing cycle goes, serving and encouraging each other.

Kris Lingham: That's a good picture. And then in verse 30, mom wraps it all up for her son to make sure he's looking for the right girl. Charm is deceptive. Those little sparks of chemistry you get, son. Don't get fooled by the magic show. Women can lie and beauty is fleeting. Son, she may be pretty now, but we're talking about a lifetime together. And it doesn't last. But a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

And there is the source of this woman's remarkable wisdom and industry. And so Proverbs ends where it began, the fear of the Lord. For any woman who aspires to be this wife of noble character, this is step one. And for any man who wants to marry her, this is what you look for. The fear of the Lord. And if you find her. Verse 31, honor her for all that her hands have done.

Husband, give your wife credit. Trust her. Empower her. And for goodness sake, honor the work she does and let her works. Bring her praise at the city gate. When you're in town, when you're at church. When someone gives you credit. Acknowledge the woman who made it possible. And while I'm here, this is my city gate. I want to tell the world. A lot of people say nice things about me for through the word, and I appreciate that.

But they don't know about my wife. They don't know the work. The perseverance through the word exists because my wife never gave up on me, never stopped believing in me. Nine side jobs, ten moves living out of suitcases. And she held us together. True story. She schooled our kids, planned our days, and kept life fun.

And I should also say that Bethany is a pretty amazing woman. And I considered reading a note from Geoff or something like that, but I thought it would be weird. So Geoff will have to find his own city gate. And that is it for the book of Proverbs. Thank you ladies for sharing your wisdom. I will see the rest of you in the next book.

Day 36 | Proverbs 31

B-Side: The Courage of Women - Kris & Friends

Kris Langham: Hello friends. Welcome back to Proverbs 31. This is the B side audio. A few excerpts from our discussion that were taken out for the sake of time. This one may be a little choppy than usual, as I had to edit elements out from the middle of our discussion, so I apologize for that, but I am so glad that you are tuning in. I really got a lot out of this chapter and our discussions.

So here it is, jumping in toward the beginning of the chapter before King Lemuel's mother gives him advice about the value of this wife of noble character. She gives him some important instructions on his own character. So let's jump back in at that recording.

Kris Langham: But no matter. The salient point is this is life advice from God through a mom to a young man with an important destiny to lead a people. Listen, my son. Listen, son of my womb. Listen, my son, the answer to my prayers. The terms of endearment here are personal and powerful. So what does Lemmy's mom have to say?

Bethany Wilson: Well, first off, it's a strong warning against the wrong women. Do not spend your strength on the kind of women that ruin kings. Every mom knows that there are women who can ruin their son. So stay away, Jack Wilson, stay away, my son.

Andrea Langham: And next in, verse four is a warning that wine and beer are dangerous for kings and rulers. Her son has responsibility. People will depend on him for justice. He's got to keep his mind focused.

Bethany Wilson: And thirdly, in verse eight, mom reminds him to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for their rights. Basic human rights are foundational to biblical law, to God's law, and rulers are responsible to protect those rights.

Kris Langham: That's good stuff. And there's one more place that we had to edit the audio. I'll back it up just a little bit. To give you context, this one is at verse 20.

Andrea Langham: And in verse 20, she opens her arms to the poor. She's compassionate and generous. And in 21, when it snows, she has no fear for her household. In other words, she's prepared. A tough winter doesn't scare her. And I think for a mom, this is important. When you have a baby, this little fragile, helpless soul entrusted to your care, fear can become overwhelming. There's so many dangers, but in Christ, we are called to be strong and courageous.

Kris Langham: I have to say, strength and courage are usually masculine words, but the strength of women can be astounding. The courage of women. Andrea leads a Bible study at a women's shelter. Me and my kids get to hold babies. We play with the kids. But many of those women left violent men who abused their strength. Many are fighting the chains of addiction and battling back from their own mistakes.

But the fight inside those women, the resilience and determination to keep their kids together, it just amazes me. One of my favorite manhood movies is *The Pursuit of Happiness*. Will Smith, dad who goes through hell and high water to make it work to provide for his son. Because for a parent, there is no quit. But I'm astounded at the weakness of so many men who do quit, and the strength of women who refuse to give up on family. I know it can be the dad or the mom, but the strength that it takes to hold a family together seems to be wired into the hearts of women.

Kris Langham: And that is it for the B-side today. Thanks for tuning in. For the extras. I hope this chapter was enlightening for you as it was for me. For you women.

I hope it was empowering. Encouraging. For my fellow men. I hope it was challenging. If you had a picture in your head of the Christian family, where the man does all the important stuff and the wife cleans up after the mess left behind by his glory? Or if you got the idea that being the head of the family somehow made you more important or more valuable, or gave you the right to command and subject your wife, you got the wrong picture.

Husbands, we are a picture of Jesus and Jesus doesn't treat his bride that way. Don't confuse church culture or tradition with biblical mandate. Read this chapter. Be challenged and learn to value your wife. Honor her and empower her for all that God has called her to. And if you want a chapter for your calling, head to Ephesians five and pay close attention to your calling there, not just hers.

Husbands, we are called to lay down our lives as we lead. And if you want more on marriage, we've got a whole series called love, romance and Marriage right here on Through the Word so you can find more there. Thanks again for joining us in Proverbs. I'll see you in the next book.