**Proverbs Chapter 12 (Lesson #13)**

**28** Additional Proverbs from the Pen of Solomon

As we have discussed, the book of Proverbs is broken into seven different sections:

* **section I** - Chapters 1-9.
* **SECTION II –** This section extends from **10:1** all the way to **22:16**. It is the largest section.

Scholars tell us section II contains **375 proverbs**. So far, we have looked at 62 of those proverbs. Today we look at an additional **(28 proverbs).** Like the proverbs from chapters **10 and 11**, most of the proverbs we will review today are **contrasting statements**.

Here in chapter 12, we find beautiful symmetry. First two equal blocks of 14 verses, where the second block repeats the first block:

Vs 1 The wise person is teachable

Vs 2-13 Contrast proverbs about words and deeds

Vs 14 A non-contrast conclusion

Vs 15 The wise person is teachable

Vs 16-27 Contrast proverbs about words and deeds

Vs 28 A non-contrast conclusion

It seems the focus of Proverbs 12 is our speech and our deeds. The leading point for both subunits is **the righteous are teachable**, while the contrasting point is also true!

***Vs 1 Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.***

To love knowledge, truly love it, also means that you are open and desirous of correction. Many claim to love knowledge, but their hatred of correction indicates differently.

According to Solomon, those who love discipline are the ones who love instruction. Are you and I open to correction from God’s words and our brothers in Christ? **Are we teachable?**

**BUT...** The one who hates correction, Solomon says is “stupid” (brutish, animal like, or foolish). **So much for seeker friendly Proverbs!**

***Vs 2 A good man obtains favor from the LORD, but a man of evil devices he condemns.***

A good man, (one who has placed faith in Jesus Christ and seeks to order his life by God’s word). A good man. Not a perfect man, there was only one of those, but a good man, obtains favor from the Lord.

A good man is favored by Yahweh! A good man is a man who has received God’s grace and is attempting to order his life by God’s Word. That man obtains favor from the Lord.

**BUT...** God condemns those of evil devices. Those who reject Jesus and those who reject God’s word will suffer harm in this life and for those who reject Jesus, even worse in the life to come!

***Vs 3 No one is established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will never be moved.***

Let’s work this one backwards, in spite of the fact that little is fixed and stable in life, the righteous person will never be moved! What a beautiful reminder!

The righteous person is like a tree planted by rivers of water, fixed, unmovable, and unshakable (Ps 1).

But the wicked are not so, they are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand (Ps 1). Opposite to the righteous, the wicked will be destroyed.

***Vs 4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.***

An excellent wife is a **crown to her husband**. **According to co-pilot –** A crown is a symbol that is meant to evoke a sense of awe and respect for those who wear it. It is meant to signify honor and dignity.

A noble woman, a virtuous woman, a woman who has given her life to Christ is a **crown to her husband**. She is an adornment that is meant to signify honor and dignity.

An excellent (virtuous, showing high moral standards) wife honors her husband, she brings glory to her husband.

**BUT...** the one who shames her husband, the one that is more like a crown of thorns than a golden crown, the one who diminishes her husband is metaphorically like **rottenness in the bones**!

Men we must ensure our sons and grandsons understand the importance of choosing an excellent wife to marry!

***Vs 5 The thoughts of the righteous are just; the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.***

What do we think about? Our thoughts indicate our **current condition** and our **likely destination**.

The thoughts of those who are righteous are just (right or fitting). Stated differently, our thoughts indicate who we are at the core. Your inner thought life. Consider (Pr 4:23).

**BUT...** Although a “but” is not used here it is clearly contrasting two things.

The thoughts of the righteous are right and fitting, the thoughts of the wicked are deceitful, false, and deceptive.

There is a problem here, our sin nature, remember (Jer 17:9), but remember (Heb 8:10). **How’s our hearts?**

***Vs 6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, but the mouth of the upright delivers them.***

The words of the wicked are traps, they take captive, they oppress and destroy. They are pictured here by Solomon stealthily lying in wait, to injure, kill, steal, and destroy.

**BUT...** The mouth of the upright delivers them. The mouth of the upright speaks the truth, they share the good news of the gospel, they are a well of flowing water that brings healing. Remember (Pr 18:21).

**Use your words today to deliver those who are taken captive by the lies of the wicked.**

***Vs 7 The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand.***

First, a reminder about a simple reality. The wicked will one day be ultimately overthrown and will suffer separation from God and his grace.

Judgment awaits those who reject the Lord’s Christ (God’s wisdom) and let’s be honest, temporal judgments await those who reject God’s word (ask David).

**BUT...** The house of the righteous will stand. Much these days is said about leaving a legacy.

The legacy you and I should endeavor to leave is an example of following Jesus and obeying His word. That is a house that is built on a rock and will indeed stand!

***Vs 8 A man is commended according to his good sense, but one of twisted mind is despised.***

Solomon says that a man is commended according to his good sense. I think what he is saying is that men are commended, celebrated, praised and sought out due to their good sense, due to wisdom (understanding).

Money may buy you fake friends, but possessing wisdom draws other men who desire to be wise to you!

**BUT...** The one who has a twisted (perverse mind, an evil mind) is despised by those who are seeking wisdom. Possessing wisdom draws men who desire wisdom, while they have no interest in learning from a man with a twisted mind, a perverse man who rejects wisdom.

***Vs 9 Better to be lowly and have a servant than to play the great man and lack bread.***

This is a simple yet profound proverb from the pen of the wisest man (apart from Christ who ever lived).

We live in a world that claims the opposite. The world cries, it is better to look like you possess much. Solomon says the opposite, it is better to look like a pauper and yet have a servant, than to play the great man, and not be able to afford food.

**Image over substance**, that is what Solomon is warning against and instead he reminds us that reality is much more important than image!

***Vs 10 ¶ Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.***

The righteous. Positional righteousness – In Jesus. Practical righteousness – Following the teachings of Jesus.

Whoever is righteous has concern even for the life of his beast, his animals that are under his care and supervision. This proverb argues from the lesser to the greater. If a man is merciful to his animals, how much more will he be to people.

A person who is righteous is a person who is compassionate, gentle, and kind. That compassion filters to all areas of our life. Our wives, friends, children, neighbor, stranger, and even our animals.

**BUT...** With the wicked, even their mercy is cruel, their kindness is harsh, their tenderness is hard and cold.

***Vs 11 ¶ Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense.***

This is one of the major themes of the Proverbs, hard work is blessed by God. The one who rises early, the one who works hard, will have plenty of bread.

This proverb is not dealing with overworking, it is not dealing with the ills of setting work above all other things, but it is reminding us that woven into God’s creation is the wisdom of work.

**BUT...** The one who instead pursues worthless things lacks sense, he will not be blessed, he will not have plenty of bread, indeed he shows a lack of sense, a lack of wisdom. Remember (Pr 18:9; 21:21).

***Vs 12 ¶ Whoever is wicked covets the spoil of evildoers, but the root of the righteous bears fruit.***

The wicked person covets the spoil of evildoers. This is a mark of a person who is wicked at the heart **their desire is for what evil people have earned through their evil deeds**.

The righteous man is repulsed by the spoil of the evil doers, the wicked at heart covet after those spoils and is willing to mimic the behavior to earn them. Remember (Pr 24:1-2).

**BUT...** The righteous bears fruit of peace and joy. We saw this proverb our last time together in Pro 11:30.

***Vs 13 An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous escapes from trouble.***

Here another **common theme in Proverbs**. An evil person will be ensnared by his own wicked lips, (Pro 13:3).

Be careful, our mouth can get us into great trouble. In the proverbs the fool is slow to think and quick to speak, and his lips can ensnare him (Pr 29:20). Remember our memory verse (Pr 10:19).

**BUT...** The righteous escape trouble. Implied but not stated, because they are slow to cast judgment, slow to leap to a decision, not hasty in opening their mouth, instead quick to hear, listen, consider (Jam 1:19-20).

***Vs 14 ¶ From the fruit of his mouth a man is satisfied with good, and the work of a man’s hand comes back to him.***

Men Solomon is reminding us that if we use our mouths for kind, spiritual, and wise words, God will reward us with satisfying honors.

Our mouths can be used to advance God’s kingdom, if so, God will satisfy us with good.

The proverbs say a great deal about the **mouth** (44 times in Proverbs) and the **tongue** (19 times in Proverbs), one example. Consider (Pro 10:31).

**And...** the work of a man’s hand comes back upon him. It is not just our mouths; it is our hands as well. God detests slack hands, but God rewards hands that are diligent. Remember (Pr 10:4).

***Vs 15 ¶ The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.***

Men there is a **well of wisdom in this Proverb.** Every fool is **certain he is right**. Of course he is!

**BUT...** A wise man **seeks advise** (safety in a multitude of counselors) and a wise man **listens to advice**, knowing the foolish reject advice, because they know everything, thus proving they are foolish.

**One commentator said this:** “To crawl out of this cesspool of human pride and rebellion, you must learn to mistrust, criticize, and resent your own thoughts. This is one of the toughest challenges of wisdom, for with powerful instincts and lusts you want to protect and follow your thoughts.”

Wisdom calls us to remain humble and teachable. For a person who is no longer teachable is behaving **as a fool.**

***Vs 16 ¶ The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult.***

As much as an unteachable spirit **marks a fool**, so does a **quick-tempered anger**. Anger and wrath are powerful passions and through the power of the Spirit living within us we must bridle our emotions! Consider (Jam 3:6-8).

**But...** The tongue can show us to be wise, or it can indicate we are yet a fool and apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, it cannot be tamed or bridled.

***Vs 17 ¶ Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit.***

This seems clear enough but look beyond the surface. The one who speaks the truth not only gives honest evidence, (but as the KJV and HCSB) he declares what his right, he shows forth righteousness.

There can be no righteousness that is not founded on the truth. If less than the truth is uttered, then we have muddied righteousness to that same degree.

Speaking the truth is a mark of a righteous man. A man who has imputed righteousness and is attempting to live his life by the word of God.

**BUT...** A false witness utters deceit. In doing so they overthrow righteousness, they attack righteousness. Consider (Pro 12:22).

***Vs 18 ¶ There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.***

Here is another Proverb that we would do well to learn and to learn well.

Our tongue can be like **sword thrusts** wounding and destroying. Words stated in haste, words said in anger, damaging words are as powerful as sword thrusts into the body. **What a graphic picture!**

**BUT...** The tongue of the wise brings **healing.**

When people leave a conversation with us are they **hemorrhaging or healing?** This does not mean we do not speak the truth, but it means we **speak the truth in love**, **seasoned with gentleness**, with the **goal of restoration**. Consider (Pro 18:21).

***Vs 19 Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.***

Let’s reverse the order for impact. A **lying tongue is momentary**. The lie will often be found out, the fraud will often be uncovered, and it will bring with the uncovering humility and dishonor.

Both in this life and possibly in the life to come.

**BUT...** The truth and those who speak the truth endure. You never have to “remember what you said the last time” when you tell the truth, you never have to wonder if your lie has been found out.

God is the essence of truth, He cannot lie; while Satan is the father of lies.

***Vs 20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan peace have joy.***

Here is a Proverb that is only fully understood when the comparison is fully comprehended.

Those whose hearts are filled with evil schemes, as evidenced by their evil plans will not experience joy. Instead, those who devise evil will experience the opposite of joy, pain, misery, and loss. Remember (Pro 10:24).

**BUT,** those who plan and pursue peace will have joy.

Those who imagine evil against others will find it in their own laps, those who plan for peace will find joy in their laps. Remember (Mat 5:9).

***Vs 21 ¶ No ill befalls the righteous, but the wicked are filled with trouble.***

Again, the Proverbs deal with statistics, the most likely outcome. There are exceptions to the rules, but generally speaking...

Evil, ill, trouble or disaster, will not overtake the righteous (faith in Christ, following his word). A principle in this life, a hard cold reality in the next.

**BUT...** The wicked are filled with trouble. To walk in sin is to walk contrary to wisdom and it will result in a life filled with trouble. Consider (Ps 145:20).

***Vs 22 ¶ Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who act faithfully are his delight.***

This is a simple and clear proverb and one that is oft repeated in the Bible, namely **God hates lying, it is an abomination.** Lying according to Solomon **stirs the moral outrage of God!** Remember (Pr 6:16-17a).

**BUT...** those who act faithfully are his delight. As sons of God, he has not withheld anything from us. When we follow the ways of King Jesus, when we are honest and truthful, He takes delight in what we are doing.

He does not love us less, when we act unfaithful, but it can excite the need for discipline, much like it does when our children lie. But God does delight in our paths when we are truthful and honest.

***Vs 23 ¶ A prudent man conceals knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaims folly.***

A prudent man is able to be quiet, he does not always have to speak. A wise man is one (empowered by the Holy Spirit) who is able to bridle his tongue.

Solomon has said much about a wise man being able to restrain his words until the right time. Consider (Pr 29:11).

**BUT...** the heart of the fool pours forth folly. From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, and the mouth of a fool never shuts. Consider (Pr 15:28).

One of you provided me with this enlightening comparison. We have been given one mouth and two ears. Equally, our mouth we can shut, but we cannot shut our two ears. A great lesson there in our design!

***Vs 24 The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor.***

**This proverb reminds us that hard work in the end, works!** God blesses hard work; this principle is woven into God’s good creation.

Talent, skill, learning, and diligence create an unstoppable force, but remove diligence and you have removed God’s blessing and God’s success.

This proverb does not address an out of balance approach to work but rather focuses on the need to be diligent in all that we pursue. Diligence can make up for shortfalls in talent, learning, and skill.

The hand of the diligent will rule!

**BUT...** The slothful (lazy), the one who disdains hard work, he refuses to push himself, he will end up oppressed and a servant to others. The slothful rarely rise to be in charge but instead sink to be ruled over. Consider (Pr 10:4; 19:15).

***Vs 25 Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.***

Anxiety, fear, heaviness, worry, or sorrow, **weighs a man down**. This is absolutely true and requires little commentary. We have all been there.

**BUT...** A good word makes him glad. Here is wisdom, you and I should be **ambassadors of good words.** We do not have to find the flaw in everything we see, look for what is good, wholesome, loving and right, focus our comments on those things, especially in the community of faith!

The mouth, which can be the source of vile statements, can and rather should be the source of living water that makes glad hearts!

***Vs 26 One who is righteous is a guide to his neighbor, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.***

All men may be created equal, **but all men are not equal**. The righteous man is a **guide to his neighbor**, the righteous guides his neighbors into a relationship with God through Christ, thus guiding them to eternal life.

The righteous man is a blessing to his neighbor.

**BUT...** the way of the wicked leads a man’s neighbors astray. The worldly man pursuing worldly things will whether on purpose or unintentionally lead his neighbors in the same worthless pursuits.

**May you and I be guides to eternal life to our neighbors!**

***Vs 27 Whoever is slothful will not roast his game, but the diligent man will get precious wealth.***

The slothful man is the lazy man, he starts many projects and finishes few. Ultimately the slothful man will not roast his game.

The analogy is of a hunter, who goes out with the ultimate goal of having dinner. The slothful will not enjoy the fruits of his labor for he will quit along the way.

**BUT...** The diligent man, the persevering man, the man who pushes through trials and difficulties, the diligent man will obtain what he is seeking, in this case wealth, in the above case he will enjoy the dinner. Consider (Pr 13:4).

**Men may we be diligent in all our pursuits.**

***Vs 28 In the path of righteousness is life, and in its pathway there is no death.***

Two proverbs back, we were told that the righteous is a guide to his neighbor, here we are told the path of the righteous leads to life. This is doubly true. First, it leads to abundant life in this life, but it also leads to eternal life in the next life.

**AND...** in the path of righteousness there is no death. Possessing the righteousness of Christ is certainty of the ultimate defeat of death in our lives! Remember (Joh 5:24).

**Men we end here, pursue life, eternal life that is found only in Jesus!**