**Proverbs Chapter 11 (Lesson #12)**

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

As we have discussed, the book of Proverbs is broken into Seven different sections.

We have finished **section I** chapters 1-9, two months ago and we have started our journey in **SECTION II,** this is the largest section of the Proverbs and extends from **10:1** all the way to **22:16**. So it is a little longer than Section I.

Scholars tell us that it contains **375 proverbs**. Our last time together we looked at **1-31** of the 375 proverbs in this section, today we will look at 32-62 **(31 additional proverbs).**

**As we discussed our last time together, there is a great deal of wisdom in these 13 chapters that make up SECTION II.**

Like the first 31 proverbs from chapter 10, most of the proverbs we will review today are **contrasting statements**.

As we discussed, at times the Proverbs can seem haphazard and simply thrown together. But, nothing could be further from the truth, there is always form and there is always a driving theme or themes.

Today, the focus is righteousness a biblical word that means right relationships. Today Solomon will build the case, mostly through contrasting statements that our **actions** and our **relationships** matter. You will see the word **but**, over and over. The wise do this, but the fool does that.

Like chapter 10 although each proverb stands alone we will find clusters that explore the same idea.

Pay particular attention to the things we should hold back and the things we should openly share.

I know we all know this, but I need to say it afresh. No one is saved because of good behavior. We have all broken God’s laws, we are all guilty before God and we cannot **good works our way out of that problem**. We are saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work at Calvary.

But, having been saved, God has expectations for our conduct.

Finally we are going to spend about a minute on each of these proverbs, just scratching the surface for each is a treasure chest worthy of our meditation.

**OK Ready?**

**WELL BEING THROUGH OUR ACTIONS (11:1-8):**

**11:1 ¶ A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is his delight.**

Before the standardization of weights and measures, the merchants themselves were expected to maintain the standards. Most food products were purchased by weight, so accurate measurements were critical.

Solomon writes that a false balance, slicing a little of the top for yourself is an **“abomination” to the Lord**. The word abomination brings with it the idea of hatred and disgust, it is something that **excites God’s moral outrage**. Shaving a little off the top for ourselves, regardless of where or why we do it, does not please our Father.

**BUT**, the juxtaposition: A just weight, fair treatment, honest activity, fair balances are his delight.

**The Lord takes delight in our honesty and fairness.**

**Vs 2 ¶ When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.**

Pride distorts our view of reality and our decision-making ability. It is an **unrealistic and exaggerated opinion of oneself**. It takes God of the throne of our heart and places self on the throne.

Pride is worse than a **character flaw**, it leads to foolish choices that bring, as Solomon says, **disgrace**. Pride comes with the warning that it will **ruin us** in a **most disgraceful way**.

Pride has a **wicked inseparable twin** called **disgrace**.

**BUT,** with **humility** is **wisdom which in turn leads to eternal life**.

James said it this way: “**6b** "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." **7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (Jas 4:6-7 ESV)

One author wrote this about 11:2: “Do you grasp the importance of this lesson? You will never hear or read a more important warning for your life. Pride will destroy you, but it will destroy you disgracefully and shamefully before all men. Humility will lift you up before both God and good men.”

**Here we find two proverbial couplets (vs 3-4) and (vs 5-6).**

**Vs 3 ¶ The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.**

To live by integrity seems to be to live by sincerity of heart and intention, to live by truthfulness, to live by uprightness. It is a plural word in the Hebrew.

The desire to live in a truthful and upright way is a guide to those who choose that path.

It is a **guide** that leads in a **clear direction**, it is a guide that puts one on a path of no regrets, it is a guide that leads to life. **When you and I choose what is right, we never need look back over our shoulder.**

**BUT,** the crookedness, the perversity, the crooked dealings of the treacherous, destroys them. It brings them to ruin.

When we follow the teaching of Jesus we are **living a life of integrity** and we when turn from those we are turning to a life of crookedness and **Solomon warns of the destination of that path! It destroys them!**

**Vs 4 ¶ Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.**

Money in this life might buy the jury and the judge. But, no amount of money or riches can delay, derail, or in any way help a man avoid the **“day of wrath.”**

Paul was crystal clear: “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...” We can do so washed in the blood of Christ or covered in the stain of our own sins; the choice is ours.

Riches will not profit on that day!

**BUT,** righteousness delivers from death. The only righteousness that can deliver from death must be perfect and it must be alien (not coming from or residing with us), for we have all sinned (Rom 3:23).

But Paul said right before that declaration: “21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it —  22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:” (Ro 3:21-22 ESV)

God’s righteousness is the righteousness that ultimately delivers from eternal death.

**Vs 5 ¶ The righteousness of the blameless keeps his way straight, but the wicked falls by his own wickedness.**

The uprightness of the blameless keeps them on a straight path.

How is a **man made righteous**? To use proverbs language, the **fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom**, to bring that into the new testament and man becomes righteous by placing faith in Jesus.

**But there is more in living isn’t there?**

Life can be like a mind field, we can stumble aimlessly through the field, or we can allow the word of God the source of moral and ethical rightness, **to keep our path straight and safe**.

**BUT**, the wicked, those who reject God’s wisdom fall by their own folly, they are **destroyed by their own wickedness**.

The wicked will have no one to blame but themselves for their own utter and final ruin. Solomon has been making this point over and over.

**Vs 6 The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the treacherous are taken captive by their lust.**

First, we were told the righteousness of the upright keeps them on the right path, now we are told it also **delivers them**. Do not let the slight alteration of the idea and associated repetition go to waste.

God is highlighting this point, God is putting an exclamation mark on this point. Our choices matter, choose wisely, choose wisdom. Both the wisdom of God (Jesus) and God’s wisdom (His Word).

**BUT,** the **treacherous**, the wicked, those who reject God’s wisdom and refuse to in any way attempt to bridle their lusts, will be **taken captive by those same lusts!**

**Darkness in all its forms blinds as it binds.**

**Vs 7 ¶ When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too.**

In the midst of these **antithetical proverbs** is a **synonymous proverb**.

This is a simple yet profound fact. The sinner while living might have been having great fun with a future of expectations, plans, dreams, and schemes set before him, but with the unrepentant sinner’s death is also the death of all future hope, all future joy, all future planned expectations.

**AND,** this is the first proverb that is not a juxtaposition, not a comparison. **AND!**

**Death steals away all future hope** for the wicked (including wealth). The sinner cannot take his wealth to the grave.

When the wicked die, all connections with what riches can accomplish PERISH!

**Vs 8 ¶ The righteous is delivered from trouble, and the wicked walks into it instead.**

There is a reward for the man who lives righteously, both in this life and in the life to come.

A man who walks in wisdom is delivered from many a trouble. For the righteous God has not promised a trouble-free life, but He has promised that He will deliver them from that trouble!

“I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.” (Ps 34:4 ESV)

**AND,** although and is used Solomon is **contrasting two points**, and the **contrast is very surprising**.

The righteous is delivered from trouble and seemingly at the same time, **the wicked walks into it instead (the implication is instead of the righteous).**

**This is the divine reversal!** The righteous find themselves in trouble and God delivers them while the wicked find can find themselves in a smooth place and God switches their outcomes and leaves the wicked in destruction.

Think of the wicked men who conspired against Daniel to have him thrown in the lion’s den, only in the end to end up in that very lion’s den, but unprotected by the sovereign God!

**SECURITY FROM DESTRUCTIVE SPEECH THROUGH KNOWLEDGE (11:9-15):**

**Vs 9 ¶ With his mouth the godless man would destroy his neighbor, but by knowledge the righteous are delivered.**

The wicked, lead others to wickedness. They deceive with their mouths by leading their neighbors into sin.

**BUT,** by knowledge, the righteous are delivered. The knowledge that delivers is knowing Jesus and knowing God’s words. These are the things that deliver the righteous!

As we place ourselves under the wisdom of Solomon we are being presented with knowledge that can deliver us from destruction!

**It appears that vs 10-11 form a couplet.**

**Vs 10 ¶ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish there are shouts of gladness.**

Favoring the cause of the righteous, causes a city, state, or nation to rejoice. Righteous and fair laws lead to a citizenry that rejoices.

Consider how much Egypt rejoiced to have Jospeh as its ruler. Enacting laws that are righteous and fair brings rejoicing.

**AND,** here a synonymous proverb around joy. A very surprising yet true connection.

AND, when the wicked perish there are shouts of joy. When the Pharoah of the Exodus died Israel danced on the banks of the Red Sea. When Hitler was found dead, the world rejoiced.

We should pray that men who do not know God would turn to God. We should thank God when He removes evil from our midst. For: “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” (Ro 12:19b ESV)

**Vs 11 By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is overthrown.**

You and I can bless Yulee and Fernandina more than elected officials. Our prayers are more influential than Town Meetings. That is not to say we should not engage in the political process, that is to say is the most important thing we can do for our city, state and nation is pray. The blessings of the upright exalt cities.

**BUT,** there is the juxtaposition.

The mouth of the wicked, is its overthrow. The Hebrew word literally means to **tear down**. By the mouth of wicked leadership is a city torn down and destroyed.

“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Pr 14:34 ESV)

**It appears that vs 12-13 form a couplet.**

**Vs 12 ¶ Whoever belittles his neighbor lacks sense, but a man of understanding remains silent.**

A man who is critical, negative, and insulting to his neighbor is a man who lacks wisdom, he lacks a heart or understanding. Our mouth which exposes our heart, can show a lack of understanding.

**BUT,** a man of understanding or discernment keeps quiet.

Wise men should quickly be moved to pity and or prayer prior to contempt and scorn of their neighbors.

Speech is one of the most certain elements of wisdom or a lack of wisdom. Being slow to speak and careful as to what we speak are both signs of wisdom.

 **Vs 13 Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing covered.**

The slander is a revealer of secrets.

BUT, a faithful man is able to keep silent, to keep things covered.

Gossiping is a sin, silence is a mark of a man who is faithful.

**Vs 14 ¶ Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.**

Most good decisions are made through council of the wise. Decisions made in a vacuum often lead to disaster or a Solomon says results in the fall of people.

**BUT,** in an abundance of wise counselors, those who possess Hokema, biblical wisdom there is safety!

Wisdom would tell us that the larger the decision the more counselors we should involve

**Vs 15 ¶ Whoever puts up security for a stranger will surely suffer harm, but he who hates striking hands in pledge is secure.**

To put up security for a stranger is to guarantee the performance or action of a person you do not know through some financial obligation. To cosign for others, particularly those we really do not know well, is risky business that can cost us. Solomon warns of this behavior multiple times in the Proverbs. This type of risk can bring future pain, for the one who does it will SURELY suffer hard.

BUT, the one who hates striking hands in pledge is secure. The wise avoid putting up security for others understanding the risk. If we are going to cosign for another’s debt we should do so only after a great amount of prayer and **biblical counselors!**

**Benevolence and community (11:16-22):**

**Vs 16 ¶ A gracious woman gets honor, and violent men get riches.**

Here a simple rule for women and for men.

A gracious woman gets honor. Graciousness brings honor, it really is that simple.

**AND,** While the gracious woman finds honor. The Hebrew word translated “violent” is a word that means terror striking, it is a man of strength. It is a man who is mighty.

A violent man will get temporary wealth. As a gracious woman is tenuous with her honor, the strong man will amass, as lest temporary riches.

**“Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.” (Pr 11:28 ESV)**

**Vs 17 ¶ A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself.**

A kind and merciful man, who focuses on others, finds in the end Yahweh returns it upon his own head. In being kind in merciful to others, we not only bless those around us, but Yahweh returns those blessings upon our own heads.

We do not bless to be blessed, but when we focus on blessing others, Yahweh focuses on blessing us.

**BUT,** a man who is cruel to other will find in the end he is delivering harm to himself.

**HERE men is a proverb we must live by. Live a live to be a blessing to others and leave the ultimate outcome to God.**

**Vs 18 ¶ The wicked earns deceptive wages, but one who sows righteousness gets a sure reward.**

The wicked cheat themselves. They labor for that which perishes, thus their wages are deceptive. They labor for something only to find once they receive it only emptiness and vanity. Equally, the man who works himself to death, seldom finds happiness.

**BUT,** the one who sows righteousness gets a sure reward! The one who sows righteousness will one day see a sure and bountiful reward.

“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.” (Ga 6:9 ESV)

**Vs 19 ¶ Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will live, but he who pursues evil will die.**

Living a life that glorifies God, one who is steadfast in the pursuit of righteousness (found in Christ) and Hokema (found in God’s word) will live.
Both an abundant life in this life and eternal life in the next.

What a promise, for those who pursue God!

**BUT,** the one who pursues evil will die.

Sin may bring pleasures for the moment, but ultimately all it has to offer is death (eternal death).

This proverb is an echo of Psalm 1.

**Vs 20 ¶ Those of crooked heart are an abomination to the LORD, but those of blameless ways are his delight.**

A person who has a crooked heart is an abomination to Yahweh! So what is a crooked heart? The Hebrew word **means twisted, distorted, perverse** or **perverted**.

The man with a crooked heart thinks perverse things and ultimately acts on those perverse thoughts. The man with a crooked heart is an evil man and thus an abomination to Yahweh.

“The face of the LORD is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth.” (Ps 34:16 ESV)

**BUT,** those who are the opposite of crooked, the opposite of perverse, the opposite of distorted, the righteous, the humble, those who have given their life to Christ and are committed to living life by God’s wisdom, those are Yahweh’s delight.

God’s eyes are upon those who fear him (Ps 33:18) He withhold no good thing from them (Ps 84:11), Yahweh delights in them!

**Vs 21 ¶ Be assured, an evil person will not go unpunished, but the offspring of the righteous will be delivered.**

This is as clear as it gets, Solomon says, rest assured, an evil person, (one who rejects God and His Word) will not go unpunished. There will be a payday for the wicked.

**BUT,** the offspring of the righteous will be delivered. God will deliver those who have imputed righteousness and their families.

Our **decision to follow Jesus** and our **daily choices matter**, they not only affect us, but they affect our children and our grandchildren! **They are watching!**

**Vs 22 ¶ Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout is a beautiful woman without discretion.**

What a bizarre picture! A big stinking pig with a gold ring in its snout! As bizarre a picture that someone would put a gold-ring in the nose of a big dirty pig.

That picture is like a beautiful woman without discretion. A beautiful who lacks discretion or judgment. Discretion is part of wisdom, the power to judge rightly and well as right understanding and discernment. A beautiful woman who lacks discretion is like a pig with a golden ring.

We live in a culture that is completely obsessed with the outward beauty. Solomon warns his sons and grandsons to pay attention to the **inner character!**

**desire and paraxoxical fulfillment (11:23-27):**

**Vs 23 ¶ The desire of the righteous ends only in good; the expectation of the wicked in wrath.**

The desire of the righteous is here compared to the expectation of the wicked.

Like many of Solomon’s proverbs the full proverb helps shed light on each half.

The desire of righteous man (and we have defined righteous) ends in good, his expectations of future bliss in Yahweh will be fully realized.

**BUT,** this is another juxtaposition, but the desires of the wicked, the hopes expectations of the wicked will end in wrath!

Solomon said it this way earlier: “When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too.” (Pr 11:7 ESV)

**Vs 24 ¶ One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.**

**This is the math of God’s economy, generosity pays**. The tight fisted man in God’s economy ends up poorer than the open-handed man.

Giving of our wealth for the good of men and the expansion of the Kingdom will cause our riches to increase.

**BUT,** withholding “what we should give” only brings poverty.

Many times I have heard people say I know I should give more, but I just to do not have it to give. I would encourage us when we find ourselves there to simply ask ourselves are we withholding what we should be giving.

One commentator said this: Every time there is an opportunity to give to God, to the poor, or to compensate someone working for you, give more than average, more than normal, more than you would have given without this proverb.

**Vs 25 ¶ Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.**

Here it is again, **this is the math of God’s economy, generosity pays.**

If we give liberally to the poor, and to the work of the Kingdom, we will be blessed.

If we water, a metaphor for giving money to the poor and kingdom work, we will be watered!

**Vs 26 ¶ The people curse him who holds back grain, but a blessing is on the head of him who sells it.**

The people curse the one who holds back what should be given.

To hold back grain for more gain, when we should be selling causes other people to curse us.

**BUT,** a blessing is upon the head of the one who sells.

Gain at the expense of others is always wrong: “Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.” (Pr 1:19 ESV)

**Vs 27 ¶ Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor, but evil comes to him who searches for it.**

Diligently implies doing something with and in spite of difficulty. What are we really seeking. Are we seeking to do good and help our fellow man, even when it is difficult, then we have the promise of the favor of God.

**BUT,** if we are diligently searching for evil, we can rest assured we are likely to find it!

We could create our own proverb, be careful what you are searching for, there is a great likelihood you will find it in your own lap.

**certain gain or loss (11:28-31):**

**Vs 28 ¶ Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.**

If we put our trust in riches, in money, it will fall, we will find calamity in the end. Riches cannot protect us nor in the end prosper us. It is possible to create the illusion of prosperity, but that illusion will one day come crashing down!

**BUT,** the righteous and as implied by this proverb those who seek righteousness as defined by God, first in His Son and second in His word, they will flourish.

Trusting in money brings no promise of flourishing, but trusting in Christ and His Word has not only the promises of in this life, but in the life to come!

As you consider this Proverb about trusting in riches, I would remind you it was written by the most materially wealthy person the ancient world knew, King Solomon.

**Vs 29 ¶ Whoever troubles his own household will inherit the wind, and the fool will be servant to the wise of heart.**

This is a serious proverb and one we would do well to meditate on. Whoever troubles his house will inherit the wind.

Men there is a laundry list of ways we can trouble our own homes. Time would not permit me to cover them all (pornography, sexual relationships outside of the marriage bed, overbearing leadership, love of money, ignoring God’s word, etc.

Those who would foolishly trouble their own homes, will inherit the wind. **We might say God will blow it all away!** In the end you have an empty hand of air.

**AND,**

The fool will be servant to the wise of heart. Troubling your own house has steep consequences and that person may in the end find themselves a servant to the wise of heart, those who possess wisdom.

**Vs 30 ¶ The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and whoever captures souls is wise.**

A good life, a life that pursues righteousness (both in Christ and His word) is a **tree of life to others**. A live well lived (for the glory of God and the good of others) is a **tree of life to others**.

A righteous man has a positive effect on those around him.

**AND,** the one focused on capturing souls is **חכם (chakam)** wise!

In these two clauses Solomon is saying, first a good life, is a tree of life to others, and the one who captures (wins) souls is wise!

We win souls by sharing the gospel and praying for the Spirit to call men out of darkness into God’s marvelous light!

**Vs 31 ¶ If the righteous is repaid on earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!” (Pr 11:1-31 ESV)**

The full meaning does not become evident until the full Proverb is considered.

For the believer your eternal reward is heaven or hell. It is eternity with God enjoying Him, or eternity away from Gud under His wrath.

But, it is also true that **righteousness comes with benefits in this life**. That is a point made throughout the Bible:

“Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” (Ps 37:4 ESV)

If that is so, that the righteous do receive good things here on earth, then it only seems to reason that the opposite will be true for the wicked and the sinner, they too will be repaid on earth, or as Solomon says: **how much more for them!**