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Chapter 1 – Affections Have Consequences

Realizing What is at Stake (vs.24-27)

Proverbs 1:24-27: “Because I called and you refused,
I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention;

And you neglected all my counsel
And did not want my reproof;

I will also laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your dread comes,

When your dread comes like a storm
And your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
When distress and anguish come upon you.”

Well, no doubt there's a necessity to listen within this particular passage, and there really is a call to the naive in particular; that is to say, the simple ones; the ones that, according to Proverbs 14, believe everything. He's talking to his son. It's an interesting picture, as the king is preparing his son to reign wisely. So, this is a book of proverbs that in many respects is the superior way of thinking. God has called us to be children of God. Imagine that. We're actually called to be children of God. We should be thinking differently. As Peter would so aptly put it, keep your behavior excellent in everything that you do, because we represent an excellent God. Unfortunately, our perception is that we can act any way we want to just because we've been saved by grace, and yet nothing can be further from the truth.

In fact, the way that it's put in Hebrews 2 is “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” God has certainly called us to a great position.

He says in Hebrews 1, “for which of the Angels did he ever call ‘son’?” So, God has given us this wonderful privilege and He is calling us to a higher standard, a higher way of living. Unfortunately, the things of the world oftentimes creep in and tell us that certain things are important, which are really not.

The question is what are you drawn to? What is it that you love? Because what you're drawn to and what you love, the affections that you have, will begin to delegate what you'll believe. This

will be fundamental and one of the points of the Gospel of John and really, throughout all of Scripture.

As we see in 1 Kings 11, one of the things that Solomon was drawn to were other women. There were about 500 that he was drawn to. So, I guess we could say he's not really picky, but obviously, he might perceive it a different way. One of the statements that he'll make within the book of Proverbs is "rejoice in the wife of your youth." Unfortunately, he did not heed that because he had other affections.

So, as we come into the book of Proverbs, what you're going to have calling and beckoning the young man are two different women, personified, as you have the things of the essential cravings of the world, the selfish desires of man that are beckoning him; on the other side, you have wisdom calling. The passage will begin to define wisdom as "she," and she will begin to call the young man to honorable positions, to the things that are right.

As we oftentimes read in Philippians 4, "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely," think on these things. We have a proclivity and nature at the very beginning of our life to want the desires of our flesh. Those things call us. They are attractive. It shines, it sparkles, and like in the Garden of Eden, the woman sees the tree and she says, "This is beautiful," and we're drawn by the senses. Scripture is telling us not everything that sparkles is gold. So, the things that are calling us, we have to relearn. We don't think right.

As Proverbs will say in chapters 14, 16 and other places, "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

Man has his own ideas and own ways of thinking.

As you come into the book of Judges, it says every man did what was right in his own eyes. Well, if you've ever read the book of Judges, you'd go, "Well, that's a mess when everybody does what is right in their own eyes." Basically, that's what we see in the world. I mean, why are there wars? Why are there problems that we see ensuing? I would say that it's because everybody's doing what's right in their own eyes. I mean, that brings mass hysteria, confusion, all kinds of wars, and that's why we have these things. If we would submit to what we understand to be and believe to be and know to be the absolute truth; that is God's way of thinking. But of course, Isaiah 55 says our ways are not His ways. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, are His ways greater than ours. The fundamental point is we don't think like God; we think like us. As parents, I think in some way we understand this process because as a child was born, you don't have to teach a child to be selfish. You don't have to teach a child to lie or steal. They kind of do that on their own. The things that you need to teach them are to think differently, to be unselfish, and to think of others. This is one of the reasons why Paul

would write in the book of Timothy, “Look, Timothy, the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith.”

Now here again, when a child is born, they're not naturally thinking of “What can I do for others?” They start off thinking, “It's all about me,” and I've never seen a child that really wasn't fundamentally egocentric in everything that they're doing. You have to teach them to think of others.

In fact, as we read in 1 Corinthians 13, “love does not seek its own” is one of the definitions of love. So, the goal of a parent, I would think, I would hope, is to teach their children to think of others, and to care for others. Now, initially that is not comfortable, and it's not something that has, I would say, immediate gratification to it, but the question is “What is it you have an affection for?” Is it for love or is it for immediate gratification? So, these two women are beckoning, and it is throughout the book of Proverbs that we see this call happening.

There's an interesting passage in Romans 1 where Paul is conveying to the church that God's truth is obvious. However, we don't immediately gravitate towards it, not because it's not obvious, but because it's not what we want. So, you have two things in the room, something that you want and something that you don't. Where are your eyes going to be focused?

(Romans 1:18) “For the wrath of God is revealed...”

That's actually where we get the word “*apokalyptō*,” “apocalypse.” What is the unveiling?

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”

Now, the fundamental point is that in order for you to not see the truth, you actually have to work at it. You have to suppress it because the truth is obvious. Is it better to be kind than to be selfish? Let me think that one out. Yeah, you have to suppress what you know to be true in order to follow our own selfish desires. So, God has made it evident to you. You go, “How has He made it evident?”

Well, one of the statements that he makes in Romans 2 is that God shows in the heart of man.

(Romans 2:15) “in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness...”

The point of the matter is, as he says in Romans 2:15, that God has given you a conscience. You know what's right and what's wrong. I mean, even a child has a sense of “Maybe I better not do that while they're looking,” and that's a conscious kicking in. It's not necessarily that the kid has the ability to read through the Ten Commandments at this particular juncture, but that the kid does know that this is wrong.

The point is in Romans 1:19, “because that which is known about God is evident within them...”

We have this sense of right and wrong that is from God. That's evident within us, and God has not created us without bearing witness of Himself. These things are evident. In fact, you can go to almost any society of the world, and they would fundamentally agree on basic points. “It's wrong to steal,” “you shouldn't covet,” and “you shouldn't murder.” They're going to agree with the same things. They would say to you, “It's wrong to do those things,” for God made it evident to them.

(Romans 1:20) “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen...”

“I don't know if God is great.” Go outside and look at the stars. How is it that this planet seems to revolve in just the right spot? How fortuitous is that? How lucky we are. So, the point of the matter is that God has orchestrated all these things. The evidence of God's orchestration is seen. It's “Self-evident” is the point, if you look in verse 19, “evident to them.”

(Romans 1:20) “... being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

Now, man suppresses the truth. Then he goes out there, and he tries to dissect creation. He goes, “I think I know how this was made,” and I'm going, “You weren't even around. How could you know how something was made?” It's like an artist coming in and you looking at the painting and say, “I know how this was painted.” How do you know how it was painted? How do you know the strokes? How do you know? You weren't the creator of this. We try to figure it out and we try to be the expert without God. Well, in order to deny God, you have to suppress His existence.

The point of the matter is all these things “have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.”

(Romans 1:21) For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

(Romans 1:22) Professing to be wise, they became fools.”

So, that fundamentally is the problem that we're dealing with in the book of Proverbs. There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof his death. “I think I got this. I think I know what life is about.” I don't think you do because you're coming from a perspective of selfishness and self-gratification. You've been longing for the wrong thing. So, the purpose of Scripture is to get us to think the right way, to have the right affections. As you begin to desire the right things, as you begin to fear God, and see the awe of who He is and the wisdom of God

clearly above yours (His ways are higher than yours), then you begin to submit to His ways even though you can't completely understand.

That's why when you come to Proverbs 3:5-6, "...do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

So, like a child, you have this individual that is naive and thinking that maybe they run the world, and they know how to do everything. You as a parent, are coming into their life and you go, "Let me direct you on what you should be doing, what you should be thinking, but more than that, what you should be loving. We want you to love caring for somebody else. We want you to love unselfishness. We want you to think about your brother, your sister, and not yourself." We're training them to think differently. Training is not always an easy thing, nor is it always an acceptable thing to those that are being trained by it.

The way that it's put in Hebrews 12 is that all discipline seems not to be joyful on the occasion, but the end result brings peace and righteousness. So, we're looking at the end result.

As you come into the book of Proverbs, we have these two women calling. Of course, the immediate gratification, which is very alluring, and then the woman of wisdom going, "Yes, but we'll pay off in the long run."

Today, we're largely going to be looking at Proverbs 1:24-27. We're going to be emphasizing the call of wisdom, and how she beckons. Unfortunately, man doesn't like being told what to do. So, it is in the process of somebody teaching us that we oftentimes reject and refuse. As we come to the end of this particular chapter, we see that there's a necessity to have the right affections, but there are also consequences to the affections that we have. If you love the wrong things, you'll pursue the wrong things, you'll deny all the evidence and truth that there is. You'll suppress that for the sake of getting what you want. Don't think for one moment that there aren't consequences. So, as we go into this particular section, we're going to be seeing the consequences of this. Not only that, but the word that we oftentimes use that is connected to consequences is "ramifications." Now, the reason why we use that word is because "ramifications" really describes the outgrowth of the consequences. In other words, there are things that happen as a consequence of doing something wrong, but then there are things that grow out of that, that you never would have seen and the ramifications or the things, or the outgrowth of it, continue on in your life. It would be one thing if it's just a punctiliar consequence, a moment in time. No, no, there are ramifications that come into play, and this is one of the things that the passage is telling us. This is also one of the reasons why we want to listen to the word of God rather than our own understanding.

(Proverbs 1:24) "Because I called and you refused..."

Once again, “wisdom is calling in the streets” is one of the statements that is made in Proverbs 1:20, “Wisdom shouts in the street, She lifts her voice...”

“I didn't hear her.” The heavens declare the glory of God. How could you say that you didn't hear? It's all over the place. He speaks to us everywhere.

“Because I called you...” Now, there's a clear beckoning within the passage. The interesting word that is used here is “you refused.” We used the English word “recusant,” which makes an interesting perspective of this in the sense that we were rebellious to any authority. There's a sense of “I don't want somebody telling me what to do;” unwilling to submit to authority, and it goes into the realm of even promises or vows that we may have made. We go, “You know what? I just don't feel like keeping those. I just don't feel like following the terms of the commitments that are made.” So, the point is that there's a sense of this rebelliousness, and “I don't want somebody telling me what to do.”

“Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention.”

The word for “stretched out” in the Hebrew, *“nāṭâ,”* makes a reference to “inclining.” Once again, it's an interesting picture of wisdom inclining us, calling us, beckoning us, stretching out to us. You have this interesting picture of stretching out the hands and the heart as well. When you think of the example that Paul gives of Timothy's mother and his grandmother, he goes, “I know the things that you learned from them were things of sincerity and genuineness,” and he says, “I know that this will keep you.” The point is that Timothy felt this sense of inclining and drawing to themselves that there was a love relationship. There was a tie that binds; the tie that binds went beyond the allurements of the world. “There's somebody that loves me and is calling me.” So, the picture here is of wisdom stretching out, and inclining towards us.

It's used again in Proverbs 5:13. In which the regret of the young man is being conveyed within this particular chapter, and he cries out in verse 13,

“I have not listened to the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!”

In other words, “Wisdom was wanting to embrace me. I refused the embrace. I would not embrace back.” It's really a sad picture.

It's interesting that the same word *“nāṭâ”* is used again in Proverbs 7:21. It reads of the wiles of the harlot, as she calls to the young man. Once again, it's the picture of the things of the world.

(Proverbs 7:21) “With her many persuasions she entices him...”

That's the same word *“nāṭâ”* meaning inclining or stretching out.

“... With her flattering lips she seduces him.”

Once again, two women reaching out, “You refused mine, and you went for her?” Proverbs has given this very graphic picture within the passage.

“Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention.”

(Proverbs 1:24) The word “*qāšab*” there for “paid attention.” It was interesting, we were out West, and we had a lot of deer on the mountain side. At one of the places we were staying, there was a rushing river between us and on the other side we could see the deer on the landscape. I went out onto the porch, and all of a sudden, I saw the deer perk up.

Now, I'm thinking that with all the noise of the water rushing, there's no way they could hear me.” They were a good distance away, and I'm going, “I don't think they even see me, but maybe they did because their ears perked up, and that's the word that's used within the passage. The point of the text is that there was no sense of “maybe what they're saying has not only a truth to it but is something that will preserve me from danger.” See, it's one of the reasons why the animals will perk up their ears. They're always looking for something because they know that they're in a world of hostility, and they know that if in fact they're not attuned to the issues of the world, that it could easily overtake them. So, they're very much attuned to everything to hear. The point of the matter is we stop listening; we stop caring. Our thought is that they don't really have to. There's not a problem. “There's no danger that's going to take me by surprise.” That's just not true. You stopped listening. You stopped paying attention.

(Proverbs 1:25) “And you neglected all my counsel...”

When we look at this, we see that two words are going to be used for neglect. One is council, and if you look at the next within the passage in verse 25,

“And did not want my reproof.”

Once again, to two sides of the coin as you go back to Proverbs 1:8.

(Proverbs 1:8) “Hear, my son, your father's instruction And do not forsake your mother's teaching.”

Once again, the two sides of instruction, one more pedagogical in the sense of instructional; that is to say that it gives the picture of the mother teaching the Torah, the Law, sitting down with lessons and going, “Ok, here's the lesson plan for today.” Then, the father goes, “Ok, straighten up” and him giving the discipline. So, the reproof would be the father and the counseling would be largely the mother. Here again, obviously both will do, but the emphasis is going to be on that. The passage describes a sense of neglecting counsel. Here again, the graphic language that is used in the Hebrew is one untying something and letting it loose. More specifically, letting it go, not wanting to have anything to do with it. So, “untying” is kind of like the word “divorce” in the Hebrew; untying and letting go. Unfortunately, we let go of things

that are the most valuable and we don't embrace them. Unfortunately, we embrace the things that are not valuable. So, the point is that you're letting these things go. You see them not as something to hold on to. So, you've untied it and let it go.

“And you neglected all my counsel And did not want my reproof.”

Now, the question at this stage is “Why is it that anybody would want correction, rebuke?” Once again, the word is described in the sense of even maybe the picture of a father sitting down with his son or child arguing with him, “You need to do this.” Why would that be so necessary? I mean, the world would say, “Don't tell me what to do.” I don't want anybody to be aggressive in that, but I believe the parents need to be aggressive in that because of all of the influences that are here. So once again, the word is dealing with the sense of correction, a sense of in some cases reasoning, in other cases arguing, but largely chastising. “You cannot do this.” We live in a world of people not accepting that kind of reproof. What is reproof and why is it that we need it? Well, once again, there are a lot of things that we don't see. You know, it's like a child walking off in the middle of the street, and a parent grabbing them by the hand, yanking them. The kid might go, “Well, that was mean” but the understanding is not seen because of the danger that the father or mother sees that is going to rescue the child. The child has no idea and no perception because of the naivety and where they are. In a way, reproof is a warning, a kind of sensical slap, so to speak, in which the dad will not let the child continue that way. In the passage there are two specific things that he's concerned about, two things that the child or the young person does not see; that is calamity and dread.

(Proverbs 1:26) “I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes,

(Proverbs 1:27) When your dread comes like a storm And your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you.”

Now, I think it's an interesting point, you might want to mark it, that it's not saying “if.” It's saying “when” it happens. It is going to happen if you ignore the truth. These things are going to come. One of the points all the way through is that we're dealing with the truth and an absolute that's going to save you. The passage is making reference to two things that will come into someone's life. One of them is calamity. Now, “*êd*” is the interesting word that is used in Hebrew; it's making reference to an oppressing, crushing load that comes on you to ultimately bring ruin.

There's a passage that you read a little bit further on, Proverbs 18:14,

“... a broken spirit who can bear it?”

In a way, that's what he's talking about. “What's going to happen in your life if you don't follow the things that I tell you to do? Life is going to come in, it's going to oppress you. It's going to

crush you, and it will be your ruin.” We don't think in terms of that. “Really? All the things that the world has to offer to us, how in the world could greed be crushing to me? Getting everything that I want, how in the world would that make me miserable to the point of wanting to commit suicide? Really, I'd never think about.” All these things begin to come upon us and will literally crush us and bring us to a blow of not being able to get up again.

So, his concern is the calamity and look at the second word that he used within the passage, the “dread” (Proverbs 1:27) or the terror or the anxiety. Why is it people have so much anxiety? I'm really amazed. Of course, back in my day when I was in school, a lot of people didn't know many of the psychological terms that people are using today. I'm going, “Really, you know these terms?” “Oh, yeah, yeah.” You'd almost have to ask yourself, why do you know these terms? Of course, the answer is pretty obvious, because the problems are prevalent. People have obsessive compulsive behavior. People have anxiety and depression and all the things that come with that. You begin to realize that it's just a part of our way of thinking now that maybe this is the way life is. The passage tells us that these things are going to come. Now, the problem is that not only do the problems come, which is bad enough, the calamity, dread, anxieties and depression, all those things, but on top of that, you have this interesting play of words, so to speak, in which you have wisdom. It seems like wisdom is mocking; wisdom is laughing in the passage. The way we would put it, probably in our more modern vernacular, is that we're adding insult to injury. The passage is really referring to things like regret, open shame, ridicule and contempt that come into play on top of the calamity and depression. I mean, it's bad enough that you have those things tied in with the wrong decisions that you've made, but now you have reminders all over the place. “You could have done it a different way. You should have done it a different way.” That regret alone will eat you up, won't it?

As you look in Proverbs 8, we see at the very beginning of the chapter,

(Proverbs 8:1) “Does not wisdom call, And understanding lift up her voice?”

If you drop on down, it says this in verse 12,

“I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And I find knowledge and discretion.”

(Proverbs 8:13) “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way...”

Unfortunately, we don't naturally hate evil. We don't. We gravitate towards it. We flew into what was called Sin City. So, they define it as Sin City, and people go, “Oh, we'll build a city in the middle of the desert so we can gamble.”

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way
And the perverted mouth, I hate.”

(Proverbs 8:14) “Counsel is mine and sound wisdom; I am understanding, power is mine.”

(Proverbs 8:15) “By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice.”

(Proverbs 8:16) “By me princes rule, and nobles, All who judge rightly.”

(Proverbs 8:17) “I love those who love me; And those who diligently seek me will find me.”

(Proverbs 8:18) “Riches and honor are with me, Enduring wealth and righteousness.”

(Proverbs 8:19) “My fruit is better than gold, even pure gold, And my yield better than choicest silver.”

(Proverbs 8:20) “I walk in the way of righteousness, In the midst of the paths of justice,”

(Proverbs 8:21) To endow those who love me with wealth, That I may fill their treasuries.”

So, what is he talking about? Well, You give up those things when you go the wrong way for the immediate gratification, and that haunts you because I gave up the things of the greatest value.

“I gave up the relationships I could have had.” So, within the passage there is this sense of mocking and contempt that comes in, and the regret is overwhelming. So, you have the calamity, dread, and the mocking that comes in with this.

It is interesting the way it's put in verse 27,

“...comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you.”

Once again, you begin to see the stirring of the emotions within this. The passage is really clear that what wisdom wants to do is preserve us from these hurts, these pains, these feelings; there's a desire for the one to listen to, not only good counsel, but to the correction.

If you look in Proverbs 3:11, it reads this way,

“My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD Or loathe (or get tired of) His reproof.”

“Oh, not again. You know, they're getting after me again?” The passage is saying don't even go there because this is like a tree of life.

(Proverbs 3:16) “Long life is in her right hand...”

(Proverbs 3:17) “Her ways are pleasant ways And all her paths are peace.”

She's like a tree of life. Take hold of these things. (Proverbs 3:18)

The fact of the matter is that we as parents oftentimes fail to properly reprove our children; to appropriately counsel them in the way. So, not only is there a regret in their lives, but there's a

regret in our lives. There's a mocking that comes out of it through the consequences and the ramifications of the things that have been done or not done.

One of the statements that's made in Hebrews 12 is that our fathers on Earth disciplined us as seemed right to them, but thank God that we have a heavenly Father, as it goes on to say, that is a "Father of spirits," i.e. knows our hearts, and will discipline us correctly. These are what Scripture begins to define as the consequences of life. How wonderful it is that we know a God who is sovereign in all these things; controls all these things; the things in our life.

I think oftentimes of the prodigal son that basically threw away whatever his father was telling him and the standards that he had given him and went for the immediate gratification. However, the power and sovereignty of God in that particular setting was that God brought a famine in the land. Now, that was God because with the kid it's all about money. It's all about acquiring things. So, what's the one thing that will begin to take away all that money? You just put a famine in the land. That's no problem for God. I can just imagine, maybe some of the people living around going, "Thanks a lot." The point of the passage is that God was dealing in his heart. It takes us to the point where he's hardly eating. He now has to eat with the pigs, and you go, "Pigs? How did he get that job?" I can just see God going, "I gave it to him," but what a graphic picture. Every time you eat something, and you watch the pig eat it too. "I'm like them." The food is thrown out and you see the pigs all head towards it, fighting over it. "I'm like them." God has just given this graphic picture. He finally comes to his senses. "My home wasn't like this at all" and he runs back home. He doesn't care if he's going to be a servant. All pride is gone, and lo and behold, who does he see running to him? His father. The picture is given to us and revealing to us that initially we think wrong. Oh, but God's not finished. Oftentimes, we're brought up wrong, and oftentimes we even reject the wisdom that we're given by the wise ones that are in our lives. God is still working in our lives, and I've seen this in my own life in many respects.

I was thinking in particular in Isaiah 28, and we oftentimes give reference to this chapter because it gives the perfect picture of God instructing us through the consequences of life. The fact that we might see it from a perspective of God denying us of something, or God just wanting to maybe shoot a bolt of lightning at us because He's angry at us, and God goes, "No, no. I'm teaching you." How wonderful it is to know that God is bringing us to Himself so that we would ultimately deny and reject all the things that are not important, and ultimately embrace the one thing that is.

It reads this way in Isaiah 28:23, and it shouldn't surprise you the way it starts off,

"Give ear and hear my voice, Listen and hear my words."

Now, this is true with most of us. In order for us to really listen, if God were to throw out doctrine immediately, we would have a hard time relating. So, He takes something that we know, and then He segues into that which is unknown. It's the same thing with children. It's obviously the way that Jesus dealt with the multitudes, "Consider the lilies in the field." Where were they? They were in the field. "Look at the birds." They were looking at birds all over the place as they were outside on the Sermon on Mount. So, the point is that you take that which is understood and known. In the passage and in this particular setting, they were very concerned about their crops and their things. So, they were good at making the land fertile. They knew what to do. They were experts on this, and God says, "Who do you think gave you the wisdom to be a good farmer? How to plow and how to do these things?"

He uses this description,

(Isaiah 28:24) "Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed? Does he continually turn and harrow the ground?"

(Isaiah 28:25) Does he not level its surface And sow dill and scatter cummin And plant wheat in rows, Barley in its place and rye within its area?"

I think it's interesting back in verse 24, but do you continually plow? Why do you plow there? You need to get all that stuff out of there, right? You need to prepare the soil to take the seed. Well, why don't you do it all the time? Because we're done. I mean, if you kept plowing, when would you plant the seed? Then the seed couldn't grow. There are times in our lives where God is plowing. Praise God He stops when things begin to change. If you're experiencing plowing, there's still a need for plowing.

"Does he not level its surface And sow dill and scatter cummin And plant wheat in rows? ..."

In other words, all this plowing had a purpose. It wasn't because God wanted to plow you under; it was because He wanted to grow and bring forth fruit. As Jesus will say in John 15, "I came that you might bear fruit and that your fruit would remain. You're planting the wrong stuff. You're planting weeds that choke out and produce no fruit. I'm going to teach you how to prosper."

(Isaiah 28:26) "For his God instructs and teaches him properly."

(Isaiah 28:27) For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge..."

There are certain things that you use, and I realize this in raising my kids. With one of my kids, ok, maybe a hammer was necessary. The other kids, you just look at them cross eyed and they just melt.

“For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin;
But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club.

(Isaiah 28:28) Grain for bread is crushed, Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever.
Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually damage it...”

He's not trying to damage it; he's producing fruit.

“... He does not thresh it longer.

(Isaiah 28:29) This also comes from the LORD...”

The passage is telling us that God is doing a work in our lives; because we perhaps initially rejected the wisdom of those that were teaching us, we've suffered the consequences in life, but God is not there to crush you. He's bringing you to Himself.

I think that's one of the reasons why when you read 1 Corinthians 1:30, as it ends that particular passage, it says that Christ has become wisdom for us. He actually lists how that happens in the same text. He has become righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. In other words, Christ is not only there to save us, but to show us how valuable we are, i.e. the redemption. He is setting us apart for a particular work, and we begin to see in Him what wisdom really looks like. How do you invest your life? What is really important? When you open up the word, and begin to look at the life of Christ, you'll begin to see what's important. It doesn't mean that He didn't have food, or that He didn't eat it. I mean, He lived in Capernaum for crying out loud. He had a house in which people cut a hole in the roof. The fact that they cut a hole in the roof, and He didn't get mad at them is telling me that He had the right priorities because here's a man that needed to be healed and He cared for him. So, Scripture never tells you not to have certain things, but it says don't be led by certain things and it says the wisest thing that you could ever do is believe that God loves you. Believe that His way is better than yours.

It's an interesting passage in 1 Timothy 6, and we'll close with that. In a very simplistic way, God is saying, “Look, don't go after the wrong stuff.” Now once again, our initial thought would be “Why should I listen to you?” and God would say, “Because you don't want calamity, and you don't want to be miserable; you don't want to live in dread. I'm saving you.”

So, the passage reads this way in which oftentimes people perceive godliness as a way for self-gain. “I can make a lot of money if I put God first.” God goes, “Ok, you've got this mixed up.” Preachers get in there, and they try to get all the money they can. I mean, if you look at religion, it's really very confusing. Don't look at religion, look at the relationship of Christ. Jesus hated religion. That's very clear. If you disagree with me, read Matthew 23. Jesus hated religion, but

the point is that the word of God, God himself is saying, "Pursue the right things. Listen to Me. I know what's best."

(1 Timothy 6:6) "But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment."

(1 Timothy 6:7) "For we have brought nothing into the world..."

Well, that would be a truth, wouldn't it? I can't remember bringing anything. Actually, I don't remember the moment.

"For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either."

Once again, there are no U-Hauls in the cemeteries.

(1 Timothy 6:8) "If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content."

Now, Scripture is not saying this is all you have to have. It's just saying that's enough to be content. Does God give more to certain people? Yeah. Is there anything wrong with that? No. When you read the passage in Luke 12, in which the guy goes, "I'm going to tear down my barns. I'm going to build greater barns, and then I'm going to take rest of my soul." He says, "You foolish guy, tonight your soul is required of you. You invested in the wrong things."

(1 Timothy 6:9) "But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction."

Isn't that what Proverbs was saying? The calamity, the heartache, the pain, and the anxiety plunge men into ruin and destruction.

The interesting passage in Ecclesiastes is the guy who works hard all his life and he never asked himself, "Why am I doing this?"

(1 Timothy 6:10) "For the love of money..."

Once again not money itself, an innocuous thing.

"...the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it..."

What are you longing for? What are pursuing?

"...have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

Why? You longed for that, and you didn't long for God.

(1 Timothy 6:11) "But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness (the right thing to do), godliness (reverential respect for God), faith (putting your trust in God), love (putting others in front of yourself), perseverance and gentleness."

(1 Timothy 6:12) Fight the good fight of faith...

Who would pursue self-discipline? Well, it's one of the fruits of the Spirit because what you'll find is self-discipline, discipline in your life is one of the greatest things that you could ever have. Just wait. You'll see. There will be times in your life where you'll go, "I'm so glad I did that." God is preserving. He's benefiting. He's keeping you from the things that are destructive and hurtful. Wisdom is calling out. God is calling out. What would it profit a man if he gained the whole world and lost his own soul. Have you thought about that?

Closing prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and it's our desire to listen to the words of not only Your counsel, but Your reproof, Your correction, Your training in righteousness. When You tell us that we're going the wrong way, our ears are perking up because we know that there's dangers ahead. We begin to realize that You're not trying to hurt us; You're helping us. We don't understand exactly what that looks like, but we do seek Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. Somehow, Christ has become wisdom to us. We see what is really important, what we should be pursuing, the things that we should be loving and going hard after. We're so thankful for that model that You give us, but more than that, for Your Spirit that you give us, that would even cause us to want to do those things. We believe and we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, and we follow in His footsteps. How wonderful it is that we have life abundant, not only everlasting life, but life of joy and purpose.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. I'm just simply asking you to examine your heart. How receptive have you been to the word of God? Have you been listening? Do you understand why He's telling you these things? Are you embracing? You might say, "Where do I start?" It's easy. You start with believing that God knows better, God loves you, and that God can make things better in your life. Then you just simply start doing whatever He tells you to do, and you do it with all your heart. How wonderful a life God has prepared for you. Take this moment, and just pray in this quiet moment.