

We use the words "to" and "fro". "To" means going "toward"; "fro" means going "from". "Froward" is the opposite of "toward". God wants us to come to Him—not go from Him. Therefore, the stubborn are called the "froward".

There is much downright stubbornness in people. Just as soon as they think you are trying to get them to do something, no matter how good it is or how important it is, they set themselves against doing it. They are stubborn. They are froward. They are an abomination to God as a result.

Wives try to get husbands to do right. Children try to get parents to do right. Preachers try to get congregations to do right. Christians try to get others to do right. What do they meet? Frowardness. God hates it. It is an abomination to Him. Can you see why it is?

Anything is abominable to God that is not as it should be! Everything pronounced an abomination in Proverbs is something that is not as it should be. God is consistent in His disgust. We can see why He reacts as He does. May we be of a sound mind to desire to be a delight to God rather than an abomination!

Things Preferable

A proper evaluation of things is one of the important things of life. The Hebrew author tells us of the great choice of Moses and the way he preferred to be God's servant rather than to live the life of ease as an Egyptian prince. Every great man of God has had to make important decisions, and those decisions are many times based upon the proper evaluation of things.

Let us turn our attention to those passages in

Proverbs that tell us one thing is better than another in order that we might have a proper evaluation of things.

I. WISDOM IS BETTER.

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is BETTER than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is MORE PRECIOUS than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are NOT TO BE COMPARED unto her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her" (3:13-18).

What a great passage that is! Man thinks of material gain. Proverbs is not blind to the place of material things, but it says the merchandise and the gain of wisdom are better than that of silver, gold, rubies, and all other earthly things that one can desire. That passage pictures Wisdom's two hands full of great blessings: length of life in her right hand and riches and honor in her left. It also points out that wisdom leads the way to pleasantness and peace and is a tree of life. No wonder, then, that the passage says, "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding."

II. RIGHTEOUSNESS IS BETTER.

Religion is all right with some people until an opportunity to make more money comes along. Then gain is chosen instead of godliness. Listen to the verdict of Proverbs: "BETTER is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich" (28:6); "BETTER is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith" (15:16); "BETTER is a little with righteousness than great revenues without

right" (16:8). Keep these things in mind when thinking of working on Sunday instead of going to church meetings, when contemplating opening a tavern, and when selling tobacco products in your place of business.

Sometimes people will lie for the sake of gain. Listen to what God says in 19:22, "A poor man is BETTER than a liar."

III. PEACE IS BETTER.

Homes, supposedly founded on love, are many times scenes of bitterness. They may be places of royal furnishings and that spread a fine table, but 15:17 says, "BETTER is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." The writer continues: "It is BETTER to dwell in a corner of the house top, than with a brawling woman (or brawling man!) in a wide house" (21:9). And 21:19 says much the same thing, and we give it to you by way of emphasis: "It is BETTER to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman (or such a man!)." (The writer being a man and writing for his son approaches the subject from a man's point of view, but the contrast is just as true from the women's standpoint).

It is fine to be married unless one is not properly married. Then, one could hardly find himself in a worse situation. You can see the way that peace in the home is emphasized in Proverbs.

17:1 says something that many congregations today need to hear: "BETTER is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife." A sacrifice or offering to God should be offered by those who are at peace among themselves. Otherwise, it will do no good. If we cannot love those among whom we dwell, we cannot love God above.

IV. SELF-CONTROL IS BETTER.

One of the overlooked verses in Proverbs is 16:32, which reads: "He that is slow to anger is BETTER than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Many a militarist has been able to subdue his own spirit and to exercise virtuous self-control. It would be better to be a saint of God living in self-control and never be heard of than to be a high-strung, hot-tempered victor in the wars and have one's name written into the books of history. 16:19 says, "BETTER it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." Strive, then, to be of the meek and controlled who live on, or who in Jesus' and David's messages "inherit the earth", than to be of the proud, uncontrolled who get cut off much before their time.

Let us appreciate the way that Proverbs exalts these four things—wisdom, righteousness, peace, and self-control—and let us ourselves place that same evaluation upon them that Proverbs does. By choosing the better, we shall be the better.

Honor as a Goal

All should have a sense of honor. All should desire to be honorable. All should both recognize it and appreciate it in others. We sing, "Honor them, the faithful few; All hail to Daniel's band." We also sing, "A place of honor is reserved For you at the Master's side."

This subject of honor is also covered by numerous proverbs, and believing that one cannot have character who does not have a just appreciation of the subject of true honor, we go into this present study with you.

I. HONOR IS SOMETHING EARNED BY THE INDIVIDUAL.

We honor the person who can do what we cannot do or what we have not done. Let a ball club have a Mickey Mantle who can drive the ball clear out of the stadium, and the stands will fill up. Our state fairs and livestock shows honor those men who produce the finest animals. We pay tribute to men like J. Edgar Hoover who have devoted their lives to fighting crime. Men like Edison, Pasteur, Pfister, and others are famous because of their contributions to the welfare of mankind in various ways.

Men of genius who devote themselves to the over-all good of the human race are honored because they have merited that honor. Wisdom may not come to all in such a way as to make all geniuses, but Proverbs does say, "Exalt her (wisdom), and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee" (4:8, 9). 8:18 says, "Riches and honour are with me (wisdom); yea, durable riches and righteousness."

People respect the man who knows, unless he is smart acting about it. We respect the man who can help us with our problems. Proverbs recognizes this when it says, "Good understanding giveth favour" (13:15). Even God is pleased with a man of true wisdom: "Whoso findeth me (wisdom) findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord" (8:35).

This great book of Solomon also indicates that true honor belongs to those whose character is like it should be. "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour" (21:21). We notice also 22:4: "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life."

In a sense, life affords us that for which we seek, and 11:27 says, "He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour." Many think it is terrible because

people don't think well of them. But, people must act right before people are going to think well of them. If one transgresses into some immoral act, he will find 6:33 is true, which says, "A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away."

Throughout the Bible is the teaching that respect is due our seniors. A good verse from Proverbs says, "The hoary head (white hair) is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness" (16:31). One of the failures of our present generation is failing to cause the youngsters to respect the aged as they should.

You will find, however, for the most part that people will respect a man if he tries to do right. When two people have been in trouble, the world will respect the one who says, "Let's bury the hatchet." (20:3 says, "It is an honour for a man to cease from strife." A person may have done wrong, but we respect anyone who will take correction properly: "He that regardeth reproof shall be honoured" (13:18).

Many want the honor, but not the toil and sweat and not the years of waiting before honor comes. What a great truth is contained in 15:33: "Before honour is humility." "She can't play," says someone listening to a child playing a piano number, but just wait. Later you may have to pay \$5.00 to get in to hear her play. "He can't bat," says a passerby concerning a boy in his first game, but he may become a very famous player in time. What you are undertaking for Jesus may look small and may evoke more smiles now than it does admiration, but if you are doing what is right, stick to it, remembering that "before honour is humility".

II. TRUE HONOR IS A HIGH GOAL THAT ALL SHOULD HAVE.

Society is burdened down with many slouches. Many are rude and crude. By them, those who are

kind are soft, and those who are honorable are despised. They do not honor the honorable nor do they seek to be honorable themselves. But, how can one read the passages in the foregoing section of this message without seeing that there is a true honor that is to be sought by all? But, listen to these verses from Proverbs that follow.

22:1, a verse whose truth should be indelibly written into the thought of every child, young person, and grown-up, says, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." What a verse when men will sell their reputations for honesty for a little more money in a business deal! What a verse to teach young people in these days when so many of them don't care what their teachers think of them, don't care what older people think of them, and don't care what Christian people think of them!

Another verse that shows a good name is to be sought is 10:7: "The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot." How will people remember you? You say you don't care? Then, you have a spirit altogether different from the Bible passages we are reading. I like also the thought of 11:16, which says, "A gracious woman retaineth honour." You are glad to remember your mother as the good woman that she was, aren't you? You will almost fight if anybody dares to say anything against her. Well, why don't you try to live just as honorably as she did?

III. LET US NOT OVERLOOK THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING THE FAVOR OF GOD.

There are many passages that would urge upon us the obedient life with which God is well pleased. Many passages could be cited showing that the wicked are abominable to Him, that He hates the thoughts of the wicked, that He despises the way of the wicked. But, in closing, let us hear these two passages,

12:2 says, "A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn". If you want the favor of God, you must live **right**, and nobody's favor should you desire to have more than the favor of God.

To the obedient child, the father in Proverbs assures, "So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man" (3:4).

Such studies as we have just had should have a very stimulating effect upon us, beckoning us to the higher life and to the better things in life through living as we ought to live.

The Place of Wisdom

1. How many proverbs did Solomon speak?
2. "The fear of the Lord is the _____ of knowledge: but _____ despise wisdom and instruction."
3. A person's earliest wisdom comes from his _____.
4. Where are some of the places that wisdom cries? _____
5. Does everyone listen to Wisdom? _____
6. Later when people try to call upon wisdom to help, what will they find? _____
7. "Wisdom is the _____ thing; therefore get wisdom."
8. "Take fast hold of _____; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy _____."
9. Wisdom will keep a young man from the way of evil _____ and will deliver him from the strange _____.
10. "A wise man is _____."
11. "_____ the truth, and it not."

The Human Tongue

1. "The heart of the righteous _____ to answer."
2. "The heart of the wise _____ his mouth."
3. "A man hath _____ by the answer of his mouth."
4. "A word _____ spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."
5. "The lip of truth shall be established _____; but a lying tongue is but for a _____."
6. "A hypocrite with his _____ destroyeth his neighbor."

7. "A _____ tongue worketh ruin."
8. Some people use their tongues to sow among brethren.
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9. "A talebearer revealeth _____."
10. "Where no wood is, there the _____ goeth out, so where there is no _____, the strife ceaseth."
11. "A whisperer separateth chief _____."
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12. "In the multitude of words, there wanteth not _____."

Lazy People

1. Our word "slothful" comes from an animal by the name of _____ that is known for _____.
2. Our word "sluggard" comes from a small animal by the name of _____ known for _____.
3. The sluggard is urged to learn the ambitious ways of what insect? _____
4. The sluggard will not plow when it is _____.
5. How wise is a sluggard in his own conceit? Wiser than _____.
6. The slothful is a "brother" to the _____.
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7. When Solomon viewed the field of the slothful, he noticed _____.
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8. A statement from Prov. relating laziness to poverty or diligence to wealth: _____.
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9. The ambitiousness of the virtuous woman of Prov. 31 was shown in _____.
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10. Concerning laziness and sleep, Prov. has this to say: _____.
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11. The man diligent in business will stand before _____.

The Cry of the Needy

1. The difference between the lazy-needy and the unfortunate-needy: _____

2. The difference in attitude that people show toward these 2 groups: _____

3. What 2 men in a well known parable disregarded the needs of a helpless man?
and _____

4. An example of people's laughing at the poor: _____

5. A statement from Prov. showing people's taking advantage of people's poverty: _____

6. Giving to the worthy-poor is actually making a loan to _____.

7. What sure promise is connected with so doing? _____

8. If we stop our ears at the cry of the needy _____.

The Problem of Pride

1. Pride is a sinful _____.

2. God is not opposed to people's knowing, accomplishing, and properly possessing, but to their being _____ over it.

3. When people are proud in their hearts, you can see it in their _____.

4. The proud stirs up _____.

5. How does contention result from a person's pride? _____

6. Though a proud man lifts himself up, pride will bring him _____.

7. "Pride goeth before _____, and a haughty spirit before a _____."

8. Comment upon pride's being contrasted with wisdom. _____

Anger Outlawed

1. "A wrathful man stirreth up _____."

2. _____ defers a man's anger.

3. "A _____ answer turneth away wrath; but _____ words stir up anger."

4. Wrath and anger are described as being _____ and _____.

5. The angry person who has no rule over his spirit is like _____.

6. What are we not to become to an angry, furious person? _____

7. "He that is _____ to wrath is of great understanding; but he that is _____ of spirit exalteth folly."

8. Who is better than the mighty? _____

Riches Discussed

1. Riches and _____ are often connected in Proverbs.

2. Prov. blames much poverty upon 3 causes: _____, _____, _____.

3. Such poor are _____ even of their own relatives and neighbors.

4. "Honour the Lord with thy _____, and with the _____ of thine increase."

5. What promise from God goes with obeying the foregoing commandment? _____

6. Crooked business dealers _____ the product they are trying to buy and then _____ about the good deal they just made.

7. What does a good man leave to his children's children? _____

8. Why did the Proverb writer not want to be poor? _____

9. Why did he not want to be rich? _____

Fools Considered

1. Why is it probably more cutting to be called a fool than a sinner? _____

2. _____ is too high for a fool.

3. The way of a fool is right in _____

4. Fools usually respond to correction in 1 of 2 ways: _____ or _____.

5. "It is as sport to a fool to do _____"

6. "The mouth of fools feedeth on _____"

7. "A fool uttereth _____ his mind."

8. "A fool's _____ is his destruction."

9. A fool's mouth calls for _____.

10. "Every fool will be _____."

11. A fool's wrath is heavier than what 2 things? _____ and _____.

12. A companion of fools will be _____

Lascivious Conduct

1. This teaching in Prov. has been given "to deliver thee from the strange _____, even from the stranger who _____ with her lips: which forsaketh the _____ of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her _____."

2. The immoral woman's house inclines to _____.

3. Contrast the strange woman's lips with the outcome: _____

4. Some of the results of lascivious behavior: _____

5. The best safeguard against getting involved with such a woman is _____.

6. "Drink waters out of thine _____ cistern, and running waters of thine _____ well...Let them be only _____ own, and not _____ s' with thee."

7. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be _____?"

8. A man will accept no suitable settlement from the thief that steals his _____.

9. Going to a harlot's house is like an ox going to the _____.

10. The wicked woman says, "Stolen waters are _____."

View of God

1. Our God is a Father who _____ His erring children.

2. "_____ in the Lord with all thine heart: and _____ not to thine own understanding."

3. "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall _____ thy paths."

4. The name of the Lord is like a strong _____, We run into it and are _____.

5. "The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the _____ of them all."

6. "The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the Lord _____ both their eyes."

7. The Lord not only created the universe, but He _____ it.

8. "The _____ of the Lord are in every place, beholding the _____ and the _____."

9. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an _____ to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his _____."

The Fear of the Lord

1. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of _____."

2. _____ despise wisdom and instruction.

3. "A wise man feareth, and departeth from _____."

4. The fear of the Lord prolongs _____.

5. How does the fear of the Lord keep us from other fears? _____

6. Thought question: What is a proper fear of the Lord based upon? _____

7. Thought question: What does the fear of the Lord cause us to do? _____

Correction

1. We are not to despise the Lord's correction administered in the form of _____

2. Parents are sometimes to use the _____ in correcting their children.

3. If we correct our children, they will give us _____.

4. If we keep God's law, we will _____ with the wicked concerning their ways.

5. Correction by words is called _____

6. Correction is _____ at the time.

7. "He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favor than he who _____"

8. How do we know that not everybody will receive correction? _____

9. What quality is speaking in Prov. 1, saying, "I have called, and ye refused... I will mock when your fear cometh?" _____

10. What is the outcome of reproving a scorner? _____

11. What is the outcome of rebuking a wise man? _____

Parenthood

1. Prove from Proverbs that the father is to be a teacher of his children. _____

2. Prove from Proverbs that the mother is also to teach the children. _____

3. Children are to h _____ what their parents say and are not to f _____ it.

7. "It is better to dwell in a corner of a house top, than with a _____ woman in a wide house."

8. The value of a virtuous wife is far above _____.

9. Tell of her ambitious activity: _____

10. Tell of her husband; _____

11. What 2 qualities characterize her speech? _____ and _____.

12. Who rise up and call her blessed?

13. Who praises her? _____

Psychological Outlook

1. "A merry _____ makes a cheerful countenance."

2. What breaks one's spirit? _____

3. Who has a continual feast? _____

4. A merry heart does good like _____

5. "The desire _____ is sweet to the soul."

6. Good news from a far country is like what?

7. What does the deferment of hope do?

8. To what extent can people share our sorrows and enter into our joys? _____

9. "If thou faint in the day of _____, thy strength is small."

Things Abominable

1. Five of the 7 things in Prov. 6: 16-19 that are abominable to the Lord: _____

_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____.

2. What is abominable to the Lord in business matters? _____

3. The _____ in heart are an abomination to God.

4. " _____ lips are abomination to the Lord."

5. "The sacrifice of the _____ is an abomination to the Lord."

6. Whoever turns away his ear from hearing God's law, even his _____ will be an abomination to God.

7. The person who condemns the _____ and justifies the _____ is an abomination to God.

8. The _____ of the wicked are abominable to God.

9. Explain the word "froward" and show how it refers to the stubborn. _____

Things Preferable

1. "The merchandise of _____ is better than the merchandise of silver."

2. "Better is a _____ with righteousness than great revenues without right."

3. "A poor man is better than a _____"

4. "Better is a dinner of herbs where _____ is, than a stalled ox and _____ therewith."

5. "It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a _____ and _____ woman."

6. "Better is a dry morsel with _____ therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with _____."

7. "He that is slow to _____ is better than the mighty; and he that

ruleth his _____ than he that taketh
a city."

Honor as a Goal

1. Exalting _____ promotes
us and brings us to honor.
2. "It is an _____ for a man to
cease from strife."
3. What precedes honor? _____
4. A good name is worth more than
_____.
5. Whose memory is blessed? _____
6. Whose name will rot? _____
7. We should particularly seek the
honor of _____.