

The Spread of Wisdom

(Proverbs 13)

11/15/17; Wed PM Pine Grove

Introduction

One the necessary chores of being a parent is cleaning up spills...

Cups spill, plates spill, paint spills....

Little hands and less coordination leads to dropped cups, plates, and things...

And though we plead with our kids to be careful with that cup or plate or whatever, it is inevitable that something will get spilled on the floor or furniture..

Now, the frustrating part of cleaning up spills is that they easily spread..

You don't just have to clean the counter, you have to lift the toaster and clean under it...

Or lift the couch and clean under it or move the area rug and clean under it or mop the floor and spills leak off tables and drop into the floor...

Liquids just simply spread out really fast when they are let out of their proper places..

And they move in all directions in the moments after a spill...

Well, that is good picture to keep in your mind in terms of wisdom...

When God in His wisdom made the world, he spilled wisdom all over his creation....

Wisdom, in a sense, is spread all throughout the world like a spilled cup of juice..

In fact, God's wisdom is found in so many aspects of our lives...

We see it in nature as God designed trees to give off oxygen and take in carbon dioxide while we as humans give off carbon dioxide and take in oxygen..

We see in the universe as God set the earth the perfect distance from the sun to make life possible for the people He created...

But not only is God's wisdom spilled on the earth and in the universe, God's wisdom is woven through the fabric of the ways of the world...

We have already seen the wisdom of God seen in work, in relationships, in parenting, in money, in life in general...

But the book of Proverbs doesn't stop there because the wisdom of God has spread to so many more things...

And so tonight, we are going to continue to expand our list of areas in the world where we can find the wisdom of God...

The first on the list is a common theme in the book of Proverbs, but we can never hear this wisdom too much....

So in verses 1-4 of Proverbs 13, we find...

I. Wisdom with Words (1-4)

Let's read verses 1-4 of Proverbs 13...

*1 A wise son accepts his father's discipline,
But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.
2 From the fruit of a man's mouth he [a]enjoys
good,
But the [b]desire of the treacherous is violence.
3 The one who guards his mouth preserves his
life;
The one who opens wide his lips [c]comes to ruin.
4 The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing,
But the soul of the diligent is made fat.*

We see the use of words in a number of ways here in these first few verses..

The first way people use words is to correct others..

In this case, the father uses his words to discipline his son..

Words of correction are good and sweet words, and a wise son accepts those words of correction from his father....

Now the assumption here is that the father is giving biblical correction...

These aren't harsh angry words but word of loving instruction from the word of God..

And a wise son takes those godly words to heart and receives them...

On the other hand, the scoffer does not receive words of correction well...

In other words, he uses his words to refuse instruction, which is not a wise use of words...

Verse 2 offer a principle of our words as well in that good words produce good fruit in our lives while bad words leads to violence and trouble in our lives...

We need to remember that our words come back to us...

Kind words, gentle words, encouraging words, helpful words lead to good things in our lives...

While unkind words, harsh words, insulting words, destructive words lead to violence in our lives..

I have a first hand of that in my own life that I have shared with y'all before but one time as a teenager, I smarted off to one of my friends and he busted my nose..

In a very real way, my insults leads to an act of violence against me...

There have been plenty of gossips and slanderers who have met the same fate of a bloody nose to their own nosiness...

On the other hand, there are many people who have many friends because of the kind words of their mouth...

Be careful, every word you plant reaps a harvest so make sure you are planting good seed in what you say..

That is why verses 3 and 4 tell us to guard our words..

The one who guards his words guards his life...

The one who doesn't guard his words leaves his life wide open to trouble...

Therefore, we must be diligent and not lazy in how we guard what we say..

Verse 4 says that the diligent are made fat...

And that is a good kind of fat in the sense of blessed.

While the one who isn't careful with what he says
goes hungry..

Here is the big picture of these verses..

God has made a world where words are a necessary
part of life..

We have to communicate and words are part of that
communication...

And look, words are good...

We express our love with our words...

We comfort one another with our words...

The gospel is preached with words...

We call upon the Lord with words...

But just as God designed the world with words to be
used for good, words can be equally destructive...

So God's wisdom says, guard what you say...

Think about what you say...

Evaluate whether what you are about to say is help-
ful or hurtful, true or false, meant for good or meant
for evil...

And do all that before you open your mouth and speak those words...

The second aspect of life in which we see the value of wisdom is found in verses 5-6...

II. Wisdom and Well-Being (5-6)

Let's read verses 5 and 6...

***5 A righteous man hates falsehood,
But a wicked man [d]acts disgustingly and shame-
fully.***

***6 Righteousness guards the [e]one whose way is
blameless,
But wickedness subverts the [f]sinner.***

The value of truth cannot be overstated...

Living truthfully and speaking truthfully are ways
to guard your life..

The wicked love lies and speak lies and in the end,
those lies and falsehoods subvert or overthrow
them..

In other words, if you by lies, you will die by those
same lies...

In you live in the truth and speak the truth, the truth
will guard your way...

Liars have to continue to tell lies to cover their
wickedness..

Those committed to truth and speaking truth have
nothing to worry about...

The truth keeps your conscience clean, your sleep sweet, and your path clear...

If you want to enjoy the benefits of a being well and living well, stick with the truth and the truth will stick by you....

A third aspect of wisdom is something that we have also seen before and this is...

III. Wisdom about Wealth (7-11)

Let's read verses 7-11...

7 There is one who pretends to be rich, but has nothing;

Another [g]pretends to be poor, but has great wealth.

***8 The ransom of a man's life is his wealth,
But the poor hears no rebuke.***

***9 The light of the righteous [h]rejoices,
But the lamp of the wicked goes out.***

***10 Through insolence [i]comes nothing but strife,
But wisdom is with those who receive counsel.***

***11 Wealth obtained by [j]fraud dwindles,
But the one who gathers [k]by labor increases it.***

Verses 7-11 speak of the dangers of money....

The first danger of money is that it leads to deceitfulness...

The poor lie in pretending they are rich in order to protect their pride..

The rich lie in pretending they are poor in order to protect their wealth from those seeking help.

The second danger of money is that it can become our ransom..

In other words, money can become a crutch in that we see it as our deliverer from trouble....

Many rich people disregard the law knowing that their money will get them out of trouble...

Fortunately, the poor don't face the same temptation and therefore have no need of rebuke..

Then in verse 9-10, we seem to seem to see a connection between money and attitude...

It seems another danger of money is that it affects our way of treating others...

Verse 10 suggests that many who depend upon money or insolent, which means rude or prideful...

In other words, money tempts us to be unkind people...

And not rude, but also unteachable...

While those without money stay humble, kind, and teachable...

The end of verse 10 says that these people are eager to listen to counsel..

And look, we all know people like this...

People obsessed with money are often rude and arrogant...

Think of Hollywood or sports stars...

Most are unkind and rude and prideful...

They don't need anyone telling them what to do...

They have money.

They will do what ever they want to do..

And then a final danger of money is seen in verse 11...

The temptation to try and get it without working for it..

Since money is so powerful in the world, people will do just about anything to get it...

Therefore, we are warned about not using deceitful ways to get it while being encouraged to work to get it in verse 11...

And the wisdom principle is this...

Work for your money so that you are tempted to steal it...

From there, we move to versus 12-19...

I call this the wisdom of waiting...

IV. Wisdom while Waiting (12-19)

Verse 12...

*12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
But desire [l]fulfilled is a tree of life.*

*13 The one who despises the word will be [m]in
debt to it,*

*But the one who fears the commandment will be
rewarded.*

*14 The [n]teaching of the wise is a fountain of life,
To turn aside from the snares of death.*

*15 Good understanding produces favor,
But the way of the treacherous is hard.*

*16 Every prudent man acts with knowledge,
But a fool [o]displays folly.*

*17 A wicked messenger falls into adversity,
But a faithful envoy brings healing.*

*18 Poverty and shame will come to him who ne-
glects [p]discipline,*

But he who regards reproof will be honored.

*19 Desire realized is sweet to the soul,
But it is an abomination to fools to turn away from
evil.*

If you notice, the thing that ties verses 12-19 together is the idea of desire fulfilled, which you see in the second part of verse 12 and the first part of verse 19..

Now what does it mean to have a desire fulfilled...

It simply means that something that you have longed for comes true..

So, what is the process of seeing your desires come true...

Well, what these verse teach is this...

You cannot short cut the timing of God..

You must wait on God faithfully and trust in his wisdom to give you the desires of your heart..

Think of Abraham and Sarai..

God told them he would give them a child but Sarai was not content to wait and wanted to have her desires fulfilled right away so she tried to hurry God up and made a bigger mess in the process..

And we must learn to wait on God to fulfill our desires in his time..

So, what is the wisdom in waiting?

Well, for starters....

Verse 13..

Listen to the word of God..

Trust in the word of God..

Verse 14...

Listen to biblical teaching and instruction...

Verse 15..

Understand the ways of the Lord..

Verse 16...

Hold on to your knowledge of God..

Verse 18...

Be teachable...

Now look, the first part of verse 12 is true...

Hope deferred makes the heart sick..

In other words, it is hard to wait on the Lord at times..

When you want that new job..

When you need the medicine and doctors to work..

When you want to see your loved one saved...

When you need the bank account to grow...

But wisdom says that waiting makes the realization of that hope much sweeter...

When I was in 2nd grade, we ate lunch really early like at 10:45, and then we had to come back to class for a couple hours before we go out to recess...

And at recess, we had the chance to buy ice cream from the freezer..

Well, you would eat lunch early and then wait for two hours for dessert...

And man that ice cream always tasted good after waiting a couple hours for it...

I would always get an orange push up, and it was probably out of date but man it would taste so good after that wait...

A lot of our life is waiting on God's timing for things..

Therefore, we have to learn to wait well...

So in your waiting, listen to the word of God...

Hold to the promises of Scripture, and if God wills it and brings it forth, your patient endurance will make that answered prayer all the more sweet...

I love how God inspired Solomon to write it in verse 19...

Desire realized is sweet to the soul..

But it is only sweet when we trust the Lord's timing and don't grow impatient and unfaithful to His promises...

There is wisdom in waiting, and that wisdom is learning to wait well..

Another area of life where we can use wisdom is found in verses 20-21...

I call this...

V. Wisdom and Walking (20-21)

20

***He who walks with wise men will be wise,
But the companion of fools will suffer harm.***

21

***Adversity pursues sinners,
But the righteous will be rewarded with prosperity.***

I don't think these verses need a lot of explanation...

The principle is simple...

Surround yourself with fools and end up a fool...

Surround yourself with wise people and end up wise..

Now clearly, this is a principle not a promise..

There are folks who were surrounded by wisdom and end up foolish and vice versa..

But the general rule is that you become just like the people you surround yourself with...

This is why it is so important to help your kids and grandkids choose wise friends...

It is not overbearing to break up friendships of your kids that are destructive...

It is not sinful to keep your kids away from other kids...

Now, we know that friends are not the cause of our children's sins...

It is their own sinful heart that causes them to sin..

But at the same time, we can't ignore their selection of friends and we can't be reluctant to step in and help them think about their choices of friends..

Listen to what John MacArthur says about the parental responsibility to help your kids choose their friends....

This parental responsibility is one where you go on the attack. We can't sit back and wait to see how our children turn out and what friends they naturally choose. We need to teach them how to choose their friends. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:33 that "bad company corrupts good morals." The friends our children hang out with will have a direct influence on who they will become and that's why we go on the attack in helping them choose the right type of friends. Proverbs 1:10 says, "My son if sinners entice you, do not consent." Excitement, adventure, and ill gain are

what worldly people will entice our sons and daughters with, but we are to train them to resist such enticements. We must equip our children with wisdom so that they will develop the discernment they need to choose friends wisely. If we don't teach our children to select their companions carefully, the devil will gladly choose their companions for them.

Parents, do not trust your kids to make wise choices about what friends they choose..

And the reason you can't trust them is that they lack wisdom in what friends to choose..

You must help them choose their friends wisely...

Proverbs 13:20 is clear...

20

***He who walks with wise men will be wise,
But the companion of fools will suffer harm.***

A final aspect of wisdom for worldly living is found in verses 22-25 of Proverbs 13...

I entitled this..

VI. Wisdom and Whippings (22-25)

***22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his
[q]children's children,***

***And the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the
righteous.***

***23 Abundant food is in the fallow ground of the
poor,***

But [r]it is swept away by injustice.

24 He who withholds his [s]rod hates his son,

But he who loves him [t]disciplines him diligently.

***25 The righteous [u]has enough to satisfy his ap-
petite,***

But the stomach of the wicked is in need.

This chapter started out calling children to listen to their parent's instruction....

And it ends with the call parents to listen to God's instruction on parenting..

The first instruction is to leave an inheritance for your children..

Our first thought is naturally of material wealth, and that is a part of this for sure, but we must also leave our children a spiritual heritage...

And again, this is not a command as not everyone has kids and not everyone has wealth to leave, but

we can leave an inheritance of good biblical instruction to our kids..

Which truth be known is far more valuable than millions of dollars...

And the wisdom here for parents is to be busy living a life that will be a treasure to your children long after you are gone...

And it seems that part of that spiritual inheritance is to teach your children the value of diligence and hard work...

Verses 23 and 25 speak of the greatest consequence of laziness which is hunger...

And I don't think these verses are here by accident in a section on parenting..

Because kids learn their work ethic or lack of it mostly from their parents...

Hard working parents usually have hard working children and even grand children, and laziness is usually passed down from generation to generation..

Another aspect of parenting that the Bible is not shy to mention is the call for parents to discipline their kids..

Specifically to discipline their kids with the rod..

In fact, verse 24 is clear...

To refuse to use the rod is the same as hating your child...

Now, this leads to all sorts of questions about the use of the rod and corporal punishment in the home...

And though we don't have time to address every issue with spanking, let me give you a quick list of the use of the rod...

First, the rod can be your hand or it can be a paddle or wooden spoon or other object...

Second, the rod is used in love and never in anger...

Third, the rod is used less and not more..

If everything gets a spanking, it loses its effectiveness...

Fourth, the rod is reserved for the most serious childhood sins, like refusal to obey or outright disobedience to a known rule..

Fifth, the rod is never applied until the reason for its use is explained...

You dont jerk a kid up and spank him without telling him or her why...

Sixth, the rod is to be used in private in nearly every situation..

Seventh, the rod is to be used by the parent only...

Eighth, the rod should never be abuse..

Ninth, the use of the rod has a small window.

I am not a fan of those who spank older kids...

I know it is a common thing to say to our kids that they will never be too old to spank, but that isn't true..

For the most part, spankings should end with childhood...

As kids gain understanding, there are more effective ways to discipline and parents need to leave the rod behind..

Tenth, the rod will be effective as long as the word of God is effective..

Spankings have gone out of style in the general population...

And the reason for that is that people rely on psychologists more than the word of God...

And psychology dumped spankings long ago...

However, God's word still holds true though the whole world stand against it...

And when God inspired Proverbs 13:24, he meant it and he means it now..

God's word does not conform to the culture...

God's word calls the culture to conform to it..

Now, the question is always asked...

Why are spankings effective as a way to discipline our kids?

And I don't know if I can give a satisfactory answer other than God said it work work and I believe what he says...

You see, God knows the human heart better than anyone, and he has said that spankings are effective in correcting sinful behavior in our kids...

But even beyond that, God says that those who refuse to spank are not doing it out of love but actually hate their children...

That is a severe charge by God, but let God be true and every man a liar...

And wisdom tells us that parenting must include spanking for a while in the lives of our kids..

And to think different is to stand contrary to the word of God..

Conclusion

So, there are 6 places where wisdom intersects life in Proverbs 13...

Wisdom intersects with our words, our well-being, our wealth, our waiting, our walking, and our parenting...

And that is not even a scratch on the surface of where wisdom is found in this world..

It is literally all over the place, and God's word simply brings it out for us to see clearly..

My prayer is that we are so well versed in the Scriptures that we can see God's wisdom and use God's wisdom more and more as we live in this world..

Let us pray.