

Family Conference: Changing Gears | Session 3 - Proverbial Wisdom in Teen Years

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[0 : 00] Well, I mentioned last night that the book of Proverbs in the first nine chapters hangs together as a unit and it doesn't take a master divinity degree to figure it out.

! If you were to read that material frequently, you'd start noticing huge paragraphs in the case of the topic of moral purity, all of chapter five, all of chapter seven, half of chapter six.

It doesn't contain the kaleidoscopic variation that you see in the other part of the book of Proverbs where one verse about one thing immediately goes to a verse about something quite diverse.

This part of Proverbs hangs together as a unit. You could easily outline it by how often Solomon says, my son, my son. And whenever that happens, you know, it's a transition.

So no matter how the chapters are divided later by those who put the canon together, you can know, all right, he's moving on to new material here.

[1 : 01] And so I spent many months just pouring through the material and I've just tried to just bring it together into what are some of the, as you overview these nine chapters, what are some of the principles that get repeated the most often?

And so I've, I've tried to bring those two in this handout. And so I just want to begin acquainting you and an appetizer, if you will, to go back and use this part of God's word to acquaint your heart with what should I be expecting would be the, what's, what does normal look like in these young adult years?

And of course, you know, culturally we've created this strange period of adolescent where you're neither fish nor fowl. You're, you're neither a child nor are you an adult yet. And we don't culturally, most of us have any serious rite of passage.

We don't have bar mitzvahs. We don't have this market that says we now culturally in our community recognize you as an adult. And so we've ended up with extended adolescence, if you will, this, this no man's land that, you know, culture wide for many has extended into their twenties. Now we're still not sure if they're responsible adult or not. And so we all kinds of cultural factors we could analyze that have contributed to that. But regardless of whether the culture stamps you adult or still a kid, this, this unit of material is incredibly helpful because it's normalizing what, what are the bumps in the road, the temptations, the challenges that I should expect for me as a parent or for me as the young adult that would be happening during these years that we call the teen years or, or adolescence.

[2 : 39] I had the privilege once of teaching this in a room full of parents and, and, and their high school kids and, and just nuancing material in both directions the whole time.

All right. What's the implications of this for us as parents? What's the implications of this for you as young people? But we'll just focus really through one lens here of saying, there's no reason for you to be shocked by your child's temptations and challenges.

If you've read Proverbs one through nine, then, you know, based on the instruction given, this is what normal looks like. And what, what should I expect would be the challenges.

And when you're not shocked, you're more likely to be an effective ministry to your young adults.

And so it's great for you to just look at this material. If you don't have kids yet, if you've got little ones, can't imagine the young adult ears seems far away.

I know I sound like every other gray haired person. When I say to you, it will be here before you know it. That's a hard thing to hear when you're a mom of a nursing baby and you're up all night and you're like, it doesn't seem to me like this is going very fast, but somehow like a snowball, it just picks up momentum as it's rolling down the hill for sure.

[3 : 51] So hang in there. It doesn't get easier. It just gets different. It's like how encouraging, brother. Thank you. Just trying to be a realist here. So let's look together at the Proverbs and these themes that keep coming up during these nine chapters.

So I've just, just tooled it this way. Number one, you'll see this call repeated treasure, the rich blessing of your parents' counsel. Now that's obviously aimed particularly at young people, but by hearing that Solomon will repeatedly say, listen to me, value my words.

He uses beautiful imagery. Tie it like a, like we'd say, tie a finger around your, tie a string around your finger so you don't forget. He would say, you know, tie it on, on your head.

Wear it like a necklace that adorns your outfit. I mean, cherish it, value it, advertise it, make it prominent. The implication for you and I is simply this.

You should not be shocked, therefore, when during these young adult years, you see your children being tempted to tune into other voices, to tune you out, and to tune into their wisdom of their very experienced 15-year-old peers who know so much about life, right?

[5 : 05] And you're thinking, well, how ridiculous. Why would you listen to them and not me? I'm twice their age. I'm three times their age. You should just, you should not be shocked by that. You should prepare for the fact, and you should prepare your young people.

Look, you're going to be tempted to listen to your peers and not listen to those who have more life experience. You should treasure my words. I just value them. A little Greta Carinty had on a locket yesterday, and I was teasing her.

I said, do you have a picture of Tandy and I in that locket? No, it's a picture of my mom and dad.

And then I came to learn that the locket was her great-grandmother's. And, you know, here's this heirloom around her neck, and she cherishes it.

She's very careful with it, and she loves it. In essence, Solomon is telling his kids, that's how you ought to treat what I say to you. So the implication for you and I is don't be shocked then. Don't be hurt.

Don't personalize it. When you see them being tempted, this is normal to listen to other voices. The second thing is, if you're going to ask your children to treasure the rich blessing of your words, to hang on every word that falls out of your mouth, then you better make sure that what you're bringing them is timeless wisdom from God's Word and not a bunch of fears and opinions and preferences.

[6 : 25] If you're going to ask them to build their house on the rock, then make sure you're giving them a rock and not merely your casual thoughts, unexamined sometimes opinions and perspectives that maybe you inherited.

And frankly, a lot of them are more worldly than they are really informed by God's Word. So be careful. You have your preferences. Sometimes preferences, it's hard to tell. Is this a conviction or is this a preference?

Let me help you out with that. A conviction is something where you can either point to a passage or at least a principle from God's Word. And that's how you know that, you know what, it's grounded in some timeless truth that's bigger than me.

Then that's not an opinion. That's not a preference. That's a principle. But sometimes our application of a principle, we mistake it for the principle of itself.

And churches separate over those kind of things, so be careful. So one of the things, the advice I got when I came to Grace Emmanuel Bible Church almost 15 years ago was from the elders there.

[7 : 29] It's like, look, young parents need an older parent to come and say, how did you apply the principles? We've read Ephesians 6. We know what it says. But they need someone they can have coffee with and talk to and say, well, how did you apply that in your family?

And that's valuable, applied wisdom. But I was pre-warned, and it certainly I think saved a lot of confusion and heartache, by just saying, just be sure that you always distinguish between your application of the principle and the principle of itself.

So, so many times over these last 15 years, as I've taught young people privately or corporately, younger couples have just said to them, now, this is one of a thousand ways you could apply this principle.

But since you've asked, this is how we chose to apply it. If we have a Q&A; together on Sunday night, you'll probably hear me say that. Well, here's the principle.

Here's how we chose to apply it. But there are a lot of different ways to apply the principle. With your young people, make sure you're distinguishing between nothing wrong with having house

rules. This is how we're going to apply the principle.

[8 : 37] But keep tying it back as they age to, why is that your standard for modesty? Why, dad, is that your standard for media, what we consume and what we don't? Why are we making our whole family life schedule rotate around what's going on at church?

Why is that? Don't just say this is what we do. Keep bringing them back. Here's why we do it. If you don't have an exact chapter and verse, then at least have a biblical principle. Otherwise, it's just an opinion.

It's just a preference and not really a conviction. So if you're going to ask your kids to treasure your, the blessing of the counsel you give, then make it thoughtful.

I think one of the reasons for the Lord, as we mature chronologically as parents, and now our children are becoming young adults, sometimes the reasons those years are rocky and challenging is because the Lord's going to use that in our life as parents to push us back to the book.

Kids will start asking hard questions. And you'll find yourself getting defensive and nervous because you're like, I don't really know for sure. So you're forced to dig in.

[9 : 46] This is the faith-stretching part of the parenting journey. It should always have been filled with faith and dependency. But the mirage of control is removed during these young adult years, during these high school years.

I mean, before that, you could pretty much control all the influences, all the voices. No, we don't. We don't go to that family's house after school, and we do go here, and you choose their friends, you choose their activities.

Well, they're growing now, and it's time to, you're not looking for as much control anymore. You're looking for influence. The chastisement years are over. There will be other restrictions.

There's still consequences for sin, but they're more natural rather than the artificial use of the rod. So during these years, as you're trying to cultivate mutuality and mutual responsibility, and make no mistake about it, your faith gets tested in these years.

I remember the moment it hit me with our firstborn. You know, I'd been instructing him, and now he's, you know, he's just growing, and his mind is expanding, and the influences are expanding, and I was like, it hit me.

[10 : 53] It should have been there from day one, but it was like a shocking revelation. Wow, I can tell you everything there is to know about Christ, but I have no power to make you love him.

I can't make you love him, and I can warn you and tell you of the scars and the consequences of my sin. I can't make you not love sin.

I can't make you hate it. That is beyond my pay grade. I don't have that kind of influence in their heart. I can't do that. Only the Lord can do that. I should have been thinking that from the first second I held him in my arms, but the elementary years, you know, he thinks, my son thought I was amazing, and I could control all the influences.

You should prepare. There's competitive voices coming. That's number one, and you see that repeated in chapter one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, not so much in chapter nine.

Second thing that I've noticed as I poured over these nine chapters was that there's a call within Solomon to perceive the real truth about power and wealth. It's contained prominently in chapter one, and in chapter one, let me just remind you of some of the things that are happening there.

[12 : 10] Turn to Proverbs one, and look at verse 10. Here's a representation. He's saying to his son, verse 10, my son, if sinners entice you, do not consent.

If they say, come with us, let us lie in wait for blood, let us ambush the innocent without cause, let us swallow them alive like she'll even whole as those who go down to the pit.

So there's going to be enticing calls that just basically, you may say, I don't think my child's ever going to be, this sounds like a gangster. This sounds like joining a gang and a bunch of thugs. But there are a lot of different ways to develop this attitude.

In essence, the world is going to enticingly say, power and wealth can be yours, and there are shortcuts to get it. I mean, Solomon's not anti-power or anti-wealth.

Solomon has a strong work ethic, has much to say about laziness. We'll talk about that later this morning. So this is not anti-acquiring, this is just simply saying the world will offer a shortcut to what God promises as a blessing to those who work hard.

[13 : 22] So without working hard, we can have, through the abuse of others, we can take what we did not earn. So that's kind of the world's enticing offer.

Look what they go on to say in verse 13 and 14, such a lie here. We will find all kinds of precious wealth and we'll fill our houses with spoil. Throw in your lot with us, we shall all have one purse. No, you won't. You might actually, through criminal activity or some other shortcut, unethical way, you might acquire wealth, but this idea, throw in your lot with us, it'll be communistic. We'll all have all things in common. It's like, no, there'll always be a major thug who gets more than the minor thug like you'll be. And so a lot of Proverbs 1 through 9 is just coaching young people perceive the truth because the world lies to you. All that glitters is not gold and you could be easily fooled by fool's gold. And so that's what the world offers. What does the world actually deliver?

[14 : 26] Look at verse 15. My son, do not walk in the way with them. Keep your feet from their path for their feet run to evil and they hasten to shed blood.

Indeed, it is useless to spread the baited net right in the sight of the bird. But the truth is, verse 18, they lie in wait for their own blood.

They ambush their own lives. So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence or any other unethical shortcut to get power and wealth. It will take away the life of its possessor.

And so, here it is. You are called to train your young people. The world is going to lie to you about what success looks like, about the value of money and power and influence and there are shortcuts and ways to do it by wronging others.

I mean, it starts, honestly, you might read this to your kids and say, they're never going to join a gang and actually murder people to get their goods. It starts as simple as this.

[15 : 31] There's a pecking order in the lunchroom and you don't want to be seen eating with those kind of people. Come eat with these kind of people. Just the whole temptation to be in with the right crowd, just the cool factor.

What is that? The Bible doesn't talk about, that never uses the word peer pressure. What would the Bible call what we call peer pressure? Fear of man. Idolatrously caring too much what people think.

And so it starts there and Solomon's just using the extreme version of it here. So train your young people, train your heart as a parent to be ready. I must tell you the truth about power and wealth.

We were talking a few minutes ago at the break about the nature, some of the culture in Jupiter, there's Jupiter where I live and then there's Jupiter Island where celebrities live.

And so not unlike celebrity culture in Whistler, Jupiter has its own thing going with really powerful wealthy people. And I remember when we first moved to Jupiter, I was serving on the board of a home for unwed mothers.

[16 : 39] And the chairman of the board, my first meeting, introduced himself as an attorney who did estate planning law. And then the vice chairman was an airplane mechanic. So after the meeting, I'm just trying to get to know the guys and I'm talking.

I said to the president, the attorney, I said, you mentioned you did the kind of law that helps people plan their estate. So I was just wondering, my in-laws could probably use some help at their end of life and thinking through their estate and being wise and maybe you could help them.

And he said, well, I kind of work for a family. I said, oh, like a family firm like Jones, Jones and Jones. And he was like, no, I work for a family. You would know their name.

I'm just not at liberty to say, I said, you were on full-time retainer for one family. You work for a family. And he said, yes. And I just went, oh, that's weird.

So I turned to the airplane mechanic. Okay, blue collar guy. Maybe he'll be normal. And I said, so do you fly out of Fort Lauderdale, Miami, West Palm, where do you work? And he said, I also work for a family on the island.

[17 : 43] I said, oh, so you just fly them back and forth to their other home. He said, actually, they have a full-time pilot. I'm just their full-time mechanic. And I'm just like, how often does the plane break?

He said, never. But if it did, I have to be here to fix it. And I'm like, and so he says, I give 40 hours a week volunteering in this ministry. And this is, and when I'm needed, I'm going.

So I just remember going home to sit down with my kids and said, this is not the real world. Okay, we've accidentally moved to Disney. And I just need you to know, this is not how the rest of the planet is living.

That's my job. I live in a hedonistic, I mean, Florida's a runaway state. Nobody's from there. I married the last person who was actually born and raised there. Everybody else, right, you're

starting a new chap, you retire, you move there, you work hard all your life, you can't wait, you're going to move there.

You divorce, you move there, you can't wait to get away from your family. It's a giant escape hatch. And it's just a hedonistic world of pleasure-loving people. Wealthy or not, they live there because they love pleasure.

[18 : 45] It's not really that different from Titus as he's ministering the Isle of Crete, not that different from the culture of recreation and this beautiful place you live is.

So, you're going to have to train your young people and your young adults. You need to perceive the truth. And your message, look, if it's not God's word, do you really think you stand a chance in the couple of hours a week that you're instructing your kids of what they're up against when they're out in the world all day long?

Help them perceive the truth. At least acquaint them with the categories. And so, I don't have time to take you there, but go back and look at the second half of chapter 1, verse 20 and following, where Lady Wisdom is calling to those who are being tempted by the thugs.

Hey, come join us and enjoy power over people, pray upon them, take advantage of people and take the easy path to money. And she just gives a sad back story and a terrifying future story.

This is one of those places in the word of God where you cringe as you hear Lady Wisdom say and Lady Wisdom is just the personification of, she's a lady because that's meant to be how attractive God's wisdom is.

[20 : 00] And she's always in the public place offering God's wisdom. But this is that chapter, the end of chapter 1 where God says, after repeatedly, openingly, inviting you to the gospel and the wisdom of God, there's just this terrifying moment that says, when your calamity comes because you rejected me time and time again, I will laugh.

And so we almost cringe in thinking, is it right to think of God's justice in such a way? After the free offer of the gospel, the answer is yes. And so chapter 1 that from verse 10 on is just a profound way to acquaint the young adults in your home.

Look, you need to perceive the truth about wealth and power. Chapter 2 and chapter 4, I'm going to skip over chapter 3 for a minute. Chapter 2 and chapter 4 both are really just encouraging expend effort, work to acquire God-fearing wisdom.

And two whole chapters that explain here's the nature of God's wisdom, here's how you can find God's wisdom. We'll actually talk about this tomorrow morning when we're looking at Psalm 128.

I'll walk you through some amazing verses in Proverbs 2 as a cross-reference on how we gain wisdom, how you put yourself in a spiritual posture to be a recipient of wisdom.

[21 : 22] And then in chapter 2, the rest of it just talks about the blessing and the protections that come. I'm less vulnerable to certain kinds of sin and people and influence in my life when I possess the fear of the Lord that leads to wisdom.

And that's the message of chapter 2 and chapter 4, a call to expend effort, a call, a promise that this kind of spiritual effort will always be rewarded.

So all of chapter 2 and all of chapter 4 just extolling wisdom, how to get it, why you'd want it, what the blessings and benefits of it are. But as you know, Proverbs 1 through 9 begins and ends, another way you know it hangs together as a unit, is in chapter 1 he says, the fear of God is the beginning of this wisdom.

And in chapter 9 it comes up again, the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. And the fear of God is somewhat an elusive topic and that's why I'm going to preach on the fear of God in the home tomorrow.

If you're like me, most things I fear, I hate, yet I'm called to fear God and love Him. How do I pull that together? And how about this tension that there are certain kinds of fear of God that the gospel releases me from and other kinds of fearing God that I will carry with me into all eternity.

[22 : 38] And so it can be confusing and we'll try to bring some clarity on that fear tomorrow. But chapter 2 and chapter 4 will say, if you want the kind of wisdom and the protection and the joy and the reward that it brings, the starting place is fearing God.

I read through the entire Bible one year looking for and marking every verse that talked about fear of God. The next year I read through the whole Bible and trying to mark down every verse that talked about fear of man and just did a contrast study on those two.

And after several years of study and I've enjoyed teaching on the fear of man and just because that was the central idolatry of my heart from which the Lord delivered me. I was an affirmation junkie. Living for the approval of men was a cruel idol in my life from which the Lord has just sweetly delivered me. And so I've given a lot of thought to it and I've come up with a whole page of various people defining what the fear of the Lord is and what it isn't.

And then I was at a funeral and one of my colleagues was preaching a funeral for a precious member of our church and after all these years of thinking and writing and collecting definitions and coming up with my own kind of paragraph long definition he just said at a funeral this the fear of God is simply this believing that God is who he says he is and that God will do what he says he will do and whether the thing that he says he will do is a promise to be cherished a promise that you should cherish or a warning that you should heed either the sweet side or the hard side if you will of the Lord's character you must believe that God is who he says he is and that God will do what he says he will do and you can see why defined in that simple way why Solomon would say the fear of the Lord believing that God is who he says he is and he'll do what he says he will do which again Genesis 3 what did Satan tempt Eve to disbelieve that God isn't who he says he is he's not good and he won't do what he says he will do he will not make you suffer death if you eat that from that tree so fearing God is simply saying

[24 : 55] I believe you're who you say you are and I believe you'll do the good and bad of what you say you will do and when you believe that you are on the starting path of wisdom the reason I think this is elusive and you're going to have to help your children is that I grew up even as a church child I grew up in my early years with a view of God that frankly wasn't worth fearing it was all it was an over emphasis on the truth that God was near and imminent but in my early years there was no teaching that God was transcendent and holy he was just loving and good so when I first heard the gospel and heard Jesus loves you I was like awesome why wouldn't he I mean my mom loves me my teachers love me I saw myself as a good boy so so the gospel the early gospel influences so emphasized the love and mercy of God without understanding that that love is made more magnificent by realizing how holy he is how offended he was by my nature and my choices as a sinner his capacity to be offended by sin is infinite

I didn't know that and all that did was just magnify wow now when you say Jesus loves you I'm like you're kidding could he possibly love me and so if your children are not growing up with this enriched view of God then he's not a God worth fearing so when I read the fear of the Lord it was just utterly confusing to me in my early life why would you fear him he's all love he's all well I don't want to remove that and the thought of judgment does get removed through the gospel but fear and awe of him maybe help your kids if they've got a teacher they really admire a coach they would never want to disappoint for me it was authors I'd read all my life and then I'd get to go to some conference and actually meet this author who took up an inordinate amount of space on the hard drive of my mind this guy influenced me and then I go to meet him and what happens I'm like just don't say anything stupid nice to meet you it was just

I was simultaneously attracted and intimidated times a million that's what this healthy fear of God is I'm attracted to God's glory expressed through the mercy of Jesus Christ and I am in the best sense awesomely intimidated by him his glory draws me in and makes me lose my breath all at the same time present that God to your children to your young adults so that the glitter of the world will look a lot less bright in the brilliance of God's outshining glory and so teach them to expend some effort that this is I read something recently St.

Ferguson said the treasures of passages of scripture no scripture will never yield its treasures to the lazy right the treasures of scripture are not given to casual reading and lazy people who are they given to those who will dig in and expend effort and that's what chapter 2 through 4 says if you'll seek her like treasure seekers off the coast of Florida if you'll seek her like men search for gold and silver in caves then you'll find them so teach them it's going to require some effort the fourth principle page 2 on your handout encourage them plead with them teach them place your full trust in God and not yourself and that's really what Proverbs chapter 3 is about trusting God's direction trust trusting God's discipline when it makes his training of you when it makes no sense to you entice them with the rewards of that trust that's included in chapter 3 show them what the implications look if you're this kind of man who trusts in

God and not yourself it'll show in your life you won't withhold good you don't plan evil you don't contend with others and you will indeed fear God tell them in your own journey what's been the

temptation to trust yourself where the areas where you're still as a mature believer tempted to trust in yourself what have been the consequences of trusting yourself you can probably point to some bad decisions you made in life just boneheaded choices you stood at a fork in the road and you trusted yourself perhaps without even praying or consulting the Lord or what would be wisdom you got guided by worldly perspectives chapter 3 is just amazing so make no mistake about it look at chapter 3 verse 4 this is one of the best known verses in all of Proverbs trust in the Lord with all your hearts said a king to his young adult princely sons trust in the Lord with all your heart do not lean on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your path straight don't stop there keep going do not be wise in your own eyes this is the great temptation of young adulthood this

[30 : 31] I've got this I think I understand life I'm not a kid anymore you know trust me I know what I'm doing don't be wise in your own eyes instead what should you do fear the Lord turn away from evil this entire chapter of Proverbs 3 is an extended dialogue on just pleading with young adults you're going to be tempted to trust in yourself trust in the Lord it's a lot like what we heard last night in Psalm 78 what did Asaph say tell them tell this generation that the next generation may tell the next generation to put their confidence in the Lord and not trust in themselves this is a major issue show them that self trust is a form of pride the perennial and tap roots in all sin is self something pride is not just arrogance pride is self love self protection self trust self justification self defense you just name it self hyphen fill in the blank think of like in the

US Baskin Robbins has 33 different flavors of ice cream here it's like there are 3300 different flavors of pride don't be don't be proud in your own eyes and it would be proud for you to trust in yourself so that fourth principle place your full trust in God and not yourself number five takes up a great deal of real estate in these nine chapters and that is the issue of moral purity!

just layers of gilded lies that the world has put on top of power and wealth so you're going to have to use the scriptures to peel away the lies the way the world has glamorized immorality and so just as we said earlier perceive the real truth about power and wealth now Solomon spends two and a half chapters calling you to perceive the real truth about moral impurity and so do you have I think our notes are the same do you have on page three kind of a little block grid with passages like this all right this is my way of saying chapter two introduces the subject of immorality in this sense and we'll look at it tomorrow morning in our message on Proverbs rather Psalm 128 chapter two introduces the concept of the immoral woman the strange woman the foreigner and there emphasizes a couple of these categories so on the left on that chart on page three what you have on the left are here are the principles that

Proverbs two five six and seven share in common in varying degrees here are the principles that get touched on in these chapters about moral purity and about maintaining it when I do this as a separate talk I call it the folly of impurity the folly of it the world makes it look glamorous and positive and the scriptures make it folly so let's just read through those categories on the far left of your chart you want to be a pure man you want to train your children to be pure men and women here's what the scriptures say number one it has to do with being rightly related to scripture constantly treasure God's truth all four passages two chapter five chapter six chapter seven all have this same pleading listen to my words cling to scripture you will never be a pure person you'll never perceive the truth about immorality if you don't have your bible saturating your mind the second bolded category in the far left utterly avoid tempting people in places chapter two doesn't mention this nor does chapter nine but chapter five six and seven all say if you're never in a place where immorality is an option you'll never be immoral now of course he's not pretending that the immorality can't happen in the mind but he's saying in the real world you want to involve acting out on it one of the wisest thing you can do is avoid tempting people and places

I heard Al Mulder not long ago give advice in a podcast where he just said I've just made it my practice to never be alone with a woman who's not my wife to never be in a room alone with a woman who's not my wife guess what if I'm never alone with a woman who's not my wife I can never sin with a woman who's not my wife now that's not the same as saying that the heart couldn't sin in its imagination of course but that's pretty wise counsel and so that's kind of the point he's just saying at least take the practical step of making sure you're never in a tempting place and tempting people obviously we don't have time to look at two and a half chapters but you may recall in chapter seven that Solomon says I stood I had like a balcony seat and I'm looking out at the city and through the lattice of my window so nobody can see me but I'm watching and he said I watched a

young man go into the wrong part of the city at the wrong time of day in the evening in pursuit of immorality remind young people you'll play games with your conscience you'll go places online where it's not an explicitly evil sight but you know that on the sidebar there's a good chance or this new sight tends to have

[36 : 18] I mean the mind can play games with their conscience and that's what this foolish young man is doing going the wrong place at the wrong time that way he could say to his conscience I mean I wasn't pursuing it it just happened to me and you remember there's a woman who's waiting and she grabs him and kisses him and says you're just the man I was waiting for which is such a lie no no you're just waiting for the next guy to show up what a lie and he's how foolishly seduced he is just by being in the wrong place at the wrong time so constantly treasure God's truth listen to God's words avoid tempting people and places thirdly wisely discern the truth about the seductress this is interesting all five passages 2 5 6 7 and 9 all talk about this is how she looks on the outside but this is who she is on the inside this is how it looks it will be all pleasure but here's the truth only the dead go down to her

I don't know if any of you happen to be Dickens fans but every time I read about the immoral woman and how her steps go down to death and she invites you to a banquet in the grave I can't help but think of this character in great expectations Mrs.

Haversham who was this jilted bride so the guy she was going to marry doesn't show up on her wedding day and she stayed in her wedding dress then for decades she refused in this mansion to let any of the reception food be changed and so imagine candelabras with spider webs and rats on the table that have nibbled away at all the food and a dress that's now tattered the lovely bride has become a hideous monster and what would have been a party and a banquet has become a macabre scene I she's leading you to your death and that's not holding her responsibly he wasn't telling his sons you're not responsible he's simply saying perceive!

the truth just like the world will gild and lie about power and wealth the world will lie about the joys of immorality what movie has ever shown an immoral scene and that didn't put beautiful music underneath it and do you ever show the heartache of a family ripped apart by immorality or divorce not going to depict that in a film you're going to make it look like you can sin with no consequences nobody ever gets an STD in a movie nobody's health is ever compromised no one dies of AIDS in the movies nobody it's just what are you talking about we're going to make it look as it is not and! that's your kids the real devastating effects of it so in age appropriate ways tell them about your own sin your own failures tell them about your own guilt and shame tell them about your past in ways that will warn them about sin and the same way we get to overhear Solomon talking to his sons wisely discern the truth about the seductors the fourth category there on the left seriously consider the devastation caused by sin all five of the passages 2 5 6 7 and 9 mention this and then chapter 5 does something you'll see alone and that is that the second half of chapter 5 is this unique and powerful passage that says it's a call completely trust God's plan for holy pleasure and the second half of chapter 5 in contrast to immorality the second half of chapter 5 a father is saying to his young adult sons you should look forward to the beauty and joy of intimacy within marriage don't compromise it

[40 : 27] God has a wonderful plan and so he encourages his sons to look forward to the future celebration of married love and so and this is just God's plan for maintaining purity and look how much real estate chapter 2 chapter 5 chapter half of chapter 6 all of chapter 7 part of chapter 9 this is a huge issue and Solomon spends if you just multiply the sheer number of words he has more to say with sons about this than anything else you cannot outsource!

real talk about the issues of lust in the heart and activity with the body somebody's going to tell your kids if you don't and so it needs to come from you as they age and are more conceptual and experiencing more things you don't need to be shocked by the temptation of it and if you're reading these passages to them as they're growing they're going to know that you understand and that God spoke to it and that it's not a taboo subject I remember taking my son away trying to do a preemptive strike my firstborn and we went away for a weekend and I opened the scriptures and and I walked in particularly through all of Proverbs 5 and he may have been a little young and I may have been a little overzealous as a dad but guys were already beginning to say things to him on the playground at school and he's asking questions I knew it was time to you know if he's going to get clarity from me or he's going to get distorted information from someone else we had already discussed biology but now

I was introducing the concept of pleasure and how to handle that in a godly way and so he's so young and innocent and sweet and he looked at me and he said dad I can tell this is really really important to you I'm like yes it is son and he said but I just want you to know sounds disgusting and that that will never be a temptation for me and I laughed and said he I just said you know I just had to bite the inside of my cheek to keep from laughing and I said in five short years you will think that's one of the funniest things you ever said in your life because you are about to experience desires a tsunami of industrial strength desires and I used to tell him all time if you can't say no to turning off Minecraft you will never have the power to say no to some things you're going to desire far more than that in ways

I can't even explain to you and boy and that came back years later and I had no idea what you were talking about but you were right and because we could have with another of my sons an open dialogue I remember being so encouraged when he confessed to me some failure and we were walking on the beach and he said to me dad this is so much harder than I ever thought it would be and if I was ever tempted to think I was a good boy this struggle alone has proved to me I am not a good boy and that I am someone who needs a savior I could have laid on the sand and cried because that's that's all I want you to know if the word of God has convinced you that you're not good and that he is and that you'll never be righteous but he can give you his righteousness then mission accomplished now that's been tested and tried and a lot of hard ways since that early confession but that's what we're looking for so normalizing the topic and the discussion in the discreet and beautiful way that the scripture talks about it means you don't have to come up with ways to talk about it

God does it just right now I would not read Proverbs 5 to a 5 year old but I certainly would to a 15 year old and so this is an important issue in these years one of the changes from elementary to now from toddlers to this is just the sheer number avoid procrastination in urgent matters this is a way of talking about another major spiritual issue that has to be addressed laziness laziness!

[45 : 07] so you may have to extend it a little bit in this way I have a good work ethic I was trained to work hard I was incentivized my father-in-law was my first boss I learned from him how to clean a paint brush at a molecular level I mean if you're going to do something do it right and he taught me how to clean a paint brush and how to maintain properties so I was physically in the temporal world I'm not a lazy person and so I would read these proverbs as an adult about laziness and procrastination and sluggardliness and they really didn't sting me because I'm not particularly guilty of in the physical world being lazy but maybe think of it this way any delayed obedience in your life where you know God wants you to do something and you're not doing it if you extend the idea of being a spiritual sluggard into that sin you know you need to get after and you're just not being serious about it that conversation you know you need to have where you either need to seek forgiveness or talk to somebody about a concern you have in their life and fear keeps!

you from it any that letter you know you've needed to write that email you know you should respond to that follow up if you take it out of the realm of I'm not guilty of failing to clean the garage or take care of my lawn but all of us spiritually are guilty of putting off things we know we need to do so I think you should keep that in mind that the sluggard is not just the character who doesn't weed the garden he can be the person who lets the garden of his heart go to pot so chapter 6 the first 11 verses talk a lot about it here's a quick sweep but what I've given you on page 4 is beyond Proverbs 6 beyond Proverbs 1-9 I've just kind of principalized all the passages in Proverbs about laziness and number one be urgent in correcting financial foolishness that's what Proverbs 6 1-5 talks about number two be prudent in financial planning Proverbs 6 6-11 just read with me what it says go to the ant

O sluggard observe her ways and be wise which having no chief or officer or ruler prepares her food in the summer and gathers her provision in the harvest in contrast to the ant sluggard how long will you lie down O sluggard when will you arise from your sleep the answer is a little sleep just a little sleep just a little more a little folding of the hands to rest your poverty will come in like a vagabond and your need will arrive like an armed man a similar story gets depicted in chapter 21 but here here's the idea the idea is that the sluggard who said how long are you going to be like this they're warned and warned and warned how long how long how long he says just a little more just a little more just a little more put it off a little more put it off a little more put it off a little more and then suddenly it's payday and there's a sudden price to pay and it's like it comes in like a like an armed robber so picture you wake up in the middle of the night and there is a burglar standing by your

bedside scary and sudden and shocking but the only person who's really shocked is the sluggard look over in chapter 21 for a minute look how this same scene is depicted chapter 21 that's not the passage

I'm looking for maybe 26 that's not what I'm looking for chapter 24 this is my travel Bible you know in my regular Bible everything is marked and I can find it easily all right chapter 24 look at verse 30 there's a similar but some added insight look at verse 30 I passed by the field of the sluggard and by the vineyard of the man lacking sins and behold it was completely overgrown with thistles its surface was covered with nettles and its stone wall was broken down so here's the picture he's! the stone walls had begun to fall down nettles and weeds grown over it what does that tell you that this guy didn't weed for a week no for a month no for a year no this is like a multi-year neglected piece of property in other words it took a long time to get there verse 32 when I saw it I reflected upon it I looked and received instruction I sat and I just that field didn't get this way overnight this is what happens in the heart and so in verse 32 rather 33 he quotes what we read early in chapter 6 he's thinking how did this happen I'll tell you how it happened incrementally just bit by bit nobody woke up one day and said you know what I've decided that's it for the next three years I'm neglecting to do my work your surprised by this we've all seen this coming for the last three years where were you and the answer is in a delusional world and that's kind of the point of the whole [51 : 35] I mean teach your kids yeah the consequences of these little choices you're making they accumulate over time and then there's a payday and as your parent who loves you I'm seeing a pattern develop that's going to lead to a character I'm trying to warn you ahead of time yeah well I did it yesterday and nothing happened well that's not the point and so back to your notes on page four be prudent in financial planning so this is what you're calling your kids to do avoid the habits and character of the sluggards here's what it is it's a presumptuous life the rest of you work hard and it goes well he's just saying oh that's that's presumptions and other proverbs say he delays beginning a job because he's self indulgent what's he saying I'm too tired I'll do it later he delays beginning a job because he's dishonest

I can't there's a lion in the street that's not true well it could be a lion I mean there was a lion once I read about it on Wikipedia in this very street you understand what he's saying it's a character issue he's self indulgent he's dishonest he's obviously lazy and he ultimately defends his inaction because he's proud look at Proverbs 26 16 Proverbs 26 16 the sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can give a discreet answer the sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who actually are wise now if the Bible didn't tell me that I wouldn't put together pride and and slovenliness would you but here it is so he says you want your your your sons and daughters to avoid the habit and character of a presumptuous life but you also want them to avoid the consequences look at the consequences that are listed in the middle of page four unemployment

emotionally unfulfilled cravings always wanting and having dreams and visions and hopes and they never come to be unnecessary hindrances in life thorns and thistles are pictures of hindrances in life that come because you're you're presumptuous and lazy and then of course as we just read unexpected poverty that comes on like an armed robber unexpected to the sluggard everybody else sees it coming then finally in chapters eight and nine as I'm again just trying to give you an appetizer to this handbook let me acquaint you with the handbook on parenting from the old testament these calls in chapters eight and nine basically this put yourself in the posture of the teachable person pursue a humble and teachable heart respond to the invitation of lady wisdom she always stands at the crossroad she's never hidden it's like the glorious free offer of the gospel it's like

Jesus saying come unto me all you who are weary and heavy laden the issue the jury's not out on whether Jesus will receive you the jury's out on whether you'll come you say I'm standing right here come you have needs for rest peace in your soul come to me similarly!

you're calling them to enjoy the rewards of humbly learning wisdom you want to call them to recognize the eternal nature of God's wisdom and to heed the warnings that come from refusing to be a humble listener that's where Proverbs 1-9 takes us and you could use that little handout and slowly go through some of these principles we used it in our home it was many nights of just you know some family time around the scriptures so I would just commend it to you but mostly like we looked at last night in Deuteronomy number one priority love God have his word in your heart you need to so parents there is no reason for you to be shocked and surprised nor to develop this silly

little thing because I got to be honest with you I when our first son was born I had a list of people he was never going to grow up to be like and behaviors that he was never going to participate in for instance

[56 : 11] I'd see somebody with a kid having a meltdown in Walmart you and then there were teenage behaviors that were never going to happen and guess what the Lord just humbled me and just said this is not how this you don't get to declare ahead of time in other words weaknesses that I saw in young people I always attributed it to bad parenting I'm just a silent judgmental self righteous thing in my mind that if you see bad kids that means true absolutely not my point is there's no reason for you to make a deal with yourself my kids never going to do these things Proverbs 1 through 9 is saying every one of your kids going to be tempted by immorality going to be tempted to be lazy going to be tempted to trust in themselves going to be tempted to tune you out and tune in other voices!

They're going to be first then you'll just be less offended when you see your you go oh just like you said God that was going to that's why Solomon had to say to his sons apparently parents have been having to say these things to their sons for millennia and I'm just no reason for me to be shocked this is coming you got young kids this is!

prepare for it make your heart ready for the ministry opportunity that these years bring you man if you have not mortified your selfishness in the toddler years then I can promise you this God will say then I will make you deal with it in the teen and young adult years I will beat that selfishness out of you stop making this about you think about it a young adult's!

capacity! address your weaknesses in unvarnished language is painful especially when they're right but they're not saying it in a godly way man you got to be willing to absorb the personal offense and say something along the lines of you're right I do struggle with that and you can pray for me as a dad so man these are incredible ministry opportunity years that's why Paul David Tripp wrote that excellent book on parenting teens and he called it what it's the age of opportunity and I would say if you haven't read that book it's all about what the teen years are doing are just exposing idolatries in your own heart your own fears your own issues why do you think God gave you kids to make you holier yes he entrusted you got some ministry to do to them but man he brought them into your life I remember holding my first born son and thinking I thought I would be further along by now I thought if you're a dad you have it together and that's when

I realized no no God God doesn't entrust children to people who have it together he entrusts children here let me help you get it together and the pressure of this little one will do it it's going to reveal things in you you never knew were true about you but you know what else it does it magnifies the love of God like nothing else could ever do because I the person I love the most in the world I would not give any of my kids I wouldn't give their lives to save them and yet God says in Isaiah 53 it pleased him to crush the son for us so you you don't just learn negative things about your own sinful heart right the doctrine of total depravity is a theory until you have children and especially if you have more than one child and then it isn't oh now I see how depravity works you go oh now I know I'm depraved it's what it reveals in you that's what the

[60 : 15] Lord is up to but he also reveals things about the nature of him and his character because of the delta between how he is and how you are that just goes Lord your love is incomprehensible you gave your son amazing so I hope this is an encouragement to you these nine chapters are God's gift to us in navigating these particular years with young adults and so you can be prepared and you can prepare your young people huh dad warned me it would be like this he said if I couldn't limit myself to 30 minutes of Minecraft and say no to me that it would be much harder to say no to other issues dad was right so that opened the door of dialogue that might not have been there had we not talked about it ahead of time this is your chance for a preemptive strike if your kids are young and if your kids are right in the thick of it this is to help you avoid all kinds of wasting your time on lesser issues and going for not preferences and opinions but eternal principles so we've got work to do don't we and here

Tandy and I sit trying to figure out what in the world is our responsibility to these 10 grandkids I've never been a grandfather before and learning what's my lane and what's not my lane and I'm not their parent but it's so we're still so apparently as one author said the school days of a Christian are never over so we certainly don't look back smugly and say well we got this parenting thing down no we never really had that day on it but now that's well that that part's over and now we got a few years to learn how to be grandparent so what a privilege what a joy what a stewardship and we are

not ill equipped are we we just don't access the tools and back let's pray father thank you that you don't tell us to do things and then hope we figure it out but you tell us what to do why to do it and you even tell us in general principle how to do it now we still have to nuance within our family exactly how we'll play that out but you haven't left us without a witness and without instruction and we thank you for this unique part of scripture these nine chapters that prepare us for the transition from from toddler and elementary years into the adult years so bless my brothers and sisters take this word that was scattered on their heart water it and grow it and bring yourself glory by our compliance to it help us not be hypocrites who tell our children to trust in the Lord while we don't we tell them to depend on the Lord while the truth is when we see them making young adult decisions that scare us and frighten us and test our faith and then they watch us fear and panic and trust ourselves while we call them not to that would be exasperated we don't want our lives to undercut the gospel message that we preach!
Lord please change us grow us to increase the credibility of our witness to the next generation we pray in Jesus name Amen