

Proverbs 15

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[0 : 00] You have your Bibles turned to Proverbs chapter number 15, Proverbs 15. Mr. Adrian Rogers has a quote about Proverbs, and he says, A proverb is a general principle, generally applied, that brings a general result.

And that couldn't be more true. Proverbs 15 is full of contrast. It is a proverb in which you see wisdom compared to folly, this compared to this, this compared to this, and different consequences. So it essentially gives you two paths.

You can do this, and this is going to end up like this. Or you can do this other thing, and this result will occur because of this. Well, Proverbs 15, we're brought up with two different ways we can go.

Let's read the scriptures here. Proverbs 15, we'll read down to verse number 9. A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger. The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

Verse number 3. The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good. A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness therein is a breach of the spirit. A fool despiseth his father's instructions, but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

[0 : 59] In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, but in the revenues of the wicked there is trouble. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the foolish doeth not so. Verse number 8.

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination of the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight. And we'll read verse number 9 together. The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord, but he that loveth him followeth after righteousness.

And we're brought up to verse number 9. And with Proverbs, picking a main point can be difficult because with Proverbs, you usually don't get an imperative like you would in an epistle. You usually don't get, don't do this, but do this.

Or you usually don't get, because of this you need to become this. But with Proverbs, it's a lot of statements. Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. Verse number 9 is a little bit different because it brings us to something we can visualize here.

And it says, the way of the wicked. And biblically there's a principle, it's a truth, it's a pretty simple one. And there's really only two ways we can lead our lives, really only two ways we can go. And it's all over the Bible. We have the option to go our way, or we have the option to go God's way.

[1 : 57] We see it in the garden. God said, here's the rule. You can do what I say, or you can do what you want to do. And they chose to do what they want to do. We see it with the children of Israel. Children of Israel, you can follow God. You don't have to worship these gods.

You can do what he says do. Or you can harden your heart, stiff your necks, and do what you want to do. And all over scripture, God gives the option of going your way or going his way. These contrasts that we see in the book are wonderful, but they're really only signs in this proverb.

We see wisdom compared to fallenness, righteousness to wickedness, marriedness to brokenness, peaceability to wrath, a bunch more. But these symptoms that we see in this proverb, they're really only signs and symptoms of our heart. They're really only signs and symptoms.

And I think a lot of times in our lives we try to diagnose and try to fix symptoms, but we ignore the problem. We try to fix what's surface level, but when it comes to what's actually causing those issues, it's really easy to glean over them.

Put a little duct tape on it, keep moving. Well, Matthew 15, 18, Jesus says this, So this tells us that the actions we see in this proverb, the things that occur in this proverb, the things that we do in our life, they're all results of what's occurring in our hearts.

[3 : 06] So it tells us that it's just not fixing our behavior that's going to do it. What really lets us lead lives to pleasing to God is it's a heart change. It's God working in our heart. That's what we see. What we do is based in our heart.

That's why Daniel 1, 8, Daniel purposes it in his heart. That's why the betrayed Jesus had entered into the heart of Judas. We've been told in Proverbs 4, 23, keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life.

Psalms 51, 10, David even praised God, created me a new heart. So much of what we do is based on our heart. In a proverb, this proverb is full of symptoms and outcomes meant to help us diagnose our way, our walk, and our heart.

It's almost like a spiritual diagnostic test. So to go through this, don't just look at the symptoms, but look at what the proverb says, and we can take how we're living, and we can compare the two, and we can see what we need to work on. We're even told all over the scripture to examine ourselves.

2 Corinthians 13, 5, it literally says, examine yourselves whether you be in the faith, prove yourselves. 1 Corinthians 11, 28 even reads, but let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

[4 : 07] We're told all over scripture to examine ourselves. It's Psalm 25, 4, show me thy ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths. So we're told all over scripture, examine ourselves, check ourselves, make sure we know where our hearts are.

Well, this proverb is a proverb, a piece of scripture that God allows us to do so. The book of James says the Bible's like a mirror. You can go look in the mirror, see what you need to fix, get everything right there. In the same way, that's what we're going to do with this proverb here.

And when he brings up these ways, we can examine our way versus God ways. As summed up, this is what God has to say about the ways here. Scripture reads this in Psalm 15, 9.

The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. We just read that there. Culmination of how God feels about the ways we can go. Psalm 18, 32. It is God that girdeth me with strength and maketh my way perfect.

Yet again, we can choose to go our way. We can choose to go God's way. Psalm 37, 5 says, commit thy way unto the Lord. Trust in him and he shall bring it to pass. Psalm 128, 1. Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord that walketh in his ways.

[5 : 05] There is a lot of scripture you can go to about which way you're going to go in life. But then there's also a whole lot of scripture you can go to on choosing the wrong way. This is what the Bible says about going our own way.

Psalms 146. The Lord preserves the strangers who relieve the fatherless and the widow. But the way of the wicked, he turns upside down. So that's how God feels about us going our way. We read Proverbs 3, 31.

It says, envy not the oppressor nor choose any of his ways. Ezekiel 3, 19. Yet if thou shalt warn the wicked, he turn not from his wickedness nor from his wicked way. He shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul.

So we go to this proverb. Let's examine ourselves. There's two ways we can take. We've got God's way this way. We have our way this way. And I want to use what God has provided in the scripture to see which way I'm leaning. I want to use what God has provided here to see where my heart's.

I want to use what God has placed in this passage to kind of see how it should lead my life, to see what I need to fix, see what I need to bring to God, to see what I need to have examined and looked at. And then the first thing we see is we see some indicators here.

[6 : 02] This is what David prays when it comes to examining ourselves. He prays in Psalm 119, 10. My whole heart I have sought thee, O let me not wander from thy commandments. So as we go through this, take inventory.

Let's examine our lives and let's check up on a few things. The first thing we see is we get some indicators. God in this proverb gives us several indicators of things in our life that we can fix, things in our lives that point to a deeper problem.

And the first thing he starts with in contrasting is he contrasts our speech. It starts with 51, A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger. A soft answer, a patient, a gentle answer. This is what the Bible says about a patient or gentle answer.

In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride, but the lips of the wise shall preserve them. Not only that, but he patience is a product of the Holy Ghost working in us. So what we say is indicative of our heart.

What we say is indicative of what's going on in our heart. And the first thing it makes mention of is our speech. If our speech is rash, angry, ungodly, unholy, prideful, whatever it may be, it's an indication of what's going on in our hearts.

[6 : 59] That's what the Bible says in Proverbs 14, 3. In the mouth of the foolishness is a rod of pride, but the lips of the wise shall preserve them. Patience is a product of the Holy Ghost working in us. He not only brings that up in how we speak, how we address people, but he also brings up knowledge and foolishness, not what you know, but rather how you use what you know.

Life and death. Proverbs 18, 21, death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. Our speech as people of God is meant to build up. It's meant to edify.

It's not meant to tear down. The Bible talks about in James 3 this little tongue of ours. In it is life and death. We can build up. We can destroy. But God instructs us in how we should use our speech. Our speech as people of God is to edify.

Ephesians 4, 29 says, Let no corrupt communication proceed out of thy mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying that do administer grace. God's working in our heart, and when God is working in our lives, the things we say should exemplify that.

They should show that. When we hang around God and we spend time with God, what we say should sound a lot like what he says. That's the same thing that should be happening here. So much of what we say is indicative of our hearts.

[8 : 05] Ephesians 5, 4, Neither filthiness nor fooling, talking, or jesting, which is not convenient, but rather the giving of thanks is what we're told how to speak. So some of these indicators don't only include speech, but some of these indicators also include solitude.

Character is who we are in the dark. And who we are in private is also brought out to be inspected. Our private behaviors reveal much about how we feel about God. Our theology is often revealed in private. Proverbs 15, 3 even says this, The eyes of the Lord in every place beholding the evil and the good.

So not only is speech brought into light, not only is what we say brought into light, but how we live our lives privately. Our heart is also brought into the stand. Bible says in 15, 13, A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance, but by the sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

Basically our walk with God. A walk with God will produce joy. A walk with God will produce happiness. A walk with God will produce peace. And in our lives, if our heart is full of sin, if we cannot do right privately, if we're not doing right privately, no victory in our lives, you might want to examine that.

Not just that, if you're continually sorrowful, continually anxious, continually depressed, and there's no victory in it, you too want to get that looked at. David even prays this in Psalm 51, 12. He says this, Restore to me the joy of salvation.

[9 : 13] A walk with God brings joy. Salvation brings joy. That is a fruit of the spirit. Proverbs 15, 28 says, The heart of the righteous even study is the answer, but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

So much of this proverb is about our heart. Proverbs 15, 14, The heart of him that hath to understand and seeketh knowledge. Heart shows up over and over and over and over in this proverb. There's even a wise and a foolish heart God reveals.

Psalm 14, 1, The fool has said in his heart. So not only does God bring on what we say, but he also brings up how we live, what our hearts are, how the stance of our hearts are, what we meditate on in our hearts.

That's too brought into light. But not just that, our thoughts too are brought up. Proverbs 15, 20, 60, Thoughts of the wicked are an abomination unto the Lord, but the words of the pure are pleasant words.

There's even a right and wrong way to think. And as Christians, we're told how to think. Philippians 2, 5, Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4, Think on these things. We're told all over the Bible, how we should think, what we should think on.

[10 : 12] And if God's working in life, we're in his scriptures, we're around him, we're spending time with him, how we think begins to get molded and changed. Ephesians 4, 23 even says, Be renewed in the spirit of your mind.

God is supposed to work in our minds. We need to allow God to work in our minds and to change us. But there's also a wrong thought process. Romans 8, 7, Because the carnal mind is enmity with God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be.

If we're carnally minded, if we're consistently rebelling against God in our minds and hearts, that's enmity with God. The way the world thinks is enmity with God. We're told to be spiritually minded, not carnally minded.

But not only does do these things affect how we speak, how we live, who we are in solitude, but it also affects our worship. Proverbs 15, 8 reads, The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

How we worship is also indicative of how close we are to God. And we see all over the Bible that people worship, but sometimes it's just broken. Sometimes it's just broke worship. We see Cain. Cain went to worship God. Didn't go too well for him.

[11 : 14] We see that the children of Israel in the Old Testament there, they went to worship God, but oftentimes they didn't receive their sacrifice because their heart wasn't in it. And if our lives, our worship is lacking, that too might be indicative of a heart problem.

The Bible says the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. Not all sacrifices are pleasing to God, but he also describes a sacrifice made insincerely for the purpose of appearing righteousness. Is our worship real?

Is when we worship God, is it really us getting down on our knees, falling before him, and the awe and the wonder and the praise of his majesty, glory, and power that he deserves? Is it really us saying, Lord, we love you.

You are amazing. Thank you for saving me. Is it real worship, or is it just a show, just fake? Is it insincere? Is our heart there? Ecclesiastes 5.1 even lets us know that there is a foolish way to worship.

Keep thy foot when I goest in the house of God, and be more ready to hear than to give sacrifice to fools, for they consider not that they do evil. There is even a foolish and a wise way to worship that's brought into light here.

[12 : 14] So not only does what's going on in our heart affect how we live, not only does it do that, but it also shows up in pride. Another point of contrast giving here in the proverb is pride and humility. Proverbs 15.25, the Lord would destroy the house of the proud, but he would establish the border of the widow.

Back then, there was nobody more humbled than a widow. There was nobody more proud than somebody with a lot of money, a whole lot of things there. And the Bible says that God would destroy the house of the pride. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, would not seek after God, reads Psalm 10.4.

Proverbs 8.13, The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride, and arrogancy, and the forward mouth do I hate. That's a biblical principle here. God hates pride. And if we're struggling with pride in our lives, we are not close to God because when we're close to God, we're humble.

There's humility there because we realize how wonderful God is and how not wonderful we are. We realize how holy and how great God is and how much we don't meet up. It makes us esteem God higher.

It makes us see people as how God sees them. Pride is an anti-God attitude. And out of that pride in this story, there's also a notion, a leaning, an inclination not to accept instruction.

[13 : 19] Proverbs 15.5 says, A scorner, love, loveth not one that approveth him, neither will he go to the wise. Sign of pride is that we can't receive advice very well or criticism very well. We can't receive, hey, you could have done this a little better, maybe do this better.

We can't receive admonishment very well. That's a sign of pride. Proverbs 15.10 says, Correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way, yet he that hatheth reproof shall die. If we can't receive reproof, that's another sign of pride going on in our lives.

Not only do we see the implications or the things brought up here, we see the importance of those implications, the importance of those things, the effects that these attitudes and heart problems can have on one's life.

A lack of peace is a result of a foolish way. Proverbs 15.13, The merry heart making the cheerful countenance, but the sorrow of the heart, the spirit is broken. Proverbs 15.6, In the house of righteousness, there is much treasure, in the revenues of the wicked, there is trouble.

As believers and as Christians, we're told to let the peace of God rule. We're told to submit to the peace of God. Colossians 3.15, Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. We're told to let God's peace work in our lives.

[14 : 22] And as believers, we need to submit to that. And a product of obedience to God, a product of a heart right with God, the product of a way that is submitted in line with God's way, there's peace. In the house of trouble, there's wickedness.

In the house of the unrighteous, there's trouble. In the house of the unrighteous, there's chaos and all these things there. But in the house of one who's submitted after God, there's peace. Not just that.

A walk with God will produce peace. But death is a consequence of going our own way. Spiritually, in your life, in your relationships, in how you deal with people, financially, sin always kills. It destroys everything it touches.

Proverbs 15.10 reads this, Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way. He that hateth reproof shall die. In life, there is a correlation between receiving wisdom, receiving reproof, receiving correction, and living.

And as Christians, we should know better than anyone where we go to receive proof. Not only receive reproof from wise men, friends, family, people God's place in life, but we go to the scriptures for reproof. And if we can't go to God's word for reproof, as our life will dry up, 2 Timothy 3.16 reads this, For all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine and for reproof.

[15 : 30] And as believers, we are to go to God's word for reproof. If we're not able to do that, it's costly. And if you're here and you're not saved and you haven't gone to the scriptures to see what God would have to say about how you should lead your life, how you should be saved, how you should find the way to heaven, that too is costly because that too will result in death.

But not just that, happiness is also a blessing of going God's way. Proverbs 15.13, A merry heart maketh a cheerful count, as by the sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. When you go God's way, it's a whole lot easier.

When the children of Israel obeyed God, did what God said do, when they worshiped God, the land was fruitful, God took care of them, they had peace within their borders, there was unity there, but the moment they didn't obey, life got a whole lot harder.

It's the same way in our lives. When we obey God, it's a lot easier to have a merry heart. But there's also destruction for those who don't obey God. Proverbs 15.25, The Lord will destroy the house of the pride, but he will establish the border of the widow.

And this is to the ones who are going their own way. The ultimate end of going your own way in life is destruction. The ultimate end of going and doing what we want to do as opposed to what God wants to do is destruction.

[16 : 35] When we ignore God and do what we want to do, the end of it is not good. Destruction in life and it's also destruction presents consequences and it's destruction and disobedience to God. Romans 3.16 reads this about those who aren't saved, those who are working on their own way to heaven.

Destruction and misery are in their ways. Those who don't obey God, those who don't submit to God, destruction and misery are in their ways. Romans 6.23, we all know this verse, for the wages of sin is death.

Because of us going our way, because of us not obeying God, because of us going our own way, those, the lives, if we do that, that life leads to death. But as believers, we've, we've believed Christ.

We've trusted in the one who says, I am the way, the truth and the life. Because of that, we receive life from that. But if we're going our own way, we're not trusting God, we're not doing what he wants to say, at the end of that, it's destruction. And if you're not saved, it's one, it's destruction spiritually.

It's hell, condemnation and death. But practically in our lives, it's also, if we refuse to obey God, we'll just lead to unfruitfulness in our life. And there's life in God's way. Proverbs 15.25 reads this, the way of life is above to the wise that he made apart from hell beneath.

[17 : 41] You guys want to find life, you guys want to find joy, you guys want to find peace, it's in going God's way. John 14.6 reads this, this is how you find God's way. Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth and the life.

God's way is the way of Christ. We submit to Christ and we trust Christ and we love Jesus and we obey Jesus, that is the way that God would have us go. Jesus is the way to life, he is the way to heaven, he is the way to truth, he is the way to God, and the way we go God's way is we go Christ's way.

Not our way, not our people's way, not the world's way, but we go the way of Jesus. And not just that, there's an importance, there's things brought up, there's indicators, but then there's implications of the way we choose.

Not only does our way, the way we live, affect our lives, but it has cascading consequences. When we go our way, this is what the Bible says about it, death and foolishness is in the way of the wicked.

And that brings us to a simple kind of crossroads, there actually is only two ways. If you're here, you haven't accepted God's way to be saved in a life that's pleasing to him, you're going the way of the fool. You can go God's way, you can go your way, there's only two ways.

[18 : 44] Jesus says he is the way. Maybe you're here and you're seeing ways in which wandering has occurred in your life. I read this proverb last night and it was every couple verses that I was saying, ouch, that hurt, God, maybe you can turn this one down a little bit.

And there are ways in which we can work in our life, right? There are ways in which we can bring our hearts in submission and to meekness with God. Well, I challenge you, turn to God's way. We need to be meek.

The Bible reads, the Bible reads in James 121, with meekness received in the grasp of the word, we need to take what we want to do and take our will and take us wanting to go our own way. We need to find God's way and we need to bring our will into submission with God's will.

We need to go his way. His way is a lot easier. His way leads to more and better things. His way is the way of life. His way isn't grievous. His way is light. His way is much better than our way.

We need to humble ourselves. Proverbs 16, 18 reads, pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. Better is it to be, better is it of a humble spirit with lowly than divide the spoil with the proud.

[19 : 41] We need to be meek. We need to submit. We need to be submitted to God. We need to follow him. Jesus even writes in Matthew 5, 5, blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.

That brings us to the conclusion here. If you're here, you've seen this proverb, all those contrasts, the things that are brought up. Take what you want to do. Take us, the things that God calls foolish and unwise here and bring them into submission with what God calls wise and right and that way is a whole lot easier.

Isaiah 55, 7 and 8 reads this about going our own way. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous his thoughts and let him return to the Lord and you have mercy upon him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon for my thoughts and not your thoughts.

Now that my ways are away, saith the Lord. You're here. You haven't trusted Jesus to save you. You're trusting in good works, money, religion, anything like that. Yourself, I don't know what it may be. You're trusting anything that's not Jesus.

God says, let the wicked forsake his way. But maybe you're here and you've read this proverb and you say, I'm going my way and this, this, and this, and this. Forsake that way. God is merciful. We can always go God's way.

[20 : 43] Let's turn to God's way. Hosea 14, 9 even reads this. Who is wise and he shall understand these things prudent and he will know them for the ways of the Lord are right and the just shall walk in them.

You're here. You're a believer. You see ways in which we've wandered. We see ways in which we've erred a little bit. We see ways in which we've gone the wrong direction. If we're just, we should want to walk in the ways of the Lord because those are the only right ways.

I pray here as the pianist comes forward. Father, thank you for your stay. Thank you for your word, Lord. Thank you for your goodness. I thank you for your proverbs and the wisdom that they carry. Lord, I pray that you would help us be people who are meek, who are submitted to you, Lord, who follow the way that you want us to go, Lord, who don't go our own way.

Maybe you're here tonight and you are going your own way, whether that be in life, the way to heaven, whether that be in how you respond, whether that be in workspace, family, whatever it may be.

You're going your own way. Submit to God. Go his way. He's given us clear instructions from his word as a how to go his way. Follow Christ. You have a moment to pray here and Pastor Trin will finish up.

[21 : 55] Tonight, we should see our reflection in it and respond to him as the instruments play. Feel free to come to the altar and speak to the Lord. But I beg of you today, if you are not a follower of Jesus Christ, the reflection of God's word would bring to a point where you would recognize that and you would put your faith and trust in him.

And we would urge you to not leave here tonight without speaking to somebody about following Jesus with your life. I'm going to take the time and pray and I would encourage you to do the same. I'll come back in a moment to finish in a word of prayer.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.