

## I. Introduction to Proverbs Chapter 10

We move into Proverbs chapter 10 today. We have been coming through the book of Proverbs verse by verse and have been in it for quite a while. I can tell you we will be in it for quite a while longer, but there is so much in here. Last week we finished chapter 9, and what a great chapter it really was. It was another piece of the puzzle of our lives to get the understanding of God, the knowledge of God, and the wisdom of God, which we all desperately need.

As I said, today we are going to move into Proverbs chapter 10. From this point on, the flow of information in the book of Proverbs changes slightly. It is important to note this because these are things you want to make a reference to in the Bible and remember them. Up to now, we have seen four or five verses that will develop a teaching or an instruction or a doctrine, on different subjects. For example, you will get five or six verses on the wise man and the foolish man, maybe seven or eight verses on the strange woman and the evil man, maybe two or three on knowledge, wisdom, and understanding, and then maybe a couple on the fear of the Lord.

From here on out in the book, the format changes. This is very important to see when you come through. Now it is literally verse by verse, with each verse containing a positive and a negative part of the proverb. The first part will be positive in one verse, then you will have a colon, and then the second part will be negative. Sometimes it will switch up, and the first part will be negative, you will have a colon, and then the second part will be positive. But each proverb, each verse now, will be divided into two separate teachings: one negative, one positive, or one positive and one negative.

You want to note the change here in chapter 10 because the rest of the book of Proverbs, for a while anyhow, follows this format. We will enter into this that way and look at these things of how God views every situation in life. Now we are beginning to see, when we talk about understanding of God, instruction of God, and wisdom of God, we are going to see it in play. You are going to see in each verse where God's thought on the positive is, and then the negative aspect if you do not do it that way. It forms for us tremendous principles for life.

The book of Proverbs is a great book. We begin to get into the issues of life now that really are instructive to us, showing you God's thought on it and then how the world looks at it. We will put the consequences on both together here as we come through it today. Material like this is absolutely invaluable to have in your life.

Now I want to read Proverbs chapter 10, the first four verses here, and we will try to get through those today.

*Proverbs 10:1-4*

*The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.*

*Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.*

*The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.*

*He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

You can see as I read this, probably something that you never looked at before in Proverbs. You can actually see how the colons divide these up. One is positive, one is negative. Sometimes one starts out negative and then the positive is on the other end, but that is the way it breaks down. Most people that read Proverbs never look at that. They never stop and see that. Those are the kind of things in the Bible that when you get to that level that you can see those things and recognize those things, you are on your way to learning the Bible.

## II. The Special Nature of the Book of Proverbs

The first thing I want to draw your attention to is why the book of Proverbs is such a vital book in our lives. Proverbs should be high on your list of books. It really should be. I have told you before that if there is one book in my life that I could get, wish I could get total recall on and use it in everything in life, it would be the book of Proverbs. I have tried to do that for 40 some years, and not that I am giving up on it, but it is quite impossible; the book is so comprehensive with all that it has.

The book of Proverbs should be high on our list, not for the reasons you think, but because you did not get all of Proverbs that it is. There are a lot more Proverbs that we did not get. Now that sounds strange. You would think that, "Well, why would that book be high on my list if it is not a complete book?"

*1 Kings 4:32*

*And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.*

We did not get nearly that many. When I see something like that, everybody has their own perspective on it. But once you have been in the Bible for a while and you see how God does things and you understand a little bit about God, when I see something like that, then I know I got something real special from God. Because to me, it means that of all the things that Solomon wrote—and I understand that God is the author of all this; Solomon may have written them, but God is the one who inspired him to write it—God then, through His Holy Spirit, chose all of the things that He wanted to give me.

When I see that, then I begin to understand that that means that of all the things that Solomon wrote, God handpicked for me what He wanted me to have. That is the way you have to look at the Bible. Your attitude toward the Bible ought to be that it is your book, nobody else's. You ought to look at the person sitting next to you this morning and say, "I wish God would have given you the Bible that He gave me." That ought to be your attitude. Of course, we know that He did, and God gave everybody the Bible, but it is how you view it, how you look at it. That is an incredible thing when it comes to the book of Proverbs.

In fact, it is the same way with the Bible. That is when you get understanding, and you understand what I am saying. You will never look at the Bible or the book of Proverbs the same way ever again. I remember years and years and years ago, when I was just getting into the Bible, I accidentally stumbled upon John chapter 21, verse 25. It changed my whole perspective of the Bible. From that day in my life many years ago, I never looked at the Bible the same way again.

*John 21:25*

*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*

That says that God wrote, said, and did many other things. Do you think that Paul only wrote to the seven churches? I guarantee you he wrote more. Those guys that wrote in there, they wrote many other things, but God handpicked what He wanted me and you to have. It is like God looked at it and sat down and He said, "I want to give you this. I want to give you this," because He knew what I needed. You have 66 books in the Bible, 1,189 chapters, 31,176 verses, and yet every one of those are handpicked by God. You do not have it all, but you got what God wanted you to have.

The History Channel will tell you that there are lost books in your Bible. You do not have all the Bible. In fact, there was a program on just last week. I do not ever watch them anymore; they are all boring to me, but I understand where they are all going. The lost books of the Bible. There is so much of the Bible you do not have, and you need to have all of the other stuff for you really to be in tune with the Bible. No, not at all. That is the way the world looks at it. The History Channel will tell you your Bible is not complete. I will tell you you got what God handpicked for you, and that makes the Bible special. That makes the Book of Proverbs special. That is understanding if you can get to that point in your life.

By God not giving me everything He said, and yet it is His book, I take from that that He handpicked what He wanted to give me. Now I know the Bible is a gift. I get that. It is a gift from God. Supernaturally, God gave it down to man. I understand. We all like gifts, but you realize that some gifts are more special than others? They really are. You get a birthday gift for somebody, and you just pull something off the rack or get something off the shelf, wrap it up, and give it to them. That is nice, but that is not special.

I have to be honest with us guys here, and the women will probably bear this out, probably get an overwhelming rise of "Amens" out of this, but most husbands do that. They really do. Your anniversary is coming up, your wife's birthday is coming up. If you do not forget about it, first of all, you kept it at the last minute. You run down to the grocery store, down to the drug store someplace, and you just go down that thing and you just, that is it, and pull it out and off you go with it. I honestly had a guy one time years ago that did that same thing, and he got his wife a sympathy card for her death on her birthday, not paying attention to the card. You have to look at what you pick up. It is just that simple, but most husbands do that.

I know, and before, I will just say this to the women, some women do it too. Everybody got married, and when you got married, you all got nine toasters, or four or five blenders. So, you know what you do? You stack them away someplace, and the next wedding you go to, you give them one of your toasters. That is how it works. That is good. Everybody needs a toaster, but that is not special.

We have a lot of couples getting married around here, and I appreciate it, but I am not saying you are not special when you get married. I am not saying that, and I am not even suggesting that. But every once in a while, something special comes along. A while back, about July or someplace, Justin asked Angela to marry him. You get an engagement ring when you get married, right? But Justin, you wanted it to be special. He took his grandmother's diamond, if I have this story right, took it out of the setting, then put it in a brand new setting, and then gave her that ring. That is special. That is special. You know why? Because most of the guys in here got their engagement ring off that TV channel that you buy stuff off of. That is why. That was special. Or, like the one guy I knew, gave her a zirconian diamond. Told the girl that it was so special because zirconian was mined on the planet Zicon. She believed him.

So to me, when I see Solomon wrote 3,000 proverbs, and I only got about 200 or 300 of them in here, that is special to me. That is something special to me. I know that that is something God did for me. I can just see Him now, sitting up there, eons in the past, with me on His mind. He did not have time to think about you because He is too busy thinking about me. And He was thinking, "He will probably need this. He will need that. I am going to give him this. I am going to put this in here. He will not need that. And he will not need this. But he needs this. He needs this. And he needs this." That is special to me.

### III. Proverbs 10:1 - A Wise Son and a Foolish Son

Let us look at some of these here, and we will look at the two parts here as we come down through it. These are something special that God gave us.

*Proverbs 10:1*

*A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.*

Remember now that I do not want you to forget this, that we know that all Scripture has three basic applications to it. So when he says, "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother," historically, we know he is talking about his own son, which we know to be Rehoboam. If you know a little bit more about the Bible, you know that Rehoboam's mom was the Ammonite whose name was Naamah. So we know that historically he is talking about that.

Doctrinally, prophetically, "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother." Doctrinally, in the Old Testament, it would be the nation of Israel. The mother of Israel, we know, is the city Jerusalem. In a doctrinal sense, in the New Testament, it would be the church. Our mother from the book of Galatians is New Jerusalem; the Bible says New Jerusalem is the mother of Israel. But inspirationally, just so you understand where we are going here,

inspirationally, it will be any family with any mother and father and their boy, and it is an absolute true statement. It is one of the great true statements of life that you learn from.

Now, I need to explain this. He is addressing only sons here, not daughters. That would be confusing to some people, but we need to put it into a context. Israel, as we know, in the church from a doctrinal standpoint, is God's son. We know that. But yet at the same time, you never find daughters of God in the Bible. They are always sons of God because the Bible knows that when you got saved, you are made in the image of God.

*1 John 3:1-2*

*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.*

*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

He is talking to men and women. So I just want to put that into a context for you, understanding that historically it is a cultural deal. It is. But inspirationally, it can apply to a son or a daughter. But in the principle here, he is talking about a boy that is in the family. So I just want you to know that, keep it in the context.

From a practical, inspirational standpoint, when it comes to having children, most fathers want a boy. Not all of them, there are exceptions to it, but most down through life will. Most dads want a boy because they want to grow up with a boy and they want to do those things. Most dads want a boy. It is okay. Nothing wrong with that. What I am about to say does not mean that there is something spiritually wrong with you if you want a boy versus a girl. Some people want a girl, but generally speaking, most fathers want a boy. In their mindset, the way they are thinking about it, they want to have a boy grow up with them. They think in their mind they can do a lot more with a boy as a dad than with a daughter. I understand that.

Dads take their boys out hunting. Most girls do not want to go out hunting. I mean, they just do not. There was a tragic little story down in Texas someplace where that little 11-year-old girl, her mom and dad took her to a firing range where you could fire full automatic weapons and put an Uzi in her hand, a full automatic Uzi. An 11-year-old daughter, a little girl, give her a full automatic Uzi. She fired it, and of course, anybody who fires an Uzi knows that it pulls up and to the left when full automatic. The guy standing over here is the instructor, a bad place to stand. And she shot him. Now if my daughters had been doing that, everybody in the place would have been dead. They would have sprayed the place like bug spray. But I am telling you, that is not maybe what a girl should be doing. I mean, I know that there are girls who like to shoot, girls who like to hunt. I get it. But I am not sure a full automatic Uzi is in the game plan on some thing. Maybe I am wrong. But her dad wanted to take her out, wanted to macho her up. He probably never had a boy, so he stuck her out there. He said, "My daughter is going to learn to shoot an Uzi." Okay. She learned the hard way.

Dads like to take their boys out fishing. Most girls do not like to fish. I would never take my two girls fishing. I mean, absolutely, they would not even sit on the dirty boat seat. There is not

enough handy wipes on planet Earth to wipe that seat off. And I could see both of them taking them big old fat night crawlers out and hooking them on a hook. That is never going to happen. I am telling you, that is just the way it works. There are some exceptions. My two girls are not. When we used to go, we still go, we go to a motel and stay overnight someplace. She takes her own sheets. She takes her own blankets. And when it comes to going to the bathroom, she has her own biological radiation proof suit that she wears. I do not know what to tell you.

They like to play sports. They like to play baseball, football, soccer. Dads like to encourage them, to watch them vicariously experience their own life with their own son. Now, I realize that today the girls are doing that too. I understand it. But it has only been the last 20, 30, 40 years that that has really come on. Because traditionally, it is a man thing. I know it goes back hundreds of years. The kings of England, the kings of France, the kings of Spain, if you know anything about European history, they did not want daughters. They wanted sons. They wanted sons so that the heir on their throne was a male. I know that does not fly today in the world that we live in with women equal. I get it. I am not saying it was right. I think I know for a fact that two of the greatest queens that England ever had turned the whole world around because she believed the word of God. So I do not always buy into it. I am just telling you the way it is.

Henry VIII had six wives. He killed a bunch of them and got rid of them and kept getting more. You know why? Because the ones he had kept just producing girls. He wanted a son. And finally he got one, Edward VI. You see him on cigar boxes a lot. That is a true thing. That is the way it works.

Now, I can speak from limited experience here because of both our children we had. We never had any boys. I had two girls. For me, it was never an issue one way or the other. But I will tell you right now, in front of everybody here, I would not trade my two girls for 100 boys. I mean, now that I have had them and I had them up there, I just would not trade my two girls for all the boys in the world. But it is all how you approach it. Somebody says, "Well, I really want a boy." I understand it. I get it. Nothing wrong with that. But I am telling you, it is generally true, but there are exceptions to it. I never had any sons. But yet when my daughters got married, they gave me two of the best sons a man could ever want or ever have. So it is a win-win for me. I do not think in terms of son-in-laws. I think in terms of sons. Son-in-laws are not even in my vocabulary. They are my sons. They love my two daughters. They are good to them. They provide for them. And yet they know how to handle them when they get out of line. They know how to do it without showing any bruises up a couple of days later. That is vital. So I understand the verse. I get it. I understand how it works. And I know that when it says a son, but it also can work both ways. I just want you to understand that.

Let me say this, and I probably better throw this in just so I put the whole package together here. In my understanding, and the job that God has given me to do, I totally understand why God never gave me any boys. I am a different case than most guys that you find in life. God never gave me sons in a physical sense because He knew that I would have to be the father spiritually to hundreds of boys in the ministry, and girls too, who never had a real spiritual father. The Bible says you are sons of God, and for the job God had given me to do, He knew I was going to have to take hundreds of sons on and be there for them and help them through things and be the father

spiritually unless they did not have good fathers. Some of them did, some of them did not. But they did not have the spiritual fathers, and their fathers wanted nothing to do with them. So I had to be the father to them. A lot of the guys around here call me dad. They call me pop. I do not appreciate it. They start calling me grandpa, we are going to have some words at that particular point in time. But I get it, and daughters too, because they are sons in God's eyes, sons of God. But in my way of thinking, it would have been totally unfair for me to have boys, because I know that there have been times when my girls have suffered because of what I have had to do, but it would have been totally unfair for me to have boys and then have to be with other guys and take care of them, and it would not have been fair to my guys, my own boys. So I understand what God is doing, and I am good with it. I understand. So God just worked it out that way, and I am fine with it. I got the two best girls in the world, two best sons in the world, and probably 100 or so other sons out here that were just as tight as we can be. My whole life has been taking young men and young ladies who want to learn the Bible, who want to get in the Bible, who want to get to where they want to get in life and help them get there. That is the job that God has called me to do. I get it. I understand it. But I understand what Proverbs is saying here.

Only a son, the firstborn son in the family, will be the second in command under the father. He gets the largest part of the father's inheritance because of that. Now that is not so much true in the U.S. anymore, but it is true around the rest of the world if most of us do not get out much. In the Muslim world, sons are number one. I always kind of laugh when I hear the news broadcast that all the mean Americans bombed so-and-so Muslim general, Hobaca, Hobaca, Homama, or whatever his name is, and two of his daughters were killed in a raid, and he is greatly distressed. Let me tell you something. When you hear stuff like that, you know that is nothing but propaganda. Muslims care more for their dogs than they do their women. If it is not a son, you do not count. That is just that culture. All around the world you find it. Most countries, most cultures, like I said, sons are number one, all down through history.

The reason for that is a father will take pride in his son's accomplishment because in his eyes it reflects back on him as a man. That is what it is all about. It is easier to bond with a son than a daughter from the world viewpoint or how the guy looks at it. Not necessarily true. In the old days, when you had a son and he grew up, the American Indians, when your son grew up, he wanted to be brave, be a brave. And to be a brave, he had to do certain things. They took him out hunting one time, and he killed his first deer. He had to go over there and cut his throat and drink the blood out of that deer. It was like a rite of passage to manhood. The Vikings used to have their kids grow up, their boys grew up, and a dad took him out, gave him his favorite knife because now he is of age, or his favorite club or whatever he gave him. And he had to go out and he had to kill somebody. Now when he killed somebody, now he is a man. That is how it has all worked down through history. That is the way it goes. And dads, they take him to baseball. Dad says, "Help me throw the ball. Help me with my passing game. Let us shoot some hoops, one on one with dad." With a daughter, it is a little different. "Hey, dad, what outfit will match up on my Barbie doll with the purse in my shoes?" I get it. I understand it.

So the Bible says in Proverbs 10:1, "A wise son maketh a glad father." Fathers are proud of their sons. Now you can take that into the biblical sense because God was proud of His Son. He said,

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." He says in the book of Psalms that He is the apple of my eye. You see it on cars all the time on bumper stickers. "My son is an Eagle Scout." That is a great thing. "My son is a soldier or a Marine." That is a great thing. "My son is an honor roll student" or "My child is an honor roll student." That is a great thing. Fathers take pride in that. But in all the years of my driving, and I have driven all over the world and all over the country and certainly all around Kansas City, all the bumper stickers I have seen, I have never seen one that said, "My son just got a DWI." "My son is a dope addict." "My son is an alcoholic." "My son just got some girl pregnant. Come celebrate with us." Well, I have known the feral pro-parents that have done that. But anyway, you do not find that.

Now you and I as God's son, I do not want our Father to be proud of us in a spiritual sense. You should. You ought to look at it in a spiritual eye that you are out there doing something for God, and you are either teaching someplace or to the church. "Let him go. Look what he is doing. Look how good he is." One of the things that shows me that God's people really have no relationship with God today, you know what it is? It is a simple thing. They do not care anything about embarrassing their Father. Never even thought about it.

Then the second part of Proverbs 10:1. And boy, this is so true. "The wise son maketh a glad father." That is positive. "But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother." That is negative. Now this is a tremendous life concept. And brother, it is true. In many cases today, too many. The son turned out to be a fool like Solomon's son did. I guess there is no bigger fool in the Bible than Rehoboam. Sometimes they grow up and it is worthless. Because you are one embarrassment after the other, one headache, one heartache after the other. They turn out to be everything that you never wanted them to be.

Now the verse is a rich verse because it shows us many things. It shows how differently a man and a mother deal with their children's issues. A son in this case, but in reality both. The father usually deals with a failed son in total anger. Not always, but 98% of the time. Most generally. He is mad at the kid for what he has done. How he has failed. How he is worthless. It comes back to how he has embarrassed me. What are people going to think? This is especially true of Christian parents who get to the point in their life where they think that they have got some high prestige in the church someplace, and their kid screws up, and therefore it reflects on them. And it is an embarrassment to them.

Now his anger would be okay if it was anger in the right place at the right reason. But father never gets it. I do not know how many times I have seen fathers wonder why their kids will not come to church on Sunday morning, and yet when the kids were growing up, you taught them it was more important to play ball on Sunday morning than it was to be in church. Then you wonder why they screw up. You teach them all the wrong things because you want them to be successful in playing ball. Well, maybe he can get a scholarship. Well, maybe that is all good stuff, but you know what? Never at the price of what God wants him to do. It is just that simple. And now it is his fault. Many times he cannot deal with the principle of the fact that everything rises and falls on leadership, and his anger at the child is nothing more than masking his failure as a father. I get it.

But moms always deal with it differently. She carries the heaviness of it all that a man, most men, will just never understand. She is made different. She gave life to that boy, that child. She carried that child for nine months. He breathed her air, her blood circulated through his veins. And there will never be any father who can build that kind of bonding experience no matter what. She took care of him. She changed his diapers while dad was at work. She held him when he cried, when he fell down and skinned his knee. She nursed him back when he was sick. That is why no matter how big the boy gets or how far away he lives, you never talk bad about his mother.

I have had kids whose mothers were absolutely worthless. They were absolutely, absolutely worthless, and they did nothing for these kids that was spiritually positive. Their life was one total disaster after another. But when you are dealing with the kids, I am always careful never to say anything negative about the mother unless the child brings it up. And even then, I am very, very cautious of what I say because you know what? I have heard her many, many times at the end of the day, no matter how rotten she was, no matter what she did, it was not right, no matter how many times she had been married, how many things she screwed up her life in, "She is still my mother." That is a great principle.

In sports, when a guy does some great thing out there and they interview him, you know what he says? "Hi mom." He does not say "Hi dad." He says "Hi mom." When they ran the battlefields in World War II and the beaches or in Korea and the Chosin Reservoir or in the jungles of Vietnam and the boy is laying there with his guts blown out with a pool of blood, the last cry out of his mouth is for his mother, not his dad. No matter what the circumstances or how it happened or who is to blame, when I find myself in dealing with those kinds of situations, I always feel bad for the mom. When she loses her son to sin or her daughter, I always feel bad for them. But it is the mother, the mom, who more than anyone else knows and carries that heaviness of her child in her heart.

The reason for that many, many times that she even adds to that is because she knows that she is number two in command. I do not know how many times I have had moms say to me, "You know, what am I going to do? I want to do what is right with the boy, but it is my husband. He will not do what is right." I want to tell you something. I have seen husbands that did not want anything to do with God and the mother did, and they took that boy. I have seen dads take that boy out and teach him how to smoke his first joint. Take him out and buy him his first marijuana cigarette. Buy him his crack. I have seen it come to the point where mom got so brokenhearted because after the boy got hooked on it, his best smoking buddy was his dad of drugs. I am telling you, mom gets frustrated because she feels like she is in a no-win situation. She is number two. The dad has more influence. She wants her boy to do what is right. She tries to do what is right, but she has got a deadbeat husband who is part of the world system, and it frustrates her, and it adds to the heaviness of what she goes through.

I understand that in a biblical sense because I have had kids in my life that I thought that in my church over the years, in my life over the years in the ministry, that really had great potential. I really thought they could really do good, but they were screwed up from one end to the other, and they were screwed up because the parents were screwed up. I would have the parents come

to me and say, "Help my boy, help my girl." In a couple cases, after exhaustively trying and getting nowhere, I said to both of them, "You know what? I just cannot overcome what you guys have done to him or her as parents. I cannot turn it around." That is frustrating, and many times a mom feels that. Many times she carries that heaviness of watching that boy that she nurtured, that she brought up.

I am going to tell you something. There are more. You go down through the Philadelphian church age and find some of the greatest preachers you ever saw in your life, some of the greatest evangelists, some of the greatest missionaries. It may not be in the books written about them. It may not be in the annals of history that you can get your hands on, but I guarantee you, at the judgment seat of Christ, the reason why those boys and those men are out there and did what they did, because there was a mama praying for them every day of their life. I guarantee you. And when the father gets mad and blames the son and goes to work and lets other things fill his mind, the mother, she cries herself to sleep every night and carries that burden of heaviness in her heart. She just worries and frets. It is a heaviness in her heart that no man on this earth will probably ever be able to understand. Proverbs 10:1, my friend, is a great principle on life. And then the father not understanding where the mom is at, this is how it goes, compounding effect, just leads to other issues in their marriage. But that is another study. They get at odds with each other, anger comes in, bitterness comes in, it is a real mess. But there is no truer statement than Proverbs 10:1, and it is positive and it is negative.

#### IV. Proverbs 10:2 - Treasures of Wickedness vs. Righteousness

*Proverbs 10:2*

*Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.*

Now see, there it is reversed. There is the first one negative and the second one is positive. It is just the opposite of what you have before. Notice here, he is not talking about a particular person. It is not the treasures of the wicked, but treasures of wickedness. In the verse it says that any wickedness will not profit you in the end. That is a true statement. It is something that the quicker you learn it, the better off you are going to be.

The Bible is a great principle found in 2 Timothy 2:5, and it is one we all ought to remember.

*2 Timothy 2:5*

*And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*

What he is saying here is this: anything you do in life and anything you get in life, it is no profit to you in life if you did not do it right and get it right. That is what he is talking about, running lawfully. Riches gained by wickedness will always evaporate into more wickedness. People who try to get ahead by not being honest and fair might look like they do prosper, but they never do.

There have been many a businessman that was not satisfied with the money he was making. And he started to do some underhanded stuff to make more money, and he makes hundreds of

thousands or maybe even millions of dollars. But when he is caught, he spends three times that much in legal defenses and still goes to jail. It did not profit him a thing. About 10 years ago, there was a doctor over in Kansas, some of you probably remember this, he had the cancer drug, and he was watering it down. And he was giving cancer patients less than they were paying for, making more money because he could make the drugs go farther, a very expensive drug. But the people were not getting the full dose, and many of them died. I do not know how many millions of dollars he made. But when he got caught, the final charges, it cost him much more than he ever made. About 300 lawsuits, \$2 million in fines, and 100 years in jail.

People cheat on their income tax. You never get ahead that way. Mechanics. Everybody is afraid of taking their car to a mechanic because you do not know what is wrong with the engine. He could charge, and there are how many times you see on Channel 9, Channel 5, Channel 41, these undercover guys that go in and these mechanics charge you for things they do not ever do. Happens all the time. I personally knew a pharmacist years ago, and the same man, nicest guy you ever met in your life. Found out years after he was into this thing that he was into Medicaid fraud, and he was defrauding the government for false charges in Medicaid. He probably ripped the government off for three or four millions of dollars, and he finally got busted. He went out and killed himself. Never enjoyed a dime of it. You never do. The verse is true. The true proverb.

Now, I always like to give you examples of things in the Bible that illustrate that, and in the Bible there are two great examples of this proverb. One in the Old Testament, one in the New Testament.

*Genesis 37:28, the story of Joseph and his brothers selling him to the Midianites for 20 pieces of silver.*

*Matthew 26:47-50 and Matthew 27:3, and that is the story of Judas selling out Christ for 30 pieces of silver.*

They both got the money, riches, by wickedness, but neither one of them ever got to enjoy the money. The brothers, after they sold Joseph, they go through a number of years of famine, destitution where they lose everything, and they did not get a thing out of what they did. Judas goes out and hangs himself and goes to hell, and the treasures of the wicked profit both of them nothing.

Now look at the second part of verse 2, "but righteousness delivereth from death." The verse is real simple. The Bible, if you apply it, you get its principles, will deliver you from that kind of lifestyle. There have been many a man who committed wickedness to gain riches, women too. You read about it all the time, somebody concocts a plan to kill their spouse to get the insurance money and winds up in the gas chamber or prison for the rest of their life. Or a man held up a gas station or liquor store, got \$30 in his pocket out of the cash register, but wound up in the process killing the owner and got the electric chair.

Now there is a lot of talk today about the death penalty. I do not know where you are at with it. If you are a Bible-believing Christian, I know where you ought to be at with it, but I do not push my viewpoint on anything else. But I want to tell you, I think the death penalty for murder is a

good thing. I am not a liberal and I am not a Democrat, nor am I a Republican. I am a Bible-believing Christian. And in the Bible, you find capital punishment taught before the law in Genesis 9, during the law in Exodus 20, and after the law in Acts 25. So the Bible takes a stand on it. And I will tell you what, Missouri is a state that boy, she does not miss a trick. She is killing them just like that. Only a month goes by and somebody is not getting a needle.

But a lot of talk today that people do not like it. They do not want a murderer who raped four ladies or killed this person or filtered that person or did this. They do not want them suffering. Now, I understand where our society gets that mindset, but that is not the Bible mindset. I am telling you. And I have been asked this before many, many times. You see, the Bible says if you shed blood by man's blood, your blood shall be shed. Simple as that. And I get people ask me all the time, "Well, you know what? Here is a guy that killed somebody. He murdered some gal. He raped her. He did this. He did that. You know, he got in prison. He has been on death row for 15 years when they worked through the appeal process. But in the process, he got saved." Glory to God. He is saved now. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord is right. Now what do we do? Kill him. You think getting saved erases the fact of what you did? If you really got saved at this point, you ought to say, "Now I am saved. I am going to take responsibility for what I did. I am going to be executed next week. I am just glad I am going to heaven now instead of going to hell." That is how it ought to be.

Now you know why I speak like that? Because I am not afraid of the death penalty. You know why I am not afraid of the death penalty? Because I am not planning on killing anybody. I just want to live my life in peace and righteousness and run as lawfully as I can. You see, when you live a righteous life and you try to be as close to God as you can, you do not do those things. Those things are the farthest things from your mind. That Bible will deliver you from that kind of stuff. It will deliver you from death. You will not get caught up in those things. It will bring you the right way down the right path.

## V. Proverbs 10:3 - God's Provision and Substance

*Proverbs 10:3*

*The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.*

Now the word substance, the last part of that verse there, is a good word. I like that word.

*Hebrews 11:1*

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

I like Christians with substance. I really do. When I see a young man or a young lady or a couple or a mom and dad or an older couple and they have got substance in their life, I like that. I want to hang out with people like that. I want people like that in my church. I want families of substance. I have watched families have to go through some hard decisions with their own kids, and it is a heartbreaking decision, but they do the right thing, and I respect them, and I watch for that, and I look for that, and when I see that, I have the utmost respect. And it puts in my mind,

"You know what, there is a family with substance." Not all families will do that. And if there is one thing that God's people lack today, generally, in most cases, it is substance.

*Luke 15:13*

*And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.*

He threw it away. Now look at verse 3. Notice the word famish. We get our word famine from that word. If you know your Bible at all, you know that will run back to Amos 8:11-12 because it says back there,

*Amos 8:11-12*

*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:*

*And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.*

That Bible says that God will keep us from being in that famine. It will keep us, it will give us everything that we need. It is the word of God in your life that gives you the substance of our lives. And when I talk about building people or taking people and building character in their life and building substance in their life, I am talking about putting the Bible in their life. Some things that sticks with you. My old grandmother used to say, she always used to, I used to have to go to her before I went to school in the morning when my mom and dad were working. I was just a little guy. She always used to fix breakfast, and I always just liked cereal. She always could hear her saying it now. She would say, "Bobby, come down here and eat this oatmeal and grit." I hate oatmeal and grits to this day. I would never eat them if I was dying and starving to death. She would fix them every morning. I wanted Frosted Flakes. I wanted them little Cheerios with little sprinkles on them. I wanted Fruit Loops. I wanted all that fun stuff. No, no, no. She made grits and she made oatmeal, and she would always tell me that stuff will not do this for you. "This stuff will stick to your ribs." It did too. That is what God's people need. They need some substance that will stick to them.

We live in a time of the beginning of this famine. Now I understand the book of Amos here in chapter 8, the context there is the tribulation. I get that. But brother, it is that famine starts in the church age. And I want you to notice it says the famine of the hearing of the words of the Lord. Most people read that wrong and most people get that wrong. This is not the fact that the Bible is not here. It is not the fact that it is a famine of the word of God. It is a famine of hearing of the word of God. It is here. Nobody is hearing it anymore.

I look across this church and see some of you guys and gals that have been here for a while and been in the book. I would put you up against anybody in this city, probably this country, any pastor, any Christian, any place at all when it comes toe to toe with that Bible. You know why? Because you have got substance to it. The book means something to it. You understand it. You

know it. And that is what I am looking for. They do not have any substance to them. You do. You understand in the word that that thing sticks to you and it gives you what you want.

The world is always taking things and turning them around. In the world, when you have got a guy who is a drug addict, he is called a substance abuser. But that is not really true from a Bible standpoint. Now it is true he is a crackhead. It is true he is a pill pusher, pill popper, dope addict. That is absolutely true. But he is not a substance abuser according to the Bible because he has no substance to him. The real substance abuser? It is God's people who are saved and have the word of God and the Holy Spirit of God in them, but you abuse the substance that God wants to give you.

The last part of verse 3 says, "but he casteth away the substance of the wicked." They do not have any substance. A wicked man has no substance to abuse. God takes it from him. Again, you see this in a literal sense in the Old Testament. The other nations in the Old Testament always were against the nation of Israel. Many times they were bigger. They were stronger than Israel. Many times they united together to crush the Jews. When they went into the book of Joshua, into the land, the devil had seven nations make an alliance against the nation of Israel. They were so overwhelmed it was unbelievable. But as long as the nation of Israel had God and His word, you see, they had substance. They had the power of God. And the other nations, no matter how big they were and how strong they were, they could not stand up to the nation of Israel because they had no substance. God gave the Jews substance and took it away from the wicked nations against them. That is why they won. And that is why you and I, we have the victory today. We do not ever have to kowtow to the world. We do not ever have to lose that victory. We do not ever have to go through the things that we go through. We can live above the circumstances because when you get the Bible principles down in life over time through that process, you gain substance. And the world has no substance. So you overcome everything in it and you live above the circumstances in the victorious Christian life.

*1 John 4:4*

*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

That is substance. You have substance, the world does not. Unfortunately most of God's people do not either. But many of you do, and I have watched it, and when I see a young man or a young lady with substance, you definitely get my attention.

## VI. Proverbs 10:4 - Slack Hand vs. Diligent Hand

Then the last verse.

*Proverbs 10:4*

*He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

So that is a great principle in life too. "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand."

*Proverbs 6:9-11*

*How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?*

*Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:*

*So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

You see a guy goes through life with a slack hand. We call him a slacker. They are lazy. They do not have any motivation.

*Proverbs 20:4*

*The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

There is a little chilly out so he does not go to work. He looks for any excuse not to get in there and do something because he is slack. He is a sluggard. And therefore when the time comes when everybody else has something because they went to work, he does not and he begs. There is an old saying, and years ago, the work ethic was completely different than it is today, and they had a lot of great sayings. One of the old sayings I heard years and years ago is that laziness travels so slowly that poverty will always overtake it. Boy, that is so true. Another one I used to hear is, "An idle as a young man, needy as an old man."

Now nowhere do you see this more evident today when it comes to God's people and the Bible and spiritual things. They are needy, they are lazy. And our generation today is filled with slackness. No motivation, no purpose, no direction, no goals. Kids today that never finished anything they start. See it all the time. I have seen kids go to college, their parents shell out all kind of money or they get a loan for it, and then they never do anything with it. I have seen kids go to specialized training, they get their certification, and then they sit on their can and never do anything with it. They just do not have any motivation, and then they wonder why they do not have anything.

Look at the last part of verse 4. "But the hand of the diligent maketh rich." Now not only true in a worldly sense, working for a living, but it is especially true in a biblical sense.

*2 Corinthians 8:7*

*Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.*

You see we as God's people should be diligent in the things of the Lord.

*Proverbs 27:23*

*Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.*

It says I am to be as a pastor, I am to be diligent to know the state of my flock and look well to my herds. I am to know what my church needs. I am to know what the younger Christians need. I am to know and understand what the older ones need, and I should understand how to get it to them. You understand what their needs are. Give them both whatever they need. Be there when

they have a need. Watch out over them, protect them, take care of them. Be diligent. Diligence is a great word.

Years ago, probably 30 some years ago, I heard a message. I think it is probably of all the messages that I have heard in life, there are two that probably stand out in my mind, and I have never forgotten. One of them is one that is just fun, but the other one was so true. And the one I heard years and years and years ago was out of 2 Timothy chapter 4, and I have preached a message probably four or five times in my life. It is probably not only my favorite message that I heard, but it is probably my favorite message to preach because it means so much to me personally and it is so true because when I heard it, brother, it put the whole Christian world on its ear as far as I was concerned and where my life was going and what I should do.

It is found in 2 Timothy 4:21 where Paul is talking to young Timothy. Paul was taking young Timothy under his wing, and he was going to be Paul's replacement. We call First and Second Timothy along with Titus and Philemon, we call them the pastoral epistles. They are called the pastoral epistles because Paul was teaching these guys to be a pastor. In other words, they were going to be his replacement. They were going to take over when he goes off the scene. And you do not get a lot about Titus and Philemon. You have two books to it, but boy you get a lot of insight into Paul and Timothy. Timothy goes all the way back to the church at Antioch, and you can watch that thing come through in his life.

In 2 Timothy 4:21, Paul is coming down to the end of his life. It is the last thing he ever said. I always thought it was instructive of the last thing that Paul had on his mind when he was getting ready to go on to be the Lord was young men because that was his life. He was not worried about if he was going to get a civil rights lawyer to get him out of the mess he was in. He was not worried about going through all the things and finally he had some great injustice done to him. The last thing on his mind before he goes on to meet the Lord was young men. You know why? Because training young men for the ministry was his life. And he is writing to young Timothy there and he says to him one of the greatest things I have ever heard a man say when he put it into perspective.

*2 Timothy 4:21*

*Do thy diligence to come before winter.*

It does not sound like much, but it is the last thing he said to his replacement. And I looked at that and thought about that, that word diligence. And I thought many, many times in my own personal life when I heard that as a Christian, there are some things that I need to be diligent about. And there are some things that I need to get done in my life as a Christian before the wintertime of my life sets in and I cannot. Because you know what? We are all going to hit the wintertime in our life. We are moving in it right now. The old wind blows down the street, the leaves start coming off, pretty soon the leaves will be bare. Pretty soon it will come to the point where the snow starts to fall. It will cover everything and you cannot really do much of anything. It is wintertime.

There is going to come a time in your life and my life when you are not going to be able to do what you do right now. There is going to be a time in your life when you are not going to be able to get out there and do the things that God has called you to do. And like the slacker and the person that does not really care about those things and he does not really worry about working when it is time to work, he just gets out there and does his own thing, his own way and does not do anything and he is slothful. He spends all his life wasting it away, and when he gets to the wintertime in his life there is nothing he can do. And Paul looked at this young man that he was training and he said, "Young man, there are some things that I need. There are some things that I need before I go," and he says, "I need you to get them to me." And he says, "Do thy diligence to come before winter."

Now I do not know if Timothy ever made it. I do not know if he ever got Paul what he needed. I have a way of thinking in my mind that by the time he got there and brought everything that Paul needed, probably the books and the parchment that he mentioned a little bit later on, he was probably already dead. But I put that thing on personal life and what a terrible thing. And he is saying there to do thy diligence to come before winter. And there are some things in your life and my life that we better get done before wintertime gets here in your life when you cannot do it anymore.

I will tell you one thing, and I am not going to preach the message to you this morning, but I will tell you one thing in context of what we are talking about here. You better reproduce yourself in other people while you still can. I got a question for you. If you died right now, God forbid, if you died right now, died tomorrow, died next week, who would replace you? Who would take your place in the ministry? Who have you personally trained in your life? Do not tell me about your seminary education and tell me about what you know about this or that, that all goes out the window in wintertime. But I am asking you right now, if you died, who have you personally trained one on one that would take your place to carry on what God is doing? That is the question. It is a great question. Paul did.

Some of God's people right now, 50, 60 years old, and you have nobody out there that you personally have put into the ministry. And I have seen many, many cases where guys get on that thing and their own families will not even come to church. There is not one single person that is doing anything for God that God's people have trained. Your whole life, the reason God saved you was to reproduce yourself. It was not to learn all that you can about the Bible, though that is important. It was not to get the most education that you can get, though that is important. You have one single fundamental function as a child of God, and that is that you bear fruit and that your fruit remain. Not just going out and winning to Christ and counting them on your, notching them on your gospel pistol. It is talking about taking them and training them and replacing yourself with the people that in the things that God has given you.

I understand what the devil does. Our lives get so cluttered with our problems, our finances, our marital issues, all of the things that break down in our families. The devil has made sure that we can never get to the single most important thing. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich." And I am telling you, there is not one single person out there. That is why I push you to get involved in people's lives. I know you do not like it all the time. You wish I would get off your back on some

thing, but I am going to tell you something. That is why I keep pushing every one of you to get involved and to do something with somebody else's life. Before the winter time of your life comes, please, you need to understand there is a coming of time in your life where you will not be able to do the things that God has given you the ability to do right now. And when you waste a summer time of your life, when winter sets in, you are not going anywhere.

If I die tomorrow, I would rest in the fact that you young men and women at this church could carry this work on. The leadership is already in place. Men and women of substance. There are people that could take this thing over and men and women that would run this thing and it would not miss a beat. But you need to be diligent in the things that God has given you to do. Do them now because there is a time coming when you will not be able to do it anymore. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich." Get some things done while you can and be diligent about it. Not only in a physical sense of prosperity, but in a spiritual sense for the judgment seat of Christ. And there is where most of the sons fail in a relationship with God.

These are some of the most practical verses that you are ever going to find in your life when you start breaking these things down into two liners, one negative, one positive, showing you how God looks at it, showing you how the world looks at it. God saved us for a reason. God saved us for a purpose. Now we are going to be slack in what we do or we are going to be diligent in what we do. I realize that many of you are young. You are just getting dialed into this and you are getting saved and you are getting into the Word of God and somebody is working with you. I get it. But your goal needs to be down the line and you do in somebody else's life what somebody else is doing in yours right now. You have to come to the point that you do the single fundamental thing that God saved you for. It is reproducing yourself.

I have known people that have been everywhere in the world and done everything, and get all the education in the world, and they have never produced themselves one time in somebody spiritually. Taking somebody in like Paul took Timothy, giving them what God has given you, nurturing them, bringing them along, getting them to the place in their life that when you pass off the scene they carry on the torch of the gospel. There is coming a time in all of our lives when winter is coming. We are going to talk about it more next week, but when winter comes you cannot get these things done.

You can see how a book filled with this kind of advice can change a life. Seeing life from God's perspective, seeing life from God's instructions to a son, or seeing it as the world sees it. This is what the book of Proverbs does. It is a great book of contrast. It will show you how God looks at this, what we should do, but it will also show you in the same verse how the world looks at it. "Do thy diligence to come before winter." We will hold up there and we will get into the next set of verses next week.