



Proverbs 16

Tape #7224
Proverbs 16
By Chuck Smith

Proverbs 16:1.

The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord (16:1).

When you have committed yourself unto Jesus Christ, the scripture says, "It is God that works in you both to will, and to do of His good pleasure". So the preparations of the heart. God is working in our hearts. Many times the work of God is unconscious to us. I'm not aware of what God is doing. I have discovered that God works in such natural ways in my life, that I'm not always aware of the supernatural, because it seems so natural. As the scripture prophesies, through Jeremiah, "There will come that day", the Lord said, "when I will no longer write the law on the fleshly tables, on the tables of stone, but on the fleshly tablets of their hearts". So as you commit your life to follow the Lord, as you surrender yourself to follow Him, God begins to plant His desires in your heart. He begins to guide you, according to His plan by giving you those strong urges in your heart.

We have Steve down here on the front row, been working for the Lord over in Africa, and more particularly the last few months, in Uganda. I was interested as Steve shared with us, he said that he feels more at home now in Uganda, than he does here. It's in his heart. His desire is to go back. It's just something that God has planted in his heart. So, "The preparation of a man's heart, the answer of his tongue, they come from the Lord". It's something that God just does in you. It's that beautiful work of God within. As God makes known His will, His purpose, by just writing it in the desires of my heart. That is why, when you're truly following the Lord, to do the will of God is, is the most pleasurable, pleasant thing that you could ever imagine. Because God has prepared your heart, put the desires there, and it's, it's just like doing what you feel you always wanted to do! For God has planted in your heart, His will, His desire. That's an easy way to follow the Lord, a glorious way of following the Lord! So, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is of the Lord", when that person has truly committed his life to follow Jesus.

This next proverb is one that we have certainly found to be true.

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes (16:2);

You know, we can justify just about anything we ever have done, or ever will do! You know, "I was right. It was the others who were wrong!" "The ways of a man are clean in his own eyes", we, we justify ourselves.

Several years ago, in the early days here at Calvary Chapel, I was called over to the Orange County Jail, by the sheriff. They had a prisoner who had been accused of murder, and tried, and convicted, who wanted to be baptized in water. So they called me, and asked me if I would be willing to baptize this man. So we went over to Santa Ana, and we used the baptistery of the First Christian Church. This fellow was brought in chains by the sheriff, and they undid him, and stood on either side with guns and all, as I baptized this fellow in water. It was an interesting experience. But the man started talking to me about the murder that he had committed. He had murdered his father-in-law. He began to tell me what a bum his father-in-law was. I mean by the time I was, he was through telling me the story, you'd say, "Man, you did the, you did the world a favor getting rid of that guy!", you know.

It's interesting how that we can justify, but it's sort of necessary for our mental health. Because the hardest thing for us to deal with is a guilt complex. The guilt complex always develops a subconscious desire for punishment, which is usually manifested in a neurotic behavioral pattern. Thus for mental well-being you just can't carry guilt too long, so you've got to justify yourself. But that doesn't do it with God! God has another way of removing your guilt by just taking away the sin. But, "A man's ways are clean in his own eyes".

but the Lord is weighing the spirits (16:2).

You may justify yourself, but that won't count before God. You must have that forgiveness. God sees the spirit, God weighs the spirit. But the glorious thing is that God is willing to forgive, no matter what you have done. But it isn't by your justifying it, it's by your confession of it. If we say we have no sin, if we say it wasn't wrong, then we deceive ourselves. The truth in it, isn't in us. "But if we confess our sins, then He is faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So the way of cleansing, the way of forgiveness doesn't come by justifying yourself, but it comes by confession of that sin, and the asking of God for forgiveness. He's faithful and just, and shall forgive.

The third proverb is one that is so important, for it encourages us to...

Commit our works unto the Lord (16:3),

Now a lot of people are apologizing for the work that they've done for God. When they come up and they start saying, "Well I tried, but it just didn't seem to work out. You know, I, I just feel like a failure", and all of this. I say, "Did you do your best?", and if they say, "Well, yes", I say, "Well then commit the rest". That's one of my proverbs, "Do your best and commit the rest". But it's sort of borrowed from Solomon here, a bit. That is, just commit your works to the Lord. "Lord, you know, it isn't the greatest work, I mean there's others that probably could've done it much better. But it was the best I could do". So you just commit it. You don't sit and fret about it. You don't worry about, "Was I alright? Did I do okay?", you know, you don't worry about that. You just, "Hey Lord it's in your hands. I did my best, so there it is Lord. You use it as you desire, or as you see fit". But I think that a lot of people are not serving the Lord because they feel like they can't do as good as someone else. They sort of have an inferiority kind of a complex of, "Well I, I really can't do much". So they do nothing, and that's wrong.

It is interesting to me that so many of those that God used in such a mighty way in the scriptures, were people who were aware, very aware of their own inadequacies. Moses that great leader! When God called him, he said, "Lord I can't speak! You know I have this speech impediment, and, and, I, I stutter, and I just can't really express myself! And, and Lord, why don't you get someone else! Surely there's someone that can do a better job than I can do!", in presenting the case of the children of Israel, before the Pharaoh.

When Jeremiah was called by God, he said, "Lord! I'm just, I'm just a kid! Nobody's gonna listen to me! No one listens to teenagers! You want me to speak to the king and to the nation? Lord, I'm too young! There are always, it seems, reasons and excuses, well, not reasons, excuses, why we feel that we are not adequate to do the work of God. But just commit the work to the Lord. Say, "Well here Lord, I am, use me", and commit the work. Don't worry about it, don't sit and fret.

Kay has a terrible problem this way of, after she has ministered to the ladies, she, she always feels like, "Oh you know, I was so, there's things I should've said", or, "Oh I forgot to say this!", or, "Oh I just really blew it today!", and she goes through it. Poor gal! I just feel so sorry for her. She has a terrible time! Because she is a perfectionist, and, and it's hard to be a perfectionist. I'm glad I'm not a perfectionist. But it, it weighs upon you. If, if it wasn't just perfect. But don't worry about that. Just do what you can, do your best, commit the rest. Just leave it with the Lord. "Commit thy works unto the Lord."

and thy thoughts shall be established (16:3).

You won't worry about it. You know, just quit worrying about it. Just say, "Hey Lord, best I could do. Sorry", And, He'll establish, He'll establish your thoughts. You won't sit and mull on it. You won't roll in bed at night, just thinking, "Oh I just really messed up horribly! Oh that was so terrible!" "There it is Lord. Best I can do."

The Lord has made everything for himself (16:4):

Now, that is a truth that you cannot escape, though people try to escape it all the time. Not only did God make everything for Himself, but He made everything for His own pleasure. Now there are a lot of people that want to fault God for this. They want to accuse God of selfish motivations. I, personally would be extremely cautious how I accuse God of anything. But there are people that feel, "that isn't fair".

In Revelation, the fourth chapter, we are given a little insight into the heavenly scene. As John describes the throne of God, and the cherubim that are about the throne of God, these angelic beings, who cease not day and night saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which is, which was, and which is to come", and he, he describes this worship of God that takes place around the throne of God in heaven. As these

elders are ascribing this praise, and honor, and glory that is God's, as they describe His eternal nature, these twenty four elders, sitting on these lesser thrones, fall on their faces before the throne of God, they take their golden crowns and cast them on this glassy sea. Responding to the worship of the cherubim, they say, "Thou art worthy O Lord to receive glory and honor, for you have created all things, and for your pleasure, they are, and were created".

God has created every thing for Himself. "Thou has created all things", they said, "and for your pleasure they, are and were created". You say, "Well I don't appreciate that". Well that's tough! You can't do anything about it. That's just the way it is. God created you for His pleasure.

Now, you can fight that. You can say, "I am going to live to please myself! I'm not gonna seek to please, I'm gonna please myself! I'm gonna do what I please!", and you can. God has created you so that you can do that. But if you do that, you will always have a sense of unfulfillment in life. Your life will always be empty. You'll always be going around thinking, "There's got to be more to life than this!", and there it, and that's, that's the truth! There's more to life than just living to please yourself! Living to please yourself is very empty, it is very unfulfilling! Oh it's not to say that you can't have a great time, and the party was wild, and you were just there making a supreme fool of yourself, and you had a great time doing it! But as you're lying there on your bed before you go to sleep, and you're thinking about the whole thing, you're wondering, "Where are we gonna party next?", you know, because it didn't really fulfill.

There's an emptiness, because God created you for His pleasure, and if your life is going to be meaningful, if your life is gonna be fulfilling, you must please Him. Pleasing God is the most fulfilling experience that you can have in life. Living for God's pleasure. Jesus said, "I do always those things that please the Father", and there He is expressing the perfect life. When you can say, "I do always those things that please the Father", you'll have a very rich, fulfilling, satisfying life. "The Lord has made all things for Himself."

Now this latter portion is difficult to handle.

yea, even the wicked for the day of evil (16:4).

God has created all things for Himself. Now, theological problems arise. If God knew everything in advance, which the bible asserts that He does, He is omniscient. That is, He knows all things. If God then knew all things, and He knew then that some people were going to be evil, why did He create them? If He knew that some would not repent and turn to Him, but would be destined for eternity apart, why would God create those people? I've often, always discovered that those theological questions that have, "Why did God?", are always unanswerable. Because we don't know why God did things! We can only surmise or speculate why God did certain things. There's a lot of speculation as to why God did, and does, what He did, and does.

But a lot of the speculation is totally worthless. It's something to just satisfy our own minds, and we may come up with answers that are probably wrong. For God said, "My ways are not your ways, my ways are beyond your finding out". That is why it's always so frustrating to get into these theological debates and arguments of, "Why did God do this?", or, "Why did God do that?", or, "Why didn't God do this?", and, and it, it's something that we can only speculate about.

For His own reasons, God did not see fit to explain to you every thing He did, and why He did it. We just have to, when we come up against things where we don't have an answer, we have to, and we don't understand, we fall back on what we do understand, and do know.

I do know that God is fair. That God is just, and every thing that God has done is absolutely just. I have no qualms about the justice of God. When we finally know ourselves, all of the facts, and that's our big problem, we are judging with partial knowledge. We don't know everything. Sometimes we think we know everything, but we don't. We are always making our judgments with partial information.

When we have all of the information, and we see the total plan of God, as we know the whole story, we'll say, "Right on! That's so fair, I can't believe it!" So, God is just, God is fair! That I know, and so these issues that I don't know, I just leave for the theologians to argue about. I just trust in the fairness, and in the justice of God. God is just, whatever He does is right. If He wants to make everything for Himself, that's His business, and He surely can do that! If He wants to make every one for His own pleasure, He can do that!

But I'm going to live in harmony with that truth, so that I can please God, and thus, fulfill the purpose for my existence. I was created to please God. If I live to please God, I am then fulfilling the purpose of my existence, and thus I have such satisfaction and contentment in life.

This next proverb deals with the proud, and of course, we've already discovered that Solomon had quite a bit to say about the proud, and he'll have quite a bit more before we're through. But...

Every one that is proud in his heart is an abomination to the Lord (16:5):

I've often said that the man who is proud, is a man who has not yet seen God. Jesus, in the beginning of the sermon on the mount, in the beatitudes said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit". Now that's the opposite of proud. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." But poverty of spirit is the natural consequence and result of an encounter, a true encounter with God.

I see men in their vain show. My wife sometimes likes to watch the Oscar awards. I can't handle it. All of this honoring of man, and all of the pride, and the pomp, and the circumstance. You may like it, that's alright, that's your, you know, my wife likes it. So you're in good company. But this fleshly display of man. Oh you know, they are the best actor, they are the best actress! This was the best script, this was, you know, and all of the applause, and the plaudits, and the palathering, I just can't handle it! "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

It's interesting that those who have had a real encounter with God, and have truly seen God, then actually see themselves. Many times, for the first time. They see the truth about themselves. As we had that one proverb, "All of the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes". But when you stand before God, and when you see God, then you really see yourself, because you see yourself now, in the, in the true light. Jesus said, "You do err because you compare yourselves with each other", and that's always a mistake to, to find my standard of comparison with people around me. "Well yes, I know my face is dirty, but look how dirty his is! Yes I know that I, but look!", and we're comparing ourselves with each other. But we are not the standard. God is the standard. Jesus Christ is the standard! When you see yourself in His standard, or in His light, then it's, "Woe is me!"

That's exactly what happened to Isaiah. In the year that king Uzziah died, he said, "I saw the Lord high and lifted up, sitting on the throne. And His train, the glory did fill the temple. Then said I, Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell amongst a people of unclean lips!"

When Peter saw the Lord, he said, "Depart from me Lord! I'm a sinful man!". Daniel, when he had his encounter, he said, "All of that which I thought was beautiful within me, turned into this ugliness! I saw myself as I really was, in the light of God". So, "Every one that is proud in his heart is an abomination to God", he's a man who hasn't really had an encounter with God. Though he conspires together with others, they're patting each other on the back...

they're joining hand in hand, they're not going to go unpunished. By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: [God's mercy is the only way in which my iniquity can be cleansed, can be purged, mercy and truth.] and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil. [Oh God give us that fear of the Lord that will cause us to depart from evil!] When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him (16:5-7).

So as we said, God created you for His pleasure. The highest experience that you can have in life, is doing those things that please the Lord. When your life pleases the Lord, He'll cause even your enemies to be at peace with you! Now here's one of those interesting comparisons.

Better is a little with righteousness [Better to be poor and righteous, than wealthy and unrighteous, better is a little with righteousness.] than great revenues without right (16:8).

You're much better off to be a poor righteous man, than to be a wealthy sinner. You'll be better off to be the poorest saint in heaven, than the richest man in hell. It's interesting how that Moses took the best that the world had to offer, and he compared it with the worst that the Lord had to offer, and opted for what the Lord had to offer.

The worst that the Lord has to offer you is better than the best that the world has to offer you! "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the children of God." That's the worst that the Lord has to offer you. As you are a follower of the Lord, you come under ridicule and all, by the ungodly world. The reproach of the ungodly world. "But he chose rather to suffer the reproach of the children of God, than to enjoy the pleasures

of sin for a moment.”

Because he had enough sense to look down and see what the final outcome was. That’s where we make our mistake. We live for the present. The present is vantage, and we don’t always take into consideration, eternity. What will be the long term effect of this path, where will this path lead me. So, “it is better to have a little by righteousness, than to be very wealthy without right”.

The next verse deals with the sovereignty of God.

A man’s heart devises his way (16:9):

“I’m gonna do this, and I’m gonna do that, and when I’m through, then I’m gonna get to this”, you know. “A man’s heart devises his way.”

but the Lord directs his steps (16:9).

God’s in control. God is sovereign over our, all of our lives. He’s really in control. I may make my plans, and I may devise my schemes, but in the final outcome, God’s gonna work out His plan, and His will. “The Lord directs his steps.” So...

A divine sentence in the lips of the king (16:10):

Is in the lips of the king, a divine sentence. Actually the king, and, and Solomon is now speaking this as a ideal. Unfortunately it isn’t always true. Sometimes the ruler is governed by unrighteousness, but this is an ideal for kings that what they say, is of God. That they become God’s representative before the people. That they rule in God’s, as God’s instrument, and, and that was God’s desire for the king. It was God’s first desire for Israel, that they had no king, that God be king over them, and that they have no visible earthly monarchy, like the other nations. That they would be peculiar in this respect, where all of the other nations had this monarch that was ruling over them, that God would rule over them, and the people would all say, “Well God is their king”. That was God’s desire.

But there came that tragic point in their history where the people came to Samuel, and they said, “We want a king like the other nations around us!” Samuel went before the Lord, and said, “Lord, these people are asking now for a king”. Samuel felt that, that was a personal up front against him, because he was the judge. But it really wasn’t against Samuel, it was against his sons. His sons were real rowdies, and they didn’t want them taking over after Samuel’s death. So they were demanding a king. So God said to Samuel, “Okay Samuel, give them a king, a man that I will show you”. So Samuel anointed Saul as the first king over Israel.

Saul had this tremendous opportunity of reigning over the people in such a way, that they knew that God still reigned. That was God’s desire. That the king be His representative, that his decrees be the decrees of the Lord. Saul, we know failed in this. Pride got in and, and Saul failed, and finally ended with a confession of being a fool.

Whereas David, then coming to the throne was more representative of what God was looking for as a king. For David was controlled by God. You remember Saul disobeyed the command of God in regards, in respect to the Amalekites. When he came back, Samuel said, “What have you done!” He said, “Oh I just, you know, thought that these animals were too nice to just butcher, and so I thought we’d bring them back and sacrifice them to the Lord”. He said, “To obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken to God is better than the fat of rams. Don’t you know that rebellion is like the sin of witchcraft, and in that you have done this, you have done foolishly, and because you have rejected God from ruling over you, God has rejected you from ruling over His people. And, he turned to walk away, and Samuel got him by the robe, and he just kept walking, and the robe ripped in Saul’s hands, and he turned, and he said, “So God is gonna rip the kingdom from you, and give it to another that pleases Him!”. So the kingdom was taken from Saul, and given to David, and David living in submission to God, reigned over the people, as God wanted a king to reign.

But you see, no one can really rule, unless he understands that he is ruled by God. One of the big problems of government today is the failure to acknowledge God as king. That failure of seeking the will of God, in the legislation over the people, but legislating from a social position. So the divine sentence is in the lips of the king, ideally.

his mouth transgresseth not in judgment (16:10).

He represents God and he brings forth God's judgment.

A just weight and balance are the Lord's (16:11):

Again their commerce was done with balanced scales. There was all kinds of cheating. When I was young you know, the butcher would always put the meat on the scale, and not, I wasn't so young, it was a regular scale, but I mean, you know you would order the meat, and he'd put it on the scale and weigh it. Then he would wrap it up, and mark the price on it, and all. There were all these jokes, when I was a kid, about the butcher's thumb, weighing his thumb, you know. He puts the meat on the scale, and holds it down with his thumb, so you see full pound, and you're really getting three quarters of a pound. I mean, there's always jokes about that. But the just balance. Honesty in business, honesty in commerce. Balances are used as a symbol for justice. So, a fairness in justice is something that God is looking for also. "The just weight and balance are the Lord's."

and all the weights of the bag are his work (16:11).

Now they had these little bag of weights. The ounce, the pound, the, of course in those days it was the shekel, and the various talent, and the various weights that they had. But, the, they were little weights that they would put on the balanced scales, and God wants honesty in our business practices. Now, getting back to the kings...

It is an abomination for kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness (16:12).

Look at the history of the kings. Read some of these kings. Their wickedness, it was indeed an abomination!

Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaks right (16:13).

So dealing with kings, but that's an area that we're not familiar with. Continually with kings...

The wrath of a king is as messengers of death: but the wise man will pacify it (16:14).

The king had his power, in his power to order people to be put to death. You remember the case of Esther, she, she was fearful even to going in before her own husband. "If I go in without him inviting me, if he doesn't lift the scepter, I'm dead!", you know, the powers of the king. Life and death. "But a wise person will pacify the wrath of a king."

In the light of the king's countenance is life; [So this is in contrast, the king angry with you, he can order you to put to death, but in the light of the king's countenance, is life.] and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain (16:15).

It's refreshing. Now leaving the kings, we come back to true value.

How much better is it to get wisdom that gold! and to get understanding is rather to be chosen than silver (16:16).

The importance of wisdom, understanding. The value that it is to you. "It's better than gold or silver!"

The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: and he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul (16:17).

So the way that I walk. The highway is that of uprightness, and departing from evil. Here's one that you've heard quoted.

Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall (16:18).

There's, there's just an awful lot to this. Watch out for pride, it will destroy you. Watch out for a haughty spirit. You'll come down.

Keith Ritter shares how that the first Sunday that he preached out in Riverside, Greg Laurie was teaching this bible study in Riverside, God was blessing it, young people were coming. It was exciting, they were meeting Sunday nights in a Episcopal church. Then the opportunity came for them to buy their own church. So we purchased the church for them there in Riverside, and set up payments for them. With their own church, they decided they'd go to Sunday morning services too. But Greg was afraid to preach on Sunday mornings. He was just a kid anyhow, and just trying to preach a Sunday morning service just terrified him, you know. He, he could handle you know the teaching on Sunday nights with a bunch of kids and all, but couldn't, couldn't handle trying to preach on Sunday mornings.

So Keith Ritter went out and did the Sunday mornings for Greg, and was sort of Greg's mentor for

awhile. The first Sunday morning that Keith spoke, he was feeling really great about this sermon. He really, he really thought, “Man! That one really came off! That was great!”, you know, and so as he was walking, he was following my practice of leaving and walking to the front to greet the people, and so just thinking, “Man that was really, I’m really tall”, you know. As he, as he was leaving the pulpit he tripped and fell flat on his face you know, in front of everybody! The Lord spoke to his heart, and said, “A haughty spirit before a fall”.

It’s better [This is a contrast to the previous one, it’s better,] to have a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. [“Better to be poor and humble, than proud and rich.”] He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusts in the Lord, happy is he (16:19-20).

Put your trust in the Lord, happy. How important that we handle matters wisely. How can I handle a matter wisely? By putting my trust in the Lord. That’s the key to handling the matter wisely. You handle a matter wisely, you find good. The wise way to handle every matter is just to trust the Lord.

The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning. [Then] Understanding is a well spring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly (16:21-22).

Now, interesting, “The instruction of fools is folly”. The Bible says, in defining the fool, “A fool hath said in his heart, there is no God”. The instruction of fools is folly. Therefore it is folly to be instructed by atheists. “The instruction of fools is folly.”

It’s amazing to me what foolish things people will believe when they reject the truth of God. If you go over to India, and make your way to the compounds of Sibaba, this famous Indian guru, Avatar, they do believe that he has gone through the transition into the god-state, after a lot of meditation, fasting, and everything, they, they believe that he has made this transition into the godhood. He is instructing other people now on the path of, of, that will bring them into a transition into the god-state. The amazing thing when you get to Sibaba’s headquarters, and you see the thousands of westerners that have made this pilgrimage, and are sitting there to listen to the wisdom of Sibaba. Waiting, and hoping to catch his eye, to receive his touch.

The vast majority of those westerners that are there are college professors, and college students, who have found that with all of their education, there’s an emptiness. So they are seeking some kind of spiritual reality, and they go to sit at the feet of this Sibaba. They, they become enamored. It’s amazing what people will believe when they have rejected the truth of God. It’s amazing how they can be so gullible! The Rashiness, and the people that follow him.

The Bible gives us the reason, “Because they did not have the love of the truth, God gave them over to believe a lie”. God gave them a strong delusion, because they didn’t have the love of the truth. How important to have the love of the truth! But, “understanding, a wellspring of life, but the instructions of fools is folly.”

The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips (16:23).

So a few proverbs that deal with wisdom.

Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, they’re sweet to the soul, and health to the bones (16:24).

Again, “A word spoken in due season, how good it is!”, pleasant words. They’re just as a honeycomb. They’re just sweet, and they’re healthy. The power of the tongue to heal, to encourage, to comfort. The power of the tongue to destroy, to cut.

This is the second time this proverb is put in the book. I always figure if God repeats something, it must be very important!

There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. [We’ve already done a whole sermon on that one. So, you can get the tape.] He that laboreth laboreth for himself; for his mouth craves it of him (16:25-26).

You know, how much of our labor just goes to feed ourselves! “He that labors, labors for himself; his mouth craves it of him.” Best job I ever had when I was in High School was working at a restaurant where I could get all I could eat. My other jobs, I spent everything I got on eating. But, finally got a job in a restaurant, and it was great.

An ungodly man digs up evil: [He looks for evil, he digs up all of the dirt that he can.] and in his lips

there is a burning fire. [The ungodly man, looking around to dig up evil.] *The froward man sows strife:* [That is the perverse man, he sows strife.] *and a whisperer separates* [Best friends. That is sort of a gossip, separates] *chief friends.* *A violent man* [So we're dealing with ungodly men, perverse men, now violent man.] *entices his neighbour, and leads him in the way that is not good.* [Leads them astray.] *He shuts his eyes to devise froward things: and moving his lips he brings evil to pass.* [Now in contrast to the ungodly, perverse, and violent men, there is that,] *Hoary head which is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness (16:27-31).*

Now, a hoary head. It, it, it is the hoary frost, which is white. In the morning you go out, you know, and the frost covers the ground. Hoary frost, so it's white. So the gray haired person. Now unfortunately I got bald before I could get gray. But, the gray haired person. The gray hair is a crown of glory, "if it is found in the way of righteousness". You know there is nothing worse than an ungodly old person. You know, old people are supposed to be sweet, they're supposed to be kind, through all of the experiences of life, they're supposed to have mellowed out. Just, you know, they're just supposed to be wonderful, sweet, glorious people! All of the experiences of life, giving them all of this wisdom to impart, and all of this knowledge, and, and it's, and it's a crown of glory, because it signifies the years of experience, and the mellowing that has done. But if the person is found in the way of righteousness, it's the most beautiful thing in the world. But, if it's not in the way of righteousness, it's got to be the most ugly thing in the world.

My daughter Jan, the older of the two. I've mentioned her before, beautiful, sensitive girl, and sensible. She worked while she was going through the university in a medical supply business. She would at times make deliveries of the medical supplies to the convalescent hospitals in different places to patients. She went into a convalescent hospital there in Newport Beach, to take some supplies to this lady's room, and she said, she was there sitting in bed and looked to be, you know just white hair, and looked to be so, you know, just so grand motherly, or great grand motherly. Jan just smiled and said, "Hello, I'm here with your supplies". This old lady began to cuss, and filth came out of her mouth, and Jan said, "Oh I just felt so horrible! To hear such filth out of the mouth of this old lady about ready to die!" So if you've got gray hair hey walk in the way of righteousness, because it's a crown of glory to do so.

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit is better than he who takes a city (16:32).

A lot of times it takes more power to rule your own spirit, than it does to take a city, to conquer a city. People can conquer a city, but they can't conquer their own spirit. Slow to anger, better than being strong. Now...

The lot is cast into the lap (16:33);

Now just exactly what it was, it, we sort of figured it was maybe something like throwing dice. The lot cast in the lap. It was a way of determining an answer. You get an argument going and all, they say, "Well let's cast lots". You know, "Let's flip a coin for it!" It's, it's a, it, it would probably flipping the coin probably would be the good sequel to the casting of the lot. You know, where you're arguing over something. "Well I want to go here!", "Well, I want to go there!" "Well let's flip a coin." The flip of the coin determines it, who, you know, "Heads we go there, tails we go here". So you let the coin, the chance of the coin determine it.

But these people would often seek to discern the will of God by the casting of lots. They would ask God a question, "Shall we do this? Or, not?", and they would cast lots to get the, "yes", or, "no", in an answer from God. In the book of Judges, no. In the book of I Samuel, in King Saul, when he had made this vow, oh, I have to give you a little background. Jonathan, his son, and the, the Philistines had moved into the land, and were really threatening them, and uh, they were really hopelessly out numbered, and out manned. I mean, things looked bad. Over half the army had deserted, just a few guys left.

So Jonathan woke up, the son of Saul woke up early in the morning. In fact, it wasn't even light yet, he just woke up. He was restless. He woke up with a, with a nagging thought, and the thought was this, "If God wants to deliver the Philistines to Israel, God doesn't need a whole army". If God's gonna do a work, He doesn't need a whole army, He can do the work with one man, as easy as the whole army!" I mean he, it, it, it's a good perspective on God. A correct perspective. God doesn't need a whole army, all He needs is one

person in harmony with Him, and He can accomplish any kind of a work. One man, in harmony with the purposes of God can move a mountain, you know, can defeat an army.

So he was wondering, "I wonder if God wants to deliver the Philistines to Israel today. You know, He doesn't need the whole army. He can do it just with one man!" So he woke up his armor bearer, and he said, "You know, I have a weird thought that just won't let me go back to sleep. I've been thinking if God wants to deliver the Philistines to Israel today, He doesn't need the whole army. He could do it for just one man. Let's go over to the camp of the Philistines, and see if God wants to deliver them today, to Israel".

So as he, and his armor bearer are heading over towards the camp of the Philistines, he says, "Now we've got to make sure God's in this thing, or we've had it! So when the Centuries spot us, if they say, 'Hey you guys, come up here, we'll teach you a thing or two', then we know that God wants to deliver them to Israel. If they say, 'Hey you guys, wait there a minute! We want to come down and see you!', then we'll know that God doesn't want to deliver them, and we'll high tail it out of here!"

So as the sentries spotted them, they said, "Hey you guys! Where you going? Come up here, we'll teach you a thing or two!" Jonathan said, "Hear that man? Go for it!". So, it said they scrambled up the hill, I mean they jumped right into the camp of the Philistines, and Jonathan began to knock the guys over. His armor bearer came with a spear, and he was doin' em' in! The Philistines began to fall back before Jonathan and his armor bearer. In the space of about an acre there, they began to smite the Philistines, and the Philistines began to fall back, and here were the Philistines moving back, and just two guys in the middle just whopping them, in every direction!

Over across on the other side, Saul finally wakes up, the old man. As he rubs his eyes and looks over towards the enemy, the camp of the Philistines, he sees all of the Philistines sort of retreating, and these two guys in the middle just wailing away on them. He said, "Quickly number who's missing!", and they numbered and they said, "It's Jonathan and his armor bearer".

Then he made this foolish vow. He said, "Cursed be the man who eats anything today, until Saul has been avenged of all of his enemies". Then he ordered the guys out, and the Philistines began to flee, and they chased them over hill and dale, through the forest, and everything else, smiting the Philistines, until they were so weak from the lack of food, they couldn't go any further. They were just worn out. They didn't eat all day.

Jonathan, as he was chasing some Philistines through the woods, saw this beehive, and so he took his end of his spear, and he put it in the beehive, and he got some of the honey. Of course, you know honey is a quick refresher, and it goes immediately into the blood, gives you good shot. Immediately he was refreshed, and continued to chase the Philistines.

Then as they gathered together that night, Saul sought to inquire of the Lord, "Shall we continue to pursue them?", and there was no answer. He said, "Someone broke my vow today. Who was it?", and they cast lots. He said, "I, and Jonathan will stand here, and you over there", and so they, he said, "We will cast lots to see".

They cast lots, and the lot came on Saul and Jonathan. So Saul said, "What have you done?" He said, "Well dad I didn't know you made a vow! I was going through the woods and I saw this hive, and I got some honey out of it, and my soul was refreshed. You made a mistake in that kind of an order today. Because, had the guys eaten, we could've wiped the guys out completely. But they got so weak, we couldn't chase them any further". He says, "Put em to death!" But they cast lots to find out, "Is it this group over here, or is it this?", and, and the lots to determine.

You remember in the new testament, when Peter said, "We've got to get someone to take the place of Judas. He hung himself, and so we need someone to take his place, his apostleship". So they cast lots. They took the two men, Barsabas, and Mathias, and they cast lots to say, "Lord, which of the two have you determined?" So, they use this as a method, sort of a flipping of a coin, to find the will of God. It is interesting that, that happened only once in the book of Acts.

Once the Spirit of God came upon the church, the Spirit of God took over the directing of the church in a very powerful way, and no longer did they seek the will of God by the casting of lots. But, "The lot is cast into the lap."

but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord (16:33).

The real disposition, or the guidance comes from God.

Well, I don't know if we'll ever get through the Bible at this rate. But, we'll be wise! As we get into these proverbs and sort of suck the wisdom out of them, that we might enjoy it, and walk in the path of righteousness, and wisdom, and fellowship with God.

May the Lord be with you, and watch over and bless, and give you a wonderful week, as He ministers to you by His Spirit. May the love of Jesus Christ just fill and flood your soul, and may your steps be guided of the Lord. And, may your life be pleasing unto Him. In Jesus' name.