



Secondary Sunday School

January 1, 2017. V67, Q1, W1

Proverbs' Precepts

Be Smart! Hear, Learn, and Understand

Proverbs: Nuggets of useful truth or advice.

Proverb: A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels. Proverbs 1:5

Scripture References: Proverbs 9:9; Proverbs 1:7; I Kings 3:3-15; I Kings 4:29; I Kings 10:1-9

Solomon was the wisest man to have lived on this earth other than Jesus Christ. When Solomon's father, King David, died, Solomon was the new king of Israel. God came to Solomon one night in a dream and said, "Solomon, ask of me anything you want and I will give it to you." This was an opportunity for Solomon to get anything he had ever wanted!

Even though he was likely a grown man, he told God, "I am just like a little child. I do not know how to rule the people. Please give me an understanding heart so that I might know the difference between good and bad so that I can rule the people." Because Solomon's prayer pleased the Lord, God gave him not only a wise and understanding heart, greater than any who had come before or after him, but he also added riches and honor.

It was this same King Solomon who wrote the vast majority of the book of Proverbs, home to approximately 900 proverbs. We are told that Solomon spoke an incredible 3000 proverbs and authored 1005 songs. God gave Solomon wisdom "even as the sand that is on the sea shore." He spoke of trees, animals, birds, reptiles, fish and a wide variety of other subjects. His fame extended to the far corners of the earth.

When the queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame concerning the name of the Lord she wasn't sure if she believed the great reports concerning him, so she visited him and asked him very hard questions. She ate at his table laden with good food and observed the attendance of his well-clothed servants. When she left, she said, "The half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard...blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel."

In our proverb today, Solomon said a wise man will hear. In school, we used to play a game called bombardment in which two teams faced off. The object was to throw a rubber ball and hit somebody on the opposing team to "get them out." Multiple balls would be flying back and forth as we tried to hit somebody while at the same time

A LOVE LETTER

*Psalm 18:35, Jeremiah 1:5, 15:18-21,
29:11-14*

February, 2014. I was 20, a sophomore in college and struggling. School was tough and I missed my mom's home-cooked meals. I was in that transition between girl and woman, and at a spiritual crossroads.

I lived in an environment centered around serving the Lord. I read all the Bible stories, I knew how to recite my Sunday verse. I went to church every week and camp meetings every year. And I loved it.

But as I grew older, my personal accountability and need for convictions grew larger. It wasn't enough to get by under the protection of my parents, of my heritage. Now, the Lord was asking me, "Who will you serve?" (Joshua 24:15)

The godly influence of my parents and our church laid a wonderfully strong foundation. But ultimately, for all of us, we make our own decision. It isn't up to anyone else. And it was time for me to make that decision.

I wanted to please the Lord. But along the way, I lost my oil. His place in my life dropped in priority and I was suffering because of it.

That year, Valentine's Day was on a Friday. I drove home for the weekend, deeply troubled. It was the day of love, but my heart hurt. My soul was hungry and pleading with my mind, "You've got to do something! We can't go on like this! Who will you choose?"

Once home, I escaped to my bedroom, fell on my bed and wept. I told Him I knew I had, largely, been ignoring Him.

That I wasn't sure how to pick myself up from the broken place I was in and love Him the way He deserved to be loved.

I didn't have strength, and I didn't know where to start. But I cried for Him to pick me up, carry me and love me. I told the Lord I needed to feel His overwhelming Love, to know He'd still choose me even after I'd let Him down, time after time.

And like the best love story out there, the Lord met me that Valentine's Day. He immediately began to witness and speak to me. Verse after verse washed over my hungry soul.

For a long time, I didn't have the strength for anything but to stay in the arms of Jesus. And He let me stay. He wooed me, calmed my self-doubt, healed my wounds and showered me in Love.

It's been more than two years since this experience, and I can joyously say my relationship with the Lord grows sweeter every day. One of my favorite verses is Psalm 18:35. The last phrase of the verse says, "Thy gentleness has made me great."

How true. I found my strength only through the Lord's unfailing, unwavering love. I struggled so much because I felt like I had to be "perfect" before the Lord would bless me. I tried, and failed, to be obedient before I had faith and a living relationship with God.

Sometimes it's hard to humble down and admit that we aren't "feeling it," or we're struggling with something, or we're scared. It was for me.

But the Lord already knows our heart. Our honesty is not going to hurt His feelings or offend Him. He's the Lord. He sent Jesus to Earth for the very reason of saving our sins.

The Lord just wants us to be honest and humble before Him.

Review and Apply!

How did King Solomon benefit from asking God for wisdom?

Example: Attended by well dressed servants

[illegible]

KEY THOUGHT

It is the wise man who will hear,
increase learning, and own wise
counsels.

MEMORY VERSE

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask
of God, that giveth to all men
liberally... and it shall be given him.

James 1:5

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss Solomon's prayer and why it pleased the Lord.
2. What did Queen Sheba say about Solomon after she visited him?
3. What are some of the different ways God teaches us?
4. Discuss the consequences for failing to learn the difference between good and bad?

A LOVE LETTER CONTINUED

If we come to the Lord in humility, He's delighted to take us by the hand, carry our worn-out Soul and teach us His love and His ways. He will fill our Souls with faith, joy and an eagerness to please Him.

And He will do the heavy lifting. He's the only One who can.

The Lord desires a love story with every soul. Meet Him, accept His outstretched hand. It will be the best decision you ever make. It was for me.

Karissa Smith

BE SMART! CONTINUED

always having to be on guard so that a ball didn't hit us. We live in a noisy world that bombards us with homework, chores, activities, information, and entertainment of all sorts. The question is this: Is there a quiet corner in our brain where we silence the noise long enough to pay attention and hear the lessons God wants us to receive?

It is not enough to just hear wise counsels, we also need to desire to increase our learning and then understand what we have learned. The truth is, there are some subjects in school we just don't care so much about. However, God is the most interesting teacher and will teach us in just the way He knows we can learn! Just as we recognize the difference between the numbers 1, 2 and 3, God wants us to recognize the difference between good and bad. A person may have high grades on their school work, but they are foolish if they are too proud to listen to or heed wise counsel. The ship of their life will veer toward perilous, rocky shores of the ocean, and they will crash, and perish. However, humility of heart and willingness to learn God's teachings will save them from such a fate. It is the person who is humble enough to say, "Yes! I want to learn what you have to teach me, God," who will be saved.

Sister Julie Elwell

The Beautiful Way (primary) and *The Compass* (junior) Sunday school literature can be downloaded at sundayschoolliterature.com and churchofgodeveninglight.com/beautiful-way. Please email any questions to gellenbeck.lindsey@gmail.com.

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Secondary Sunday School

January 8, 2017. V67, Q1, W2

Proverbs' Precepts

The Industrious Ant

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Proverbs 6:6

Scripture References: Proverbs 10:4; Proverbs 19:24; I Kings 5:12-18; Proverbs 24:31-34

King Solomon might have been king, but he was acquainted with work and had workers who knew how to work. He built houses, vineyards and pools. He planted gardens and orchards with different kinds of fruit trees. He had stalls built for 4,000 horses and built a huge and beautiful palace. The most important work Solomon undertook was the building of the temple.

The number of workers needed was enormous; 30,000 men were hired to help. 70,000 men carried heavy loads, 80,000 men cut stone in the mountains, and 3,300 men were supervisors over the work. This huge group of men did not stop working for seven years. When they were finished, the temple they built was magnificent.

Work can either be fun or it can be a dreary chore. Many have taken what they think is the easy way out and have become sluggards. A sluggard is someone who is lazy; they would rather play or do nothing than to work.

In our proverb today, Solomon had some advice for laziness. He told the sluggards to go observe the ants. It isn't hard to find ants—all we have to do is go outside. Amazingly, the total weight of all the ants in the world is equal to, if not greater than, the weight of all the humans on the planet. They move an estimated 50 tons of soil per square mile every year. They are able to carry objects up to 20 times their own weight and sometimes more; that would be like you lifting a car! They can run quickly for their small size; if we could run as fast as they do proportionately, we would be as fast as a racehorse. They work together to move heavy objects. They carry crumbs, dead leaves, and dead insects back to their underground tunnels. Every ant has a job and they work tirelessly to take care of and provide for their colonies.

A wise person will consider these incredible, tiny little insects and realize that no matter how they feel about doing work, that work is important and good. Even the most successful and hard-working people don't always feel like being responsible and

GOD STILL HEALS

Growing up in church, I've always been taught God is capable of divine healing. I've read accounts in both the Bible and other books of instances in which people have been miraculously healed of physical and mental afflictions. Yet, reading or hearing about something is never the same as experiencing it for yourself. I believed God was able to heal in a divine fashion, but my faith wasn't polished in that area. God wanted to change that, so He sent me a trial which would require my decision to trust Him or place my faith in man.

I was playing basketball one afternoon during Monark in 2014. I was dribbling down the court when someone came up behind me and accidentally knocked me off balance. My body twisted, I fell to the ground and I landed hard, directly on my shoulder, and heard a loud pop as I hit the floor. I hopped back up, shoulder throbbing, and tried to keep playing. I had the usual encouragement of the other guys there, saying, "just play it off," or, "you'll be fine." I wanted to believe them, but I physically couldn't lift my arm above my waist without intense pain.

I went home and couldn't move my arm very much at all without shooting pain. I thought it might be dislocated, so I rested my arm in a sling. We couldn't find anyone with the medical knowledge to pop it back into place. We decided to make a quick trip to Urgent Care in Joplin to have them do it. They admitted me to a room to wait for someone to see me. After the long wait, the doctor

explained I needed an X-ray on my shoulder to know what the true problem was. Once it was completed, I waited even longer while it processed. Instead of a dislocated shoulder, I had acromioclavicular separation.

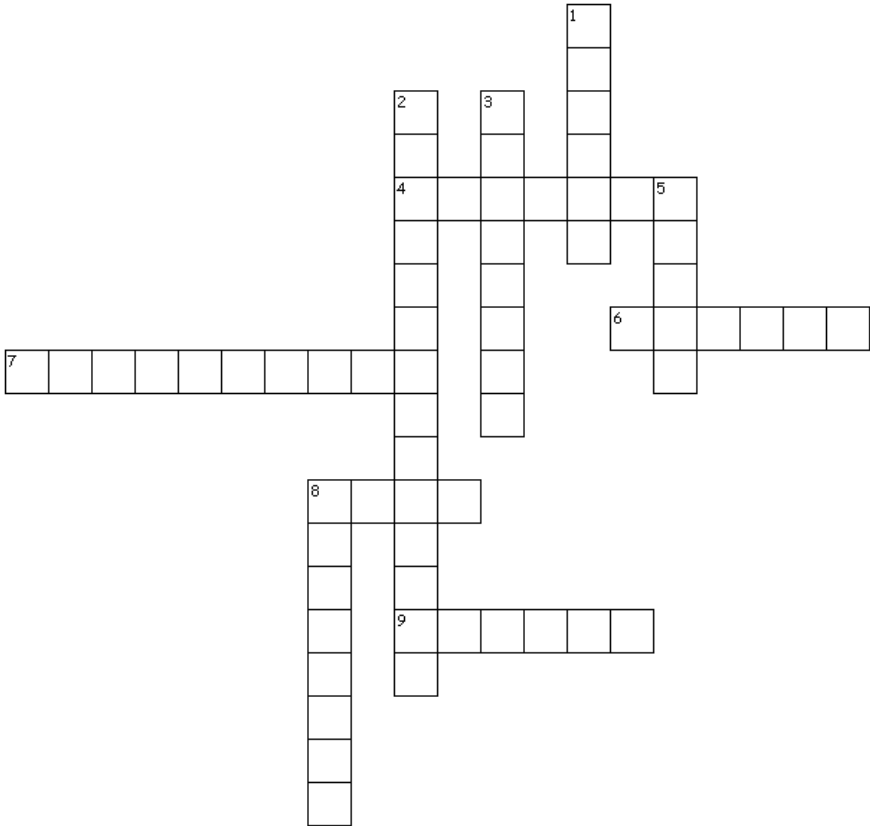
Minus all the medical lingo, the ligaments holding the joint together tore, which caused a separation of the joint and bone. There are different grades to the injury, but my injury was the most severe: Grade 3 separation. My shoulder fell under the weight of my arm, and there was a painfully obvious bump protruding from the top of my shoulder as well. I couldn't raise my arm without severe pain. I could either have my arm in a sling for weeks on end, allowing the shoulder to heal naturally, or have surgery performed to fix my shoulder. Each option was a lengthy process, neither fail-proof.

I chose to let my body heal naturally. I knew, despite my questionable faith that He would, God COULD, heal my shoulder. The expected recovery was about four weeks before I could use my arm without a sling and up to 12 weeks before it was fully functioning. I prayed, my family prayed, and a lot of my friends prayed for me, too. God decided to heal me, even though my faith wasn't firmly grounded. Within three weeks, by the time school started, I was out of the sling. After four weeks, I had full functionality in my arm. God had performed beyond what I ever would have expected.

The real lesson came after I was healed where I could reflect on what had happened. My healing was premature, nothing short of a miracle. It helped build my faith to believe that God still does heal

Work Hard!

Word List: Horses, Orchards, Responsibility, Seven, Sluggard, Soil, Success, Palace, Privileges, Temple, Twenty



Across

4. Hard work leads to this.
6. Solomon's greatest architectural feat.
7. These are granted those who work hard.
8. ants move up to 50 tons per square mile of this every year
9. Ants can carry up to this many times their own weight!

Down

1. Solomon built stalls for many ____.
2. Working hard builds a person's ____.
3. Solomon planted many of these.
5. the number of years it took Solomon to build the temple.
8. "Go to the ant, thou ____"

KEY THOUGHT

All roads that lead to success have to pass through hard work.

MEMORY VERSE

The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest and have nothing. Proverbs 20:4

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What would have happened if Solomon's workers got bored and decided they didn't want to work?
2. What can we learn from the ant?
3. What can you do to make work more fun?
4. What are the benefits of hard work?

GOD STILL HEALS CONTINUED

and perform miracles. It is one thing to hear about healings for other people, but it is quite another to have that mercy extended personally. This experience helped grow my faith, and is something I'll remember for a long time, along with a bump on my shoulder.

Bretton Cole

THE INDUSTRIOUS ANT CONTINUED

working hard, but they realize nothing worthwhile comes without work. The benefit of hard work is that we enjoy, if nothing else, knowing that we gave a job our very best effort.

What about you? Do you repeatedly have to be reminded to do your chores? Do you keep your eyes open for tasks that need to be completed? For example, if your room is cluttered, do you automatically clean it? God wants to challenge us all to do better!

We might not always get paid money for doing chores or schoolwork, but if we are responsible and work hard, we will earn trust, respect, and privileges. Developing good work habits with a good attitude will earn the favor of those we work for, both now and later on in life. On the other hand, when we don't complete tasks assigned us or don't put all our energy and heart into our work, we cannot expect to profit.

While ants appear to never stop, they do have many rest cycles (or short naps) lasting often just a few seconds or up to a minute each. Of course we need more sleep than the ant, but when our alarm clocks go off in the morning, we should rise cheerfully to start our day! God wants us to ENJOY life. He doesn't expect us to work, work, work all the time, but neither does He want us to be lazy.

Sister Julie Elwell

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Secondary Sunday School

January 15, 2017. V67, Q1, W3

Proverbs' Precepts

Word-Inflicted Wounds: Gossip

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: The wounds of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly. Proverbs 18:8

Not one person in the land of Israel was praised more than Absalom, King David's son, for his great beauty. However, handsome Absalom, had a deceitful and wicked heart. He wanted to be king over Israel so he would get up early every morning and stand by the gate before his father, the true king, had a chance to arrive. As people who had controversies came to have their problems settled by the king, Absalom would call out to them and engage them in conversation. He listened with a "sympathetic" ear to their troubles, and he kissed their hands. Worst of all, he spoke harmful words against his father. In this way, he stole the hearts of the people away from King David. In time, Absalom gained a large enough following that David was afraid for his life and fled the palace for the hills.

David was wounded, humiliated and sorrowful. Eventually, Absalom, in an attempt to kill his brother, was racing through the forest on his horse when his hair got caught in a tree. The horse left Absalom hanging and Joab, captain of David's army, killed him. David was left weeping bitter and sorrowful tears over the death of his brother. Fault-finding words spoken out of the wicked heart of Absalom ultimately wounded many people. No one was a winner.

A talebearer is someone who spreads rumors or who gossips. It is someone who reveals secrets. Sadly, some people think if something is confidentially whispered in their ear, it must surely be true. It is a simple person who believes everything he or she hears. Some things we hear might indeed be true, but many times, words expose things which should be kept private. Most of the time, stories we hear may have an element of truth, but there are usually aspects of the story we know nothing about.

The saying "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me" is simply untrue. Words do hurt and take longer to heal than broken bones. Have you ever had someone make fun of your name, make hurtful comments about your appearance, or say something unkind about you to other people? Careless words or exaggerated truths spoken just to add sensation to a story can wound to the point of causing much heartache and many tears behind closed doors.

WHEN GOD SAID “I TOLD YOU SO”

There have been many times in my life when God has shown His faithfulness, but there's one time that's fairly fresh in my mind because it happened so recently.

About two years ago, I started to pray and ask God what He would have me do for Him. This went on for some time. Then one day, I was at a orientation for the co-op I was going to and saw a pamphlet for a mission trip to Nicaragua. I can remember so clearly feeling a heavy burden, but thinking that it was just me wanting to travel or see the world. So I suppressed that burden and continued to pray the same prayer.

Later, I felt a burden yet again to do missions work. And again, I suppressed the burden, until God gave scripture Matthew 28:18-20. That's when I changed my prayer, saying, “Okay, Lord, when and where?” I still had doubts, but I continued to pray.

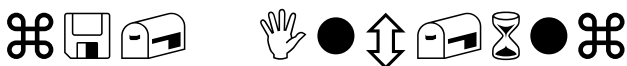
Later, I heard about the same trip to Nicaragua and I heard God say, “Go to the missions meeting.” So I did, and I found out that it would be \$1500. I doubted I would be able to go but I still went to the meetings and prayed. I remember hearing God say, “You're going to go.”

I started a fundraiser to raise the money. I still had doubt about if I could go or even if I was supposed to, even after all this confirmation and almost two years of feeling the burden. I went to Monark in 2016 and on my way back, I was praying about the whole thing when God spoke to me and said, “Check your GoFundMe account.” I did.

I not only had the \$1500, but more. He then so sweetly said to me, “I told you I wanted you to go and that I'd provide.” His words were the sweetest and kindest ‘I told you so’ I've ever received in my life, but I'm thankful for it. God is so faithful to make a way for His people to do what they're called to and to confirm that it's what they should be doing.

Donald Elwell

Crack the Code!



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
W	X	Y	Z							

KEY THOUGHT

Gossip wounds deeply; it should die when it hits our ears.

MEMORY VERSE

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 4:29

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Did Absalom's handsome face make up for his wounding words?
2. What damage did Absalom cause by speaking words against the king?
3. Why do hurtful words wound us so badly?
4. Discuss ways to kill gossip.

WORD=INFLECTED WOUNDS CONTINUED

You can be sure if someone continually gossips and tells stories about other people, that person is not to be trusted. The person who gossips with you will also gossip about you.

God is highly displeased with gossip and tale bearing. If someone draws you into one of those secretive and confidential conversations in which another person is being talked about in a hurtful way, what should you do? Refuse to listen or walk away. Don't throw wood on the fire by adding your opinions and comments or by taking sides. If you don't repeat gossip, the fire will die. Make a commitment to never tear down other people. Most of the time rumors which are spread are just that—rumors. Partial truths and idle words are the devil's tools to create all sorts of problems. Gossip ruins friendships, causes pain, and divides people.

Spreading gossip is like going outside on a windy day, cutting open a feather pillow, and tossing all the feathers to the wind. It is impossible to gather them all back. Words, once spoken, take wings and fly. Remember, you will never have to explain words you don't speak. Words can wound deeply. **THINK** before you speak. (T) Is it true? (H) Is it helpful? (I) Is it inspiring? (N) Is it necessary? (K) Is it kind? Be careful of the tales you tell and listen to.

Sister Julie Elwell



Proverbs' Precepts

A Good Name: Reputation

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold. Proverbs 22:1

What comes to your mind when you hear the name King Solomon? Perhaps you think of the fact that he was the wisest king ever to rule Israel. Yes, his request to God for wisdom showed great foresight and prudence, and he used that wisdom to build Israel into a prospering, wealthy kingdom. But there is another side to Solomon that is not easily forgotten: he allowed his heart to be drawn away from God by his many, many wives. His riches, fame, and power caused him to believe that he could do whatever he wanted, including take a multitude of foreign, pagan wives who swayed his love and devotion from God who had served him so well.

What does it mean to have a good reputation? The definition of reputation is this: a widespread belief that someone or something has a particular habit or characteristic. Based on that definition, having a good reputation or name means that it is widely believed amongst the people who know you that you lead a life of clean habits and upstanding moral character. Such a reputation is worth more than many great riches!

But is it easy to create or maintain a good reputation? We already discussed Solomon's reputation. Even during his lifetime, his reputation was so far spread, the queen of Sheba came to see for herself if all that she heard was true. It was no easy task for Solomon to create the reputation he had—many hours of labor, much money, and many wise decisions were made before word of his greatness reached the queen. It is not an easy task for you to create a good name for yourself either. You have to be steady and consistent in your actions.

Are there ways that you can build up a good name for yourself? Of course! The proverb in today's lesson even has some hints about how you can. What is rather to be chosen than silver and gold? Loving favor. To earn favor from those around you, show respect. Obey those in authority, and do it with a good attitude! Treat your peers kindly and give them a helping hand when they need it. Reach out toward those who do not know Christ and befriend those who are living without His hope. How can you earn the favor

GOD'S PERFECT TIMING

I have been trying to figure out where to start with my testimony, and I hadn't really figured out where to start until today. Brother Marty said something in church today that really stuck out to me, and I wanted to share it. He said, "Sometimes we go through a season of suffering so that God can perfect us." This couldn't be more true in my life.

I have always been raised in the Church of God, and I always tried to do what was right, but completely giving everything to God took me a while. I went to the altar when I was younger, but as for a full consecration, I wasn't quite ready to give everything up and give it to God. It wasn't a very smart decision, but it is what I did.

When I was eight years old, my grandpa passed away. I know that is a part of life and getting older, but up until that point, I lost a family member every two years. I was very close to my grandpa and really looked up to him. He was the spiritual example that I looked up to and everything I wanted to be. He had such faith in God, and always talked to God as though He was sitting right next to him. It always touched me that even though my grandpa couldn't read very well, the one book he could read was the Bible. When my grandpa died, I got hard. I wanted to serve God, and I still tried to live right, but something was missing. I was bitter knowing that my role model had gone, and my grandma was heartbroken. I was young and I just kept thinking that I needed my grandpa

longer and that it was the wrong time to take him.

On December 27, 2012 at the Guthrie meeting, I couldn't take it anymore. I wanted the joy that others had. I wanted to give everything to God. I went up to the altar that night and prayed and begged God to help me. He filled me with such a peace that, up until that point, I couldn't have even imagined having or experiencing. Things were still hard, but I gave God complete control of my life. I knew He had it all under control.

I started to look back at my grandpa's life, and read diaries my grandma wrote about him. I started to think back over his prayers that he prayed in church, and the kind of life and example he was. I realized that he is the person I want to be like. Through his death, God was able to work with me and show me what it is like to have a true experience of salvation. Just like Brother Marty said in church, God has been able to perfect me and mold me into the person He wants me to be through the suffering. I realize what I treasure I have in Him, and it took the suffering for me to really realize that.

Life is still hard, and trials still come, but with God we can make it through anything. So, try to remember just one thing: no matter how hard the road was or seems ahead, God knows exactly what He is doing and His timing is perfect. And that through the suffering, God can make you into the jewel He wants you to be for His service.

Tiffany Shaffer

SOLOMON'S REPUTATION: GOOD OR BAD?

In what ways did King Solomon build a good reputation?	In what ways did King Solomon build a bad reputation?
Example: Rebuilt the Temple of God	Example: Married many foreign wives

You decide: In the end, did King Solomon have a good or a bad reputation? Write about what you think and share your opinion and reasons with your Sunday school class!

KEY THOUGHT

A good reputation is hard to obtain and maintain, but it is a priceless treasure!

MEMORY VERSE

And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. Act 24:16

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What were the two sides to Solomon's reputation?
2. What decisions did he make to ruin his good name and how did they affect his life?
3. Discuss even more ways you can build up your reputation.
4. Why is it such a terrible thing to lose your good name?

A GOOD NAME CONTINUED

of God? That is an easy question to answer: love Him above everything in this world, follow His commandments, and strive to do His will in everything. These are a couple easy ways to build your good name. God is pleased with all of them!

Unfortunately, the building up of a good name is far more difficult than the tearing down of one. A single bad decision can be the ruin of a person's good reputation. A man or woman might spend 20 years doing what is right and following God's standards, but one major mistake can cause them to be seen differently in the eyes of their peers. The change is often permanent, and the damage done is often beyond repair. We can read about how Solomon's good reputation was ruined by his bad decisions as well. He came to the place where his household was falling apart, and even some of his sons were turned against him. How sad to suffer these things when God had so richly blessed the beginning of his rule.

It is a wonderful, priceless thing to have a good reputation. Your ability to reach those around you is increased tenfold when you are perceived as a godly and righteous individual. Just remember that the building and protecting of your good name is worth far more than all the riches of this earth!

Lindsey Gellenbeck



Secondary Sunday School

January 29, 2017. V67, Q1, W5

Proverbs' Precepts

Material Riches: Greed

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble there-with. Proverbs 15:16

Scripture References: Mark 10:5, Psalms 37:25

Have you ever been walking through a store and saw a little child throwing a fit? Usually these episodes occur because the child was refused a piece of candy or some other treat by their mother. What unrest and discord these times bring to the little family! As an adult, however, it is easy to see the reasons a mother might decide against granting her child such a treat. Perhaps it is almost time for the child's nap, or maybe the mother will be serving dinner as soon as they return home.

It is so easy to become upset when we look at our lives and see a lack of material riches. How nice it would be to be able to purchase that fancy new phone coming out! What fun it would be to drive a new, sporty car to school every day! Owning new and exciting things brings a certain satisfaction, and even validation, to our self-confidence. However, God often has good reasons for allowing us to go without some of those exciting belongings.

In Mark, Jesus says, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Why do you suppose Jesus said this? Imagine if the child in the store was given that piece of candy every time he asked for it. Soon, he would consider it his right to eat candy every time he went to the store with his mother, and if for some reason he didn't get it, he would certainly make his displeasure known. He would become spoiled—inconsolable every time something didn't go his way.

As adults, we are really no different than that child. If we are given every desire of our heart, we will soon believe we deserve the nicest that this world has to offer. Discontentment and greed will grow exponentially, even as we purchase more and more to try and satisfy that need. Not only will we be greedy, entitled, and snobby, but we will also start to lose our dependence on God.

Now imagine a different scenario: A child is walking through the store with his mother and they reach the checkout stand. His mother reaches for a candy bar and offers it to

A JOURNEY

This past July, I was challenged to fall in love with Jesus and deepen my relationship with Him. Since then, I have faced more trials than I can ever remember facing.

Some of my trials are from the devil, but most of them are from the Lord. He is working on me and making me into pliable clay. This process is uncomfortable, but necessary.

It all started a few months ago when something came up in my life, and it showed me that I wasn't making God my first priority. Because of this, my happiness was like a roller-coaster, with many highs and many lows.

When all this came to light in my mind, I started battling my will. I wanted the Lord's way, but I also wanted mine. After much prayer, I began to come to the place of surrender. Sometimes I find myself picking up my will again. I then have to lay it back down. While I still need work, I thank the Lord for helping me in this area of my life.

Another related issue I have been dealing with is trusting and waiting in the Lord. How hard can it be to trust and wait in an all-knowing God? It doesn't sound hard, but when it gets down to a personal level, it can be a struggle.

The Lord has impressed upon me to wait on Him in very specific areas of my life. While I know the Lord told me this, waiting can get long and boring. Also, when praying for an answer, it would be nice to get one right here and now. But the Lord wants me (and you) to learn to

wait and trust Him. Psalm 37:7 says, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him...." Patience is a tough virtue to learn. However, in my life, I feel like the Lord is teaching me patience through these waiting periods.

This brings me to another topic: contentment. I have really struggled with being content with my life. I have found myself wishing I had different circumstances.

"If only this aspect of my life could be like so and so's over there instead of the one I have," has been a thought I've battled with.

But why would I wish for circumstances that weren't from the Lord? My life is unique. God's plan for me is different than His plan for "so and so over there." I am learning to be content in whatever situation the Lord places me.

Regarding contentment, I have also been learning how to live my life day by day. Not vacation by vacation or Friday by Friday. There is nothing wrong with looking forward to future events, but if it's keeping you or me from living daily life, it's a problem. When we wake up in the morning, dreading another boring day of school, we need to be on the lookout for the little things the Lord sends our way. It may be as simple as a bird singing. But it is the simple things that have the most meaning, and that are sent to brighten our day.

From putting the Lord first, such as laying down my will, trusting and waiting and being content, to living my life day by day and enjoying the simple things, the Lord is working on me and showing Himself to me.

A GREATER TREASURE

BEHAVIOR	DISCONTENT	GREED	SATISFACTION
CAMEL	ENTITLED	MATERIAL	SPOILED
CONTENTMENT	FULFILLED	NECESSITIES	TREASURE
DEPENDENCE	GRATEFULNESS	PROVISION	VALIDATION

T L A C T N E T N O C S I D O E E L V F J C N D N
Y I E O O D E L I O P S E E E A N A G Q R O Q E E
K J B M D N P S Z O M U Y E Q C L T W E I M T L C
E T E B A A T Z J I F V Z R L I N Q I T S R C L E
X R H J D C C E M A X W M G D N O E C T E X Q I S
G R A T E F U L N E S S J A Y Z S A D A L M A F S
T X V V K K M M O T C H T U U C F L S N B E V L I
O Q I G M I F W Q F M I A K I S F U N Z E W D U T
J H O I H Y F W B Q O E P Q I Y R O M O Q P V F I
P A R W H V W X Q N Q Z N T E E I I K P Z H E T E
A L V K M A O B G X T N A T C S W S I V L S H D S
M A T E R I A L I F X S M O I H Q O Y J V B F M A
F A P C U H E R K L U S Y V G L B G L S R B D N V
F B T N F E M K S Q G Q O R A Q H M L C V J N B V
E A E A G B A M V R W R J C D S L J C Q F R S L D
E W L E L Z K P K U P E W A P Y D S O I L Q K G T

KEY THOUGHT

It is far better to poor and content with God than rich and greedy with satan.

MEMORY VERSE

Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than he that is perverse in his ways, though he be rich.

Proverbs 28:6

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the two children described in the lesson. What causes each child to be the way they are?
2. How can we strive to be like the content, obedient child?
3. What crowds into our hearts when we are given every material possession we want?
4. What kind of treasure should we strive toward?

MATERIAL RICHES CONTINUED

the child as a reward for good behavior. What happiness and contentment that child will feel upon receiving such a reward! How fulfilled he will be when he sees the tangible benefits of obedience and respect for his mother. Can we, as children of God, strive to be more like this child?

Instead of desiring the best this world has to offer, our hearts should be continually turned toward God. There is always something for which we can give thanks and God will never leave us without the necessities we need. David wrote, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." What a beautiful promise to place our trust in! We can have faith in the continual provision of our needs and be thankful for what we have. When this is our main focus, when our gratefulness toward God is not crowded out by greed and discontentment, there is room in our hearts for the fear and respect He deserves.

So remember next time you see something you feel like you just can't live without, instead of spending your time and energy thinking about it and all the fun it would bring you, remember the words written in today's proverb. Great trouble comes with owning great treasure! Instead, strive toward a greater treasure: love for the Lord, your pearl of great price, hidden away in your heart.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

A JOURNEY CONTINUED

Yes, I have my struggles. You will too. The devil knows just where to get you and me, but the Lord is always there to lift us up. I want to thank and praise the Lord for all He has done for me and I want to continue serving Him with all my heart.

Amen.

Andrea Smith

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Secondary Sunday School

February 5, 2017. V67, Q1, W6

Proverbs' Precepts

Be Ye Transformed: Thoughts

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7

Scripture References: 2 Corinthians 10:5; Philippians 4:8; Romans 12:1-2

"The power of positive thinking!" "Mind over matter!" "Think happy, be happy!"

Have you heard any of these phrases out in the world? People have come up with many sayings and phrases like these to encourage themselves in their own minds. Our thoughts are a powerful tool! Thankfully, we do not have to rely on phrases such as these. We have access to a power much more potent and effective!

There is a verse in Corinthians where Paul encourages the saints to bring their thoughts into subjection. He says, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ..." Casting down imaginations—what do you suppose that means? Is it wrong to have an imagination? No, God has given that as a gift to each one of us. But what kinds of scenarios do we choose to imagine? Paul gives a specification for this very thing—everything that exalteth itself against God. Are your imaginations focused on Godly things, or are they promoting a vain self-image, inappropriate behavior, or unkindness toward others? In the next few verses, Paul goes on to talk about how keeping our minds from such thoughts is a part of our obedience to God.

Often times it is fairly obvious when we have a thought that we should not stop to dwell on. But what kinds of things does God want us to think about? Paul wrote to the Philippians about this very thing, saying, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." That is a pretty comprehensive list! True—not only does this include lies, but also things that are not of a pure nature; honest—don't dwell on gossip, exaggerations, or untruths! Pure and lovely—nothing inappropriate or degrading to others; of good report—nothing that disturbs the peace God has gifted you with. Do your thoughts fall easily into these categories? Strive to keep the things you dwell upon within these guidelines. In them there is virtue and praise!

CALLED

The fresh autumn wind whisked the leaves as Jimmy Hix stepped out his front door. Refreshing air filled his lungs and cleared his mind. Jimmy was a heavy-set man with a big heart and a broad smile. Drugs and alcohol had enslaved him for most of his life. However, in his recent past, he had become totally clean. Now, a heartfelt desire to help others drove him to hold weekly meetings in the county jail. He was dedicated to helping others break away from the vice of drugs and alcohol.

About the time he stepped outside, I stopped by his house. As I walked up to the fence, Jimmy and I shouted how-do-you-do's over the barking of the dogs. We then chatted about the weather, life, and other small talk. Suddenly, Jimmy interjected, "Well, are you coming to the jail with me this Saturday?" A lump formed in my throat. He had ribbed me with the same question the last few times we had talked. I seriously wanted to join, but I was a sheltered kid who hadn't tasted alcohol or tried drugs! What would I have to give a group of people who struggled with things I knew nothing of?

I began to earnestly pray. No angel appeared, no visions came, and no voice from Heaven spoke in my ear. Only the normal things of life: God's Word, parents, and my thoughts. What was I supposed to do? Jimmy wanted my help and the inmates needed the light of God. My dad and mom both felt that it could be beneficial, as long as I was led by the Lord.

I knew we are all commissioned to get the gospel out in the world! Mark 16:15 says that we are to "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

God had caused the doors to swing wide open right at my fingertips and I felt a peace from God about it all. The approval of spiritual advisors, the opportunity, and the fact that my heart wanted to do God's will, all said I needed to go.

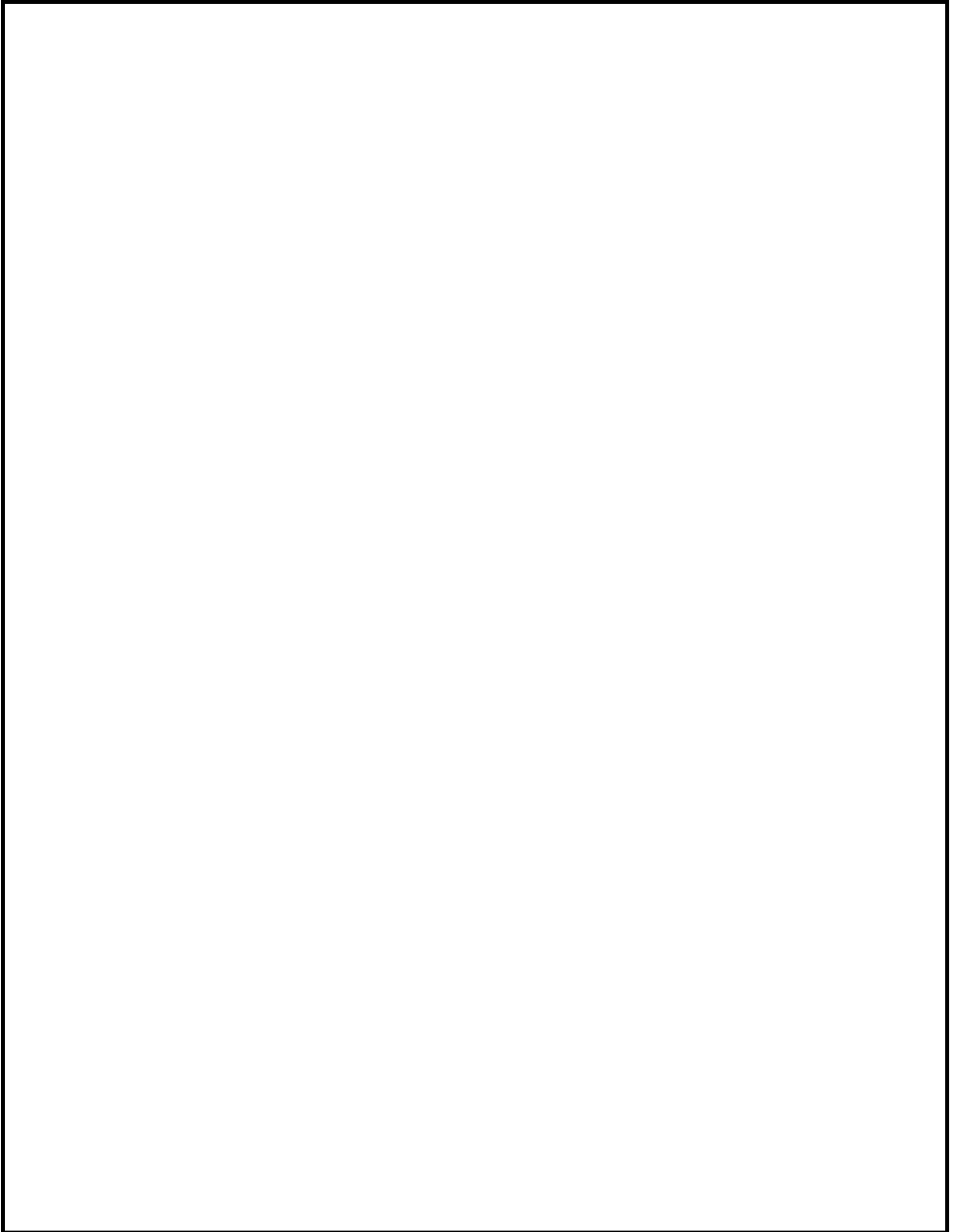
It's easy to get a glorified idea of the callings of God. In reality, He often leads in simple and subtle ways. Let's examine how Christ called Peter and Andrew. Matthew 4:18-19 says, "And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother... And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Jesus simply went to them in their normal occupation of fishing and commanded them to follow Him.

He will call us in our everyday life but He might give us a different job. Some build the boat, some operate the sails, some cook for the crew, and others cast the nets. Regardless of our place, we are equally responsible to carry out God's will to be fishers of men.

The will of the Lord is often a maze of insignificant and unexciting baby steps that leads us through a purposeful journey. Let me explain: following the Lord is similar to walking in a thick forest with a smartphone flashlight. The light only illuminates the area in front of us. It would be nice to see out into the dark future but God wants us to follow one step at a time and yield ourselves completely into His will.

ARE YOU AN ARTIST?

Use the space below to draw a picture of thoughts that God would be pleased with. Share with your classmates!

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a drawing. It occupies the majority of the page below the text.

KEY THOUGHT

How a person thinks becomes who the person is.

MEMORY VERSE

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. Romans 12:2

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Why do people in the world rely on catchy phrases to promote positive thoughts?
2. Discuss the kinds of imaginations God wishes us to avoid.
3. Name some thoughts that fall under the categories listed in Philippians.
4. How can our minds be transformed and what does that mean in our everyday lives?

BE YE TRANSFORMED CONTINUED

Even though we know what kinds of thoughts we should think, it isn't always easy to completely block out the things we shouldn't think. The devil uses our thoughts as a tool. He brings things to our minds that should not stay there. When this happens, ask God for strength to put those things from your mind. It is a part of His plan that we have this choice to make, and what we choose to think about is a conscious choice. There is no shame in struggling with your thoughts, as long as you are constantly submitting and striving to keep your mind a pure place. A verse in Romans says that we should present our bodies, which includes our minds, as a living sacrifice. That means we are a work in progress! Every day, we should ask God to keep our thoughts pointed toward holy and righteous things.

The verse in Romans goes on to say, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." If we choose to let God purify and cleanse our thoughts, we will be allowing a transformation. We will find that we do not think the way the world things—we will think the way God thinks. And if we think the way God does, we will become more and more like Him.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

CALLED CONTINUED

Long story short, I ended up going with Jimmy to the county jail. Now the work in the jail has been going on about two years. Many people have prayed for salvation, and I have learned an enormous amount. It is such a wonderful blessing to follow the Lord! It's not even that complicated--God will lead us with what we have. There is no place more fulfilling than right in the center of God's will.

Robert Gellenbeck

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Secondary Sunday School

February 12, 2017. V67, Q1, W7

Proverbs' Precepts

A Way That Seemeth Right: God's Wisdom

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Proverbs 16:25

Scripture References: 2 Timothy 3:7; Proverbs 21:2

Think about what it would have been like growing up 50 years ago. Have your grandparents told you stories of what their childhood was like? What kinds of technological advances have been made since then? Now think about what it was like for them going to school. Did they face the same sorts of trials that you do? Does it seem like they grew up in a time where it was easier to be a follower of Christ?

There is a verse in Timothy that talks about what people will be like in the last days. It says, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." That certainly sounds like our society today, doesn't it? Humankind has learned an incredible amount about the physical world in the last 100 years, and yet it seems like knowledge of the truth of God is decreasing day by day. People are choosing to believe in the wisdom of humans which goes directly against the wisdom of God.

A proverb very similar to today's proverb says, "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts." Can you relate to these words? Was there ever a time where you were certain you were performing a task the right way but you found out later you had done it completely wrong? Perhaps you thought handling a situation a certain way would bring about the best results, but once you acted upon your thoughts, it became obvious that there would have been a better way of solving the issue.

We are so convinced that our own thinking is right that we can often become blinded to the very truths that are in front of us. There is great folly in believing that your way of thinking is the only right way—doing so severely limits God's power in your life.

There is a man in the Bible who experienced the truth of this proverb in his own life. Saul—who later became Paul—spent years of effort and energy killing and imprisoning Christians. And he truly believed he was doing the right thing! Can you imagine being so

GOD IS LOVE

Before God started dealing with my heart, I didn't care much about God. I wasn't really interested in getting to know Him because life was good. But when God started working on me I knew I wasn't living right. I needed to get saved before I died so I could be in Heaven. He showed me exactly what He didn't like in my life, but I didn't take it seriously. I feared giving my heart to Him would make me lose the freedom to do what I wanted to. What I didn't see, at that point, was that God wanted to give me real freedom and that He had so much to offer me. God showed me that He is the only one who can bless me with things that don't fade away, but with riches of much more value.

I heard God calling me but I always deferred salvation until later. I noticed during this time that God never forces someone to come to Him. He just presents Himself as a God full of love to everyone and of all power.

In 2013, some of my family, friends and I went to Canada to visit my aunt and her family. We also got to attend the Monark Camp Meeting that year. I really enjoyed being around the saints. I admired how God worked in the lives of His children and recognized the emptiness in my heart. The last service I visited was on Tuesday evening because we had to leave on Wednesday morning. In this service, Brother Rodney Smith preached about the story of the blind man crying after Jesus to heal his eyes and as the people around him tried to stop him, he cried even louder. This story encouraged me not to be ashamed of coming to Him for repentance and to not care what others might think.

So I sat there, hearing God calling but still hesitating. After the message, the song "Profit and Loss" was called. I hadn't heard this song before but the words of the chorus said, "What will be your profit, to gain all this world, then lose your soul?" They were just stuck in my mind and I couldn't get rid of them. Right there, God gave me the choice and said to me, "Now you have to decide whether to follow me and to have everlasting life or to continue looking for earthly pleasures and losing your soul."

Standing in the rows like everyone else, this all happening in my mind, I knew I needed to go down to the altar to confess and repent all my sins if I wanted to be in heaven. I don't know where I got the courage to go down there, but after regretting all my sins and promising God to start a new life, He told me, "I have cast all your sins into the deepest water and won't remember them anymore."

I'm very thankful to God for giving me this confirmation of the forgiveness of my sins. It still helps me a lot to battle the enemy when he tries to attack me.

Looking back, I recognize that God changed my whole lifestyle, thoughts and wishes. He also changed my attitude towards many people, and many relationships improved just because I became a different person. The thing I most appreciate about having a constant relationship with Him is that I can tell Him everything and He cares for me. I believe God knows what's best for each one of us.

I can't really comprehend how much God did for me, but I just want to encourage you all to give your best in serving God. It'll be worth it.

Alwine Voll

VERSE RACE!

Race your classmates to see who can find and write all of the verses below first!

John 8:23 _____

Ephesians 6:14 _____

2 Timothy 2:15 _____

1 John 5:20 _____

Psalms 119:127 _____

KEY THOUGHT

Human wisdom and understanding holds it's own power, but choosing it over God's wisdom means spiritual death.

MEMORY VERSE

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1 Corinthians 1:25

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss how the advancement of technology might decrease human's understanding of God's wisdom.
2. Compare your wisdom to God's—how has using either way of thinking turned out for you?
3. List as many books as you can think of that Paul wrote.
4. Name some ways you can let God change your way of thinking to His.

GOD'S WISDOM CONTINUED

deceived? Wicked ways of thought are often the work of months or years. Eventually, the devil creates such confusion and deceit in a mind, that what originally looked terribly wicked suddenly looks very right. It took a divine, massive display of God's glory to stop Saul in his tracks and make him rethink his life. Thankfully, as soon as he was able to see the truth of his situation, he did a complete 180! He began preaching the gospel of Christ to all he came in contact with. Do you remember the great things Paul accomplished? Not only did he travel great distances, teaching the church and converting sinners, but he also wrote many of the books in the New Testament. His influence was great and far-spread.

Isn't it encouraging to see how Paul's life changed because he was willing to enlist in God's way of thinking? Just because you have not always been perfect in your thinking does not mean God isn't willing to perfect you. He is faithful to take the humanity in your thoughts and replace it with His divine wisdom if you are willing to let Him. Do not enlist in the world's way of thinking! Resist the devil when he tries to convince you that the world's way of thinking makes perfect sense. As today's proverb says, the end of that kind of thinking is always death. Choose life! Choose God's thinking! Choose His wisdom!

Lindsey Gellenbeck

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Secondary Sunday School

February 19, 2017. V67, Q1, W8

Proverbs' Precepts

Unrighteous Anger

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city. Proverbs 16:32

Anger is one letter short of Danger.

Have you ever been filled with a strong feeling of annoyance or displeasure toward someone or toward a situation you found highly unfavorable? We would be less than honest if we didn't admit to ever feeling anger. It is important to understand the emotion of anger is not wrong. However, we get into trouble and displease the Lord when we do not handle our anger in a right manner.

We have examples in the Bible of men who did not handle their anger correctly, and paid a high price because of it. While the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they were thirsty and began to bitterly complain they were going to die. God had given Moses a solution. Moses was to speak to the rock and it would bring forth water. However, Moses, in frustration and anger, had reached his breaking point because of their continual complaining. He said to the people, "Hear now ye rebels, must we then fetch you water out of this rock?" Then, rather than speaking to the rock as God had commanded, he smote the rock. He also took credit for providing the water when he should have given all glory to God.

While Moses' frustration might have been understandable on one level, it was not an excuse for him to handle his anger in an unrighteous and disobedient manner. His anger led to a lack of trust in God and he took matters into his own hands. Very sadly, the high price he paid was that God did not allow him to lead the children of Israel into the Land of Canaan.

What was true for Moses is also true for us. A few moments of uncontrolled frustration and anger often bring hard consequences. We can cause rifts in relationships—with our parents, our siblings, or our friends. Angry words, once spoken, can be forgiven, both by God and by the offended party, but they can never be taken back. They sometimes cause wounds that take a long time to heal.

In our proverb today, Solomon noted that a person who is slow to anger is better than the mighty and he that ruleth (or takes control) of his own spirit is better than someone

MORE BEAUTY THAN BROKENNESS

I've learned so much about God's love these past couple months and over the past year. He has loved me and helped me through the hard times spanning the past year and a half. God has brought me to a place of submission, stripped me of all safe zones I had and let me know that He is in control. Even in the midst of life's chaos, God has shown me His love and He has proven that He controls the storms beating around me.

Looking back on the events of this past year reminds me of the story of Job. He had all the riches in the world, all he could ask for, but he was stripped of everything he loved and cared about. I remember the night that everything crashed on me. I cried out to God, "I have nothing left. I having nothing to give." It was true. I was and am nothing without God. I found myself stripped of everything that I had. I lost my Grandpa; my spiritual leader, my pastor, and the rock of our family. I lost my schooling. My plans for the future were shattered and set back from what I had planned. I lost my sense of purpose and my self-esteem. But at the end of the day, I know that I have God as my leader and strong tower.

I'll be really honest: I am still struggling spiritually, even now. I feel as though life has calmed down from the storm it's been the past year and a half and things are starting to settle into a new normal. Yet I still struggle to trust God through everything in life. It sounds silly after

everything that has happened--I SHOULD know to just trust Him. But I still feel myself trying to face life on my own terms. I am trying to stay true.

I face my demons like everyone else. I face scars and hurts every day, just like everyone else. But I'm striving to live out a better testimony of what a Christian should look like. I've grown up knowing enough to know how to sound like a good Christian and to say the right things. But I truly want to live out what I should be. I still have a lot of things to work on, but I have felt very humbled in the past year, especially the last few months.

You never know what someone is going through or where they are in life. But what I do know is that Jesus is the answer to all of my problems. There is a huge difference between knowing that Jesus is my answer versus living out the truth that Jesus is my answer. My prayer is that I live with Jesus as my answer to everything instead of just knowing it.

I have found that through all the heartache and brokenness this world may give, Jesus will always be my Healer and Savior. There is more beauty in His love than there is brokenness in the world.

Josh Elwell

PERSONAL APPLICATION

List some things below that make you angry, and then brainstorm ways to react to those situations that would please God. Sometimes the simplest things annoy us, but there are also simple solutions to reacting in a Christian manner!

[illegible]

KEY THOUGHT

Strong people are slow to anger and control their reaction to it.

MEMORY VERSE

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

James 1:19-20

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. In what ways did Moses let his anger get the best of him?
2. Identify: what situations cause you to experience the emotion of anger?
3. Discuss ways to control your own anger or diffuse the anger of another person. What helps? What doesn't help?
4. Do you look strong or weak when you don't stand up for your own way? Why?

UNRIGHTEOUS ANGER CONTINUED

who is strong enough to overcome a city. In the heat of the moment, we may be tempted to raise our voices, argue back, or throw something. However, it is a strong person who is able to hold their tongue and control their actions. We should take the time to identify situations that cause us to be angry so we can appeal to the Lord for the strength and grace we need when we encounter them.

Another proverb tells us a soft answer turns away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger. Soft, kind responses are much more apt to soothe angry feelings, whereas harsh words are like throwing wood on a fire. Proverbs also tells us a soft tongue breaketh the bone. We should never underestimate the strength in quietly spoken words in the heat of conflict. Even if we are right, a very high percentage of the time we will not convince the other person of this by raising our voice or arguing back. Silence, many times, speaks louder and far more convincingly.

Conversely, we are also instructed: "Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame." The truth is, we are NOT always right. We will be the ones looking foolish if we argue and contend for our own way, only to figure out later we were wrong. Again, silence or softly spoken words will serve us best.

Sister Julie Elwell

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Secondary Sunday School

February 26, 2017. V67, Q1, W9

Proverbs' Precepts

Braggarts: Let Another Man's Lips Praise Thee

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips. Proverbs 27:2

Scripture References: Matthew 6:1-7; John 8:54

Aside from the fact that bragging is not pleasing to God, nobody likes to be around someone who is constantly talking about themselves, how good they are, how much they have accomplished, their newest "toy," or all the cool vacations they have taken. Braggarts are people whose pride is puffed up like a balloon. In an effort to make themselves look good to others by praising their own accomplishments, they often don't realize it has the opposite, negative effect!

Jesus spoke these words: "If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me." In other words, Jesus didn't go around telling everybody about all the miracles He performed and how good of a Son He was for leaving His really wonderful home in heaven so He could die for us. We never once hear of Jesus bragging about how good He was. The opposite was true. Many times, after He healed someone, He told them not to go spreading word of their healing miracle around. God, however, DID honour Jesus when He spoke from heaven. He said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."

If we have accomplished good grades, if we have new clothes, or have had some nice thing happen to us, we should let someone else be the one to bring attention to our honor or accomplishment. It is a self-focused person who goes around "sounding the trumpet" and bragging on themselves.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees, spoken of in the gospel of Luke, blew a trumpet before they gave money just so they would be seen by other people. They wanted praise and glory and consequently were not quiet in their giving. Jesus warned us against doing things (or saying things) just to try to get the attention of other people. You don't need to tell people you are good. People will see and sense the good. Confidence is silent. Insecurities are loud. Even if they don't know, God does and that is what counts the most.

Some people can sing beautifully, some can write well, some have an intellectual mind,

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LILY POND

Meme's backyard was alive with the colors of spring as winter's bitterness melted away into warm sunshine. Golden daffodils, mixed into a rainbow of lilies and tulips, overflowed their beds. A white wooden fence, almost sparkling in the early afternoon sunlight, lined the bottom of an evergreen backdrop. Vivacious colors of early April added to the day's merriment as the Wilkins family gathered on Meme and Papa's back porch to celebrate Easter. I don't remember that day, as I was barely two, but it has been told and retold to me enough that I feel I can almost relive it.

All the adults were sitting under the covered porch, chatting back and forth as they watched the babies. We must have already gone on our annual egg hunt and eaten dinner, for everyone was relaxing on the back porch. Meme had disappeared into the house to look for the bubbles she purchased for us grands to enjoy. She must have not been able to find them, because she seemed to take a while. It gave me just enough time to wander off. When Meme came back out with the treat, I was nowhere in sight. They called and called for me, frantically searching the yard, house, and garage. Worry wrapped around each heart as they bounced questions off one another concerning when and where I was last seen and what places had been checked. Panic began to mount as the reality of the situation sank in. I was gone.

Then, God allowed Meme to remember the lily pond. The back porch faced the south and off to the east there was a brick path which led past a flower

garden and on down to Papa's auto body shop. Nestled into the bed was a small pond, full of gold and white fish that played hide-and-seek behind the lily pads, and water that just begged you to dip your fingers in. Momma had been after me all morning because I had been trying to get into the water. It seemed to draw me like a magnet--all the way down into its murky, choking depths.

Meme practically threw Kaytra and Ariyanna, whom she was holding, into her sister Beverly's arms as she bolted for the pond. Sure enough, there I was at the bottom. She plunged into the water and pulled me into her arms. The slight relief that trickled through the family when they saw I had been found was soon replaced with a new fear. There was something wrong. I wasn't moving--I was blue and unresponsive. They turned me over, pounded on my back, and called on the Lord for mercy. Meme was so worried that I would get infection from all that I had assuredly swallowed. Since it was early April, she had not yet cleaned her pond, so it was full of a year's worth of bacteria and icky slime buildup.

Within a matter of minutes, God intervened and I came to--coughing and throwing up the water I'd swallowed. Their next concern was that I would suffer brain damage after my small body had gone so long without oxygen. But to this day, I am healthy and normal--no brain damage, handicap, nada. How truly wonderful and merciful our Heavenly Father is!

If Meme had not gone into the house for the bubbles when she did, I probably wouldn't have been found in time. But thank the Lord for bringing the bubbles to her mind! Not only that, but throughout the week prior to that afternoon, Meme had been under a heavy burden to pray.

Pride vs. Humility

Use the word list and clues from the lesson to complete the crossword!

Accomplishments

Actions

Boast

Braggart

Confidence

Family

Honour

Humility

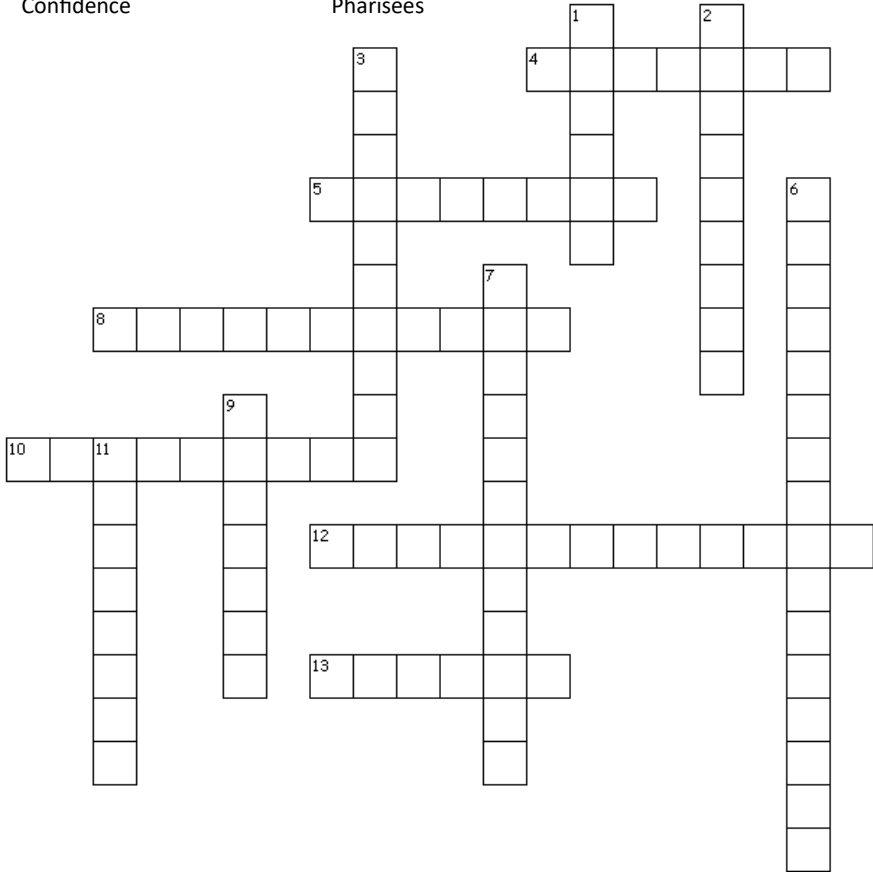
Insecurities

Pharisees

Pride

Self Focused

Trumpet



Across

4. "If I ____ myself, my ____ is nothing."

5. The Pharisees and Saducees sounded this instrument when they gave money.

8. This is silent.

10. A person who constantly brags about themselves.

12. These are loud.

13. Puffed up feelings about one's self.

Down

1. A verse says, "My soul shall make her ____ in the Lord."

2. The way that Jesus taught His followers to think/live.

3. A group of people that

bragged about their tithes and righteousness.

6. Things we achieve in this life.

7. (Two words) Being totally focused on one's self.

9. The group of people with which it is okay to share our accomplishments.

11. God judges our ____, not our words.

KEY THOUGHT

Don't brag about yourself.
Let others praise you.

MEMORY VERSE

He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

2 Corinthians 10:18

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Are people who brag and talk about themselves all the time fun to be around? Why not?
2. Why did Jesus warn us not to be like the Pharisees and Sadducees?
3. Which does God count as more important, our words or our actions?
4. How can we share good news without bragging and is it okay to do so?

BRAGGARTS CONTINUED

some are inventors, and some may have a gift of kindness. We should remember, however, that any talent, goodness, accomplishment, or acquisition is a gift from God. He can take it away in a moment of time if He chooses. Paul said, What do you have that you didn't receive (from God) and WHY do you boast or brag as if it were yours to begin with? It is only because of God that we are who we are. If we are going to boast, we should boast in the LORD and what HE has done for us by dying on the cross.

When we focus mostly on ourselves, we will find that we talk about ourselves. Jesus teaches us a different way to live; He calls it humility. He doesn't want us to think we are better than everybody else, and doesn't want us to go around talking about how good we are. He judges our actions, not our words.

There is a difference between bragging and honestly sharing good news. It is completely acceptable to share your accomplishments with your close family and close friends in an humble way. In fact, those who love you and your friends will WANT to know about the good things happening to you. Friends are wonderful to have because we can share things with them. We just want to be careful that we don't talk nonstop in a boastful manner about all the good things we have done. Praise should come from someone else's mouth and not our own.

Sister Julie Elwell

LILY POND CONTINUED

She didn't know why, for what, or even whom really. She felt like it was for someone in my family, but wasn't sure. She prayed long and hard. Little did she know those prayers would be answered the following weekend. To this day, I believe that I am alive only by the grace of God, as this was the first of many instances when He spared me. To God alone be all the glory!

MaKayla Booher

The Beautiful Way (primary) and *The Compass* (junior) Sunday school literature can be downloaded at sundayschoolliterature.com and churchofgodeveninglight.com/beautiful-way. Please email any questions to gellenbeck.lindsey@gmail.com.

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Secondary Sunday School

March 5, 2017. V67, Q1, W10

Proverbs' Precepts

Cultivate Cheerfulness

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. Proverbs 15:13a

Cultivate cheerfulness. Even if you don't feel like it. Some days we just flat-out wake up on the wrong side of the bed and things happen that make us to want to be the complete opposite of cheerful. However, let's explore Biblical examples and ways to fight our desire to be grumpy.

First of all, what does our Proverb today mean? Let's put it in different words. A happy heart makes the face (countenance) cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit. If our heart is happy, then our face will naturally reflect that everything is okay. It is easy to be cheerful when we are having fun! But what about when we are not having fun?

How do we have a happy heart when we don't feel like it? It is true that sometimes we will be scared, unhappy, or fearful. Maybe you got a bad grade on a test, maybe you felt left out and lonely, maybe your pet died, maybe you are sick, or maybe you are just not getting along with somebody. Jesus didn't promise that things would always please our feelings. In fact, He said that in the world we will have trouble. But wait. He also gave this promise: "In me you will have peace. BE OF GOOD CHEER; I have overcome the world."

The Bible gives us an account of Jesus' disciples who were in a boat in the middle of the night. The clouds started rolling in, the wind increased in intensity, and the waves tossed the boat around like a small toy. The disciples were feeling anything but cheerful. They were afraid, they were scared, and they definitely were not feeling happy. Then, something happened that turned things around. Jesus came to them walking on the water. He immediately told them, "Be of good cheer; it is I, be not afraid." Jesus was the right answer to their fearful, un-cheerful hearts!

Count Your Blessings is the name of a song we sing sometimes. The words of the first verse are these: "When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed, when you are discouraged thinking all is lost, Count your many blessings, name them one by one, And it will surprise you what the Lord has done." How high can you count? Has God blessed you that much?

HAPPINESS THAT DOESN'T SLIDE

A dripping chocolate-covered ice cream cone can be a pretty happy picture. There are lots of things that give off fuzzy feelings or make us laugh, but what gives people true happiness can be quite different. God created breath and freely gave it to us to enjoy so many incredible things--such as the wings of a butterfly and the sand by the ocean. Each gift He created can bring a smile, but only offers a piece of the joy He intends for us to have. God can give us happiness when the cream is gone and a chilly day comes, or when we feel sad. The gifts that God has given us only reflect the love He wants to share and put inside our hearts.

Dancing in the wind as a little girl in Oregon, I always had dreams of big brains and business. I knew in my heart about God's love by the reflection of the incredible family and friends He gave me, and I wanted His plan for my life. It was important to me to make the very most of what God had given me.

The very first time I gave my heart to Christ was on a wooden bench, holding the hand of my grandmother in prayer. It was the fear of letting my unclean heart keep me from His love for an eternity. I didn't want my own hopes to limit me from something so much better. Even when we are at a crossroads and under the pressure of life, we can trust that He truly knows what is best and what will bring true happiness and fulfillment.

A few years have trickled by, making this consecration stronger and sweeter. Happiness in life is not about tasty treats or fun toys, but about being filled with

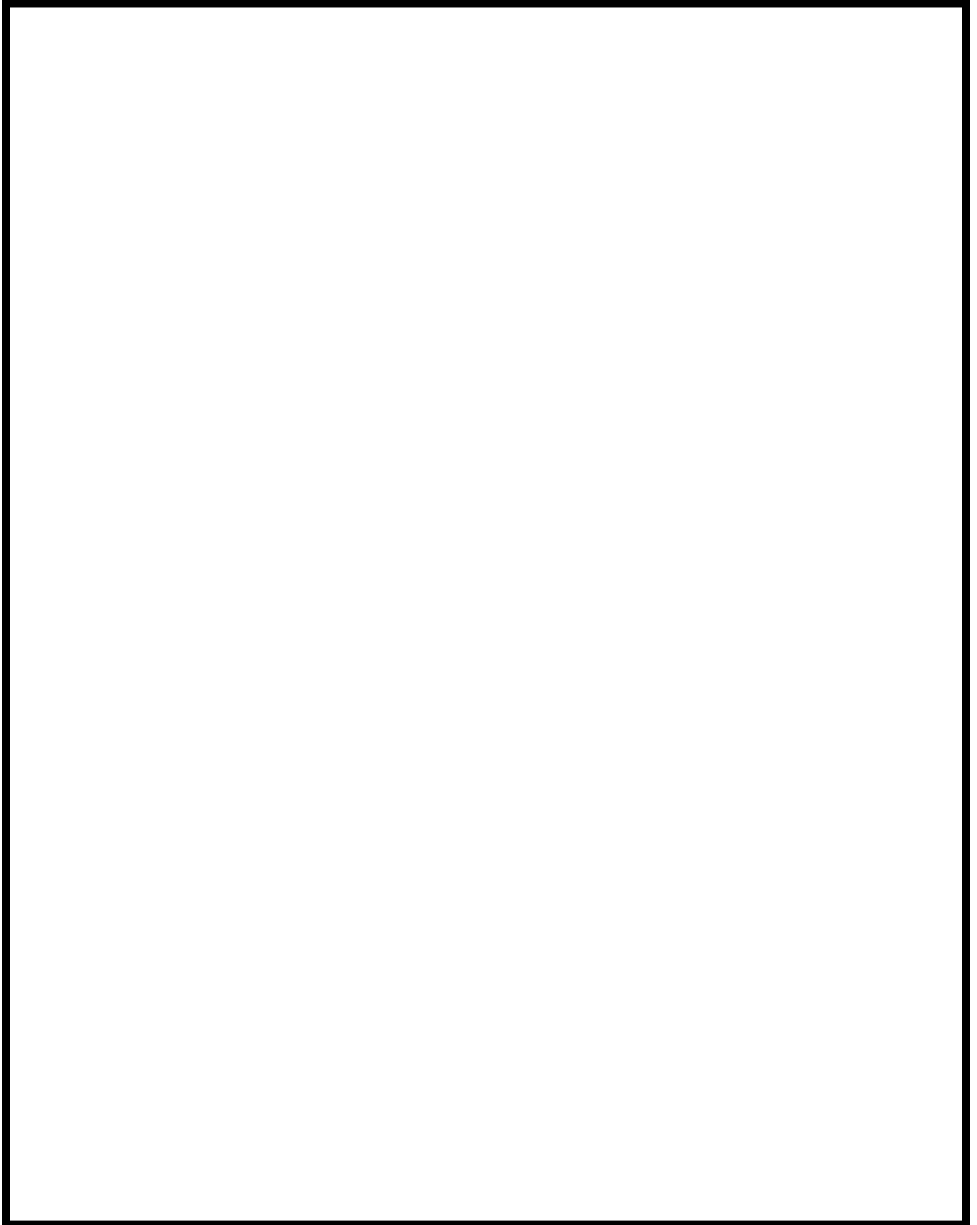
and sharing our love. Testimonies about God's power and love can be rather empty if someone hasn't felt His burning love inside, but maybe you can start to understand it by asking what makes you happy. Dreams are a slippery slide that can take you many places but never leave you with lasting happiness. I have learned we were built for more than earthly dreams because they will leave you empty and simply craving more. When I gave Him my fleshly weaknesses, He traded them out and gave me true peace and happiness that passes all understanding. The love He has and shares is so big that our earthly minds can't hold it all at once but it's the small moments we experience that give life happiness and meaning.

People, places, and glittering colors can very easily distract our knowledge of what brings true happiness, but they are all so very empty. God wants to lovingly create inside of us a new heart of love and goodness that shines through. Many people look at Christianity like a list of rules but it simply means to be like Christ, and with the guidance of His spirit and word we can. It takes more than just accepting the fact that God hung the stars and gave me breath, but it requires the action of a loving, daily relationship. Being happy, fulfilled, and full of passion is a daily adventure with Christ. It is about giving your all and being the very best every day, then letting Him do the rest. There will be disappointments and hard things in life to remind us of our true goal--Heaven. These hard things are like learning tools that build a big heart that can hold more love and happiness. God has a plan for each of His children that is brighter and sweeter than all the ice cream in the world, and He wants to lead us in it.

Kristen Wilson

ARE YOU AN ARTIST?

Draw a picture of something you can do to cultivate spiritual cheerfulness and have your classmates guess what activity you illustrated!



KEY THOUGHT

Jesus is the key to a happy heart.
A happy heart is the key to a cheerful
face.

MEMORY VERSE

This is the day which the Lord hath
made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
Psalms 118:24

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. What does it mean to cultivate cheerfulness?
2. What are things we can do to feel better when we don't feel cheerful?
3. Discuss how our attitude has an influence on other people.
4. What kinds of things bring heart-happiness?

CHEERFULNESS CONTINUED

We have so many blessings! God is always our help. He is merciful even when we do wrong and don't deserve it—He loves us anyway. He caused the sun to come up this morning—think of how scary it would be if the sun hadn't come up! Do you realize that the Bible tells us our hearts can even be made happy not just by the “fun” things of life, but also by work and suffering?

Practice praising God and thinking thankful thoughts even when you don't feel like it. Bite your tongue when you feel like complaining. Acknowledge if you are having a bad day and don't feel like being cheerful, and then take those problems in prayer to our great God. Take time out and find a quiet place to collect your thoughts if you need to calm down and find God's peace. Don't let your feelings control your actions. Let go of the things you can't control!

Some people have a naturally bubblier, more smiley disposition than others. We don't have to always be smiling, but our prayer should be that our heart is at peace. When our heart is at peace and happy, our countenance will automatically reflect that things are okay. Cheerfulness is contagious and encouraging! Smile and laugh as much as you can. God is on your side and is working for you!

Sister Julie Elwell

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Secondary Sunday School

March 12, 2017. V67, Q1, W11

Proverbs' Precepts

Hiding Sins: Confession

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Proverbs 28:13

Scripture References: Joshua 7:1-26; Luke 15:11-24

The game hide-and-seek held a thrill for me when I was young. I remember running around the house trying to find the safest and most obscure place to crouch, lay, or squeeze myself into so that I would not be "found." My most memorable hiding place was in the empty clothes hamper in my parents' bedroom. Hiding was fun. One thing we should never hide, however, is our sins.

The Bible tells of a man who hid his sin. The children of Israel had just won a great victory over Jericho, so victory over the next, smaller city of Ai (a-i) was certain. God had told them not to take anything for themselves from the city of Jericho and they were not to take anything from this next city, either. How surprised Joshua was when the men of Ai fought valiantly and defeated them. Joshua tore his clothes and asked the Lord, "Why did this happen?" The Lord told Joshua that someone in the camp had sinned.

The next morning, the Lord showed Joshua who had sinned. It was a man named Achan. Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me." So Achan confessed that he had sinned. He had taken a beautiful garment, gold and silver. He dug a hole in the ground and hid them under his tent. Because Achan sinned and then hid his sin, he was put to death and everything he owned was destroyed.

The prodigal son in the Bible also sinned. He wasted his money on frivolous living and ended up in a dirty, smelly pig pen. He did something very smart, though. He did not stay in his sin. He said, "I am going to go back to my father's house and say I am sorry. I will tell him that I am not even worthy to be his son." No doubt as he plodded along the road to home he was tired, dirty, needed a shower, and carried the weight of the sins he had committed. Yet, as he drew near to his father's house, his father ran to meet him, throwing his arms around the neck of his son with tears of joy and

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

The only way you realize you need something is when you don't have it, and that you have been taking it for granted all along. That's what happened between me and my relationship with God.

I was raised in church, and wanted to do the right thing. But I kept falling into a state of backsliding and one mistake after another. I had just decided to give up trying hard and to leave it be. I figured one day it would work itself out and I would understand everything spiritually related, but at that point, I wasn't super concerned. I figured God would always forgive me, even though I knew what I was doing wrong.

One night I hit a super low point after going through something really hard and embarrassing. There's always something to learn after being humbled, and this incident taught me exactly what I needed to learn. The lesson came about after I made a huge mistake by not thinking correctly, and it involved others that could have gotten hurt. God gave protection and thankfully no one got hurt, but the intensity of the situation really made me realize that God was looking out for me.

Someone became very upset and scared at the incident, and took it out on me pretty harshly. I deserved it, for it was a sorry and embarrassing mistake. I was so ashamed of myself and what I had done, and I was in an emotional shock from the reaction of the other person. It shook me to my core.

I knew that the relationship between me and the other person was sure to be gone, and I thought that they would never forgive me. I couldn't even forgive them. I distinctly remember praying to

God that He would work in that situation and would have His will, but to not let it permanently steal my joy in life.

At that moment, I needed Him. I needed to be reminded of something good in life and the fact that I could get through this and still remember that God loved me. He taught me that His love and His opinions of me were the only things that mattered.

We are all on a journey to make it to Heaven and are doing so by allowing God to have all of our love. The words or actions of another human being could never take away the value God placed on my life. That small blessing changed my perspective of how I lived from that point onwards. Things that test my patience or mistakes I am trying to fix always make me turn back to the fact that God loves me! He loves me so much that He has a purpose for me despite all of the awful regrets I have of past, thoughtless mistakes.

He also loves my enemies, no matter how they have hurt me or I have hurt them. It hurt to forgive that person, and to accept the fact that I was forgiven. It was also hard to entrust a huge issue like that to God and let Him take care of it. The problem I had before was that I was too dependent on myself to allow God to handle small situations in my life. Little decisions I took into my own hands gradually affected the dynamic of my life as a whole. It took a huge incident that removed the trust out of myself, and special people in my life to show me that I could not handle life on my own! God was the only One who could lift me out and carry my broken self to Him and gently remind me that He still loved me. I've been able to have a fresh perspective on the importance of trusting God over myself and others, because He is the only

Crack the Code!



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
W	X	Y	Z							

KEY THOUGHT

If we hide our sins we will not succeed. If we confess our sins we will have mercy.

MEMORY VERSE

If we confess our sins, he [Jesus] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the difference between how Achan and the prodigal son handled their sins.
2. Why do we sometimes want to hide our sins?
3. Is admitting guilt an easy thing to do? Discuss.
4. Will Jesus freely forgive us when we confess our sins?

HIDING SINS CONTINUED

forgiveness. The son hardly had a chance to get the words of confession out of his mouth.

Notice the difference in the outcome for these two men? Achan was forced to confess his sin and died. The prodigal son freely confessed his sin and obtained mercy. We have all sinned. Every single one of us. Our proverb today tells us that if we cover or hide our sin we will not succeed, but if we confess and leave our sins then we will obtain mercy.

Carrying around the weight of our sin is tiring and hard. The good news is this: If we sin—maybe we have told a lie, cheated, been disobedient, or spoken harsh words—Jesus is waiting with love and mercy for us to confess our sins to Him. While he might disapprove of what we have done, He will never disapprove of who we are. Jesus condemns our sins, but He never condemns us. He loves us too much to let us stay in our sins, and He wants to forgive us. When we tell Him we are sorry he removes our guilt and we can feel light and free. We should also confess to the person we have wronged. This can be hard, but will bring healing and help us remember to do better next time.

Sister Julie Elwell

A NEW PERSPECTIVE CONTINUED

One who can carry me through life.

I want to be the one who doesn't walk behind God, or in front of Him, but holds His hand and lets Him carry me through hard times when I can't carry myself. I'm so glad God taught me this lesson and brought me back to Him. He truly wants everyone to experience a life of freedom in love and joy through His blessings. He enables me to do the hard things I would rather not do, and teaches me to be a better person. I know I can trust Him because of what He has done for me in the past, and what He will do for me in the future.

Kayleah Bell

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Secondary Sunday School

March 19, 2017. V67, Q1, W12

Proverbs' Precepts

The Best Seat: Humility

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

Proverbs 25:6-7

Have you ever been around someone who is a little bit pushy? They want to make sure they are noticed and heard and always have to be first in line. While it is okay to not want to be forgotten, it is not okay to be rude or impolite.

One day, Jesus noticed guests who had been invited to a dinner were trying to choose the best seats at the table. How important these doctors and lawyers must have felt! One can imagine the grave expression on Jesus' face as he watched these petty men jostle around. To help teach them, He gave them the following parable:

He said, when you are invited to a wedding feast, don't sit in the most important seat. If someone more important than you has been invited, the host might ask you to get up and give your seat to someone else. You would then be embarrassed as you slunk to some back corner. He said, it would be better if you go find an obscure seat near the back to begin with and have the host warmly come find you and ask you to move up to a seat of honor. The lesson Jesus wanted to teach was that the person who thinks they are important will be humbled, and the humble will be honored.

The advice Solomon gives in our proverb today is very similar to what Jesus taught. Don't push yourself to the front, only to be asked to go to the back. We may not stand before kings, but we do interact in group situations at home, school, church and other events. We have many opportunities to practice this principle of humility. When dinner is served, don't rush to be the first in line. Stand back and politely wait for others to go first. When there is a room full of people, don't take the best chair. Sit on the floor or in an out-of-the way place so those who are older can have a nice chair to sit in. Don't take the largest and best piece of pie. Take the smaller piece. It is better to get your plate last, sit in the more uncomfortable place, and take the smaller piece of pie. Then, if you are asked to go first, sit in the more comfortable chair, or take the larger piece of pie, it is an honor.

ANGELS' ARMS

On Valentine's Day 2014, I felt angels and God's arms around me. It was the closest God has ever felt. My sister, who was seven months pregnant, and I were driving on the freeway when a car came into our lane. With nowhere to go, our car hit hers at freeway speed. It felt like everything happened in slow motion. Our car flipped over and went skidding across the busy freeway. I remember looking over to see if my sister was okay. We held hands as the car came to a stop—just outside the freeway lines. We both checked to make sure we were okay, then starting crawling out through Lindsey's driver side window. As soon as we crawled out of the upside-down car, people were there to help and make sure we were okay. We sat down on the side of the freeway (the fast lane was now closed) and gave each other a hug. We knew God had just saved both of our lives and the baby's life.

Have you ever heard of a miracle? A miracle is something only God can do. Only He could have saved our lives that day. He protected us in the way our car wrecked; we landed outside of the freeway so other cars wouldn't hit us. He made a way out of the car, people were right there to help us, and lastly, we were not injured. His hands provided many miracles to keep us physically safe, but would you like to know a secret? Even more important than our bodies, He protected us emotionally. If my sister and I would have been very anxious or worried after the wreck, she could have had her baby early. We were not worried; in fact, we were completely at

peace. We felt God's arms and His angels physically protecting us. Sliding upside down on the busy freeway in a car does not sound peaceful; but it's one of my greatest moments of peace. It is how I know God is real.

God cares for His children and He wants to make sure they are safe and protected. I know this because God impressed Lindsey's mother-in-law to pray for us the night before. She had a dream that caused her to spend some time in prayer. I believe it is one of the reasons I still have a sister today. And a cute nephew.

Some days it can seem like God is far away, or He doesn't hear our prayers. God might seem far away, but He isn't. He follows the details of your life very closely. He cares about what happens to you. In Psalms 91, it says He will give us angels to protect us. My sister and I are living proof of this. The next time you're discouraged or wondering if God cares, ask Him to give you His peace and show you His angels around you. I have confidence He will answer your prayer. Continue to draw closer to God; it is not a decision you will regret. He can protect you, not just physically in life, but also spiritually and emotionally. Our God loves and cares for His children. May you be encouraged with the story I've shared with you. I hope it gives you hope and faith to keep living for Him.

Nicole Elwell

WORD SEARCH!

DUST
HONOR
HUMILITY
IMPOLITE
IMPORTANT
KING SAUL (One Word)
OBSCURE

PARABLE
POLITE
PUSHY
SAMUEL
SEAT
SOLOMON

Z D I A V Y D E I X D R J P A R A B L E L P F Z T
U Y F E X W V M D U H S O M U G G R A J U O Q S A
S D B N K X P H I T Y L K N F R Y Z M J A L W L E
N X J X O O W E M S T W G O O I D S P C S I I S S
Y B Q O R K R E C X H R E H V H J N J L G T F E X
N J W T P U J F M N K T A O Q I Q C J K N E W E B
V Y A J C Q R B S S U A Z J Z M R A S T I B R J B
J N T S E R V I X A O P S T P S E A E F K M K K F
T Q B I O D N H C M Z L S O A X M Y H S U P V X E
X O N X L A A P W Z Y P O N B U U H J F Q Y Y A W
I R O T L I N T M H I K M M E K S I Z T P F V Q W
B R S G Q A M G Q U B W O L O R Q R Z F O J R D I
X U V K K A K U D E D G M Q K N U A T G W C W Z R
D V K P I V X Y H E T Z G U Q D N C T D Q L O E L
E T I L O P M I O A Z B Z A G Q M I K D C J Q N Z

KEY THOUGHT

Leave the best seat for someone else.

MEMORY VERSE

For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Luke 14:11

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Why did Jesus teach about taking the most important seat?
2. Discuss situations where you can “take the lesser position.”
3. What are the rewards of not being pushy or rude, but staying humble?
4. What was the consequence Saul paid for becoming proud?

THE BEST SEAT CONTINUED

King Saul is an example of a man who started out humble. When Samuel came to anoint him as king, Saul said, I am only from the smallest tribe of Israel and my family is the least of all families. Why are you anointing me king? Unfortunately, later on after he became King, he fancied himself more important than he was and ended up disobeying God’s commandment. His throne seat as king was ultimately given to another man because he became lifted up and proud.

Jesus instructed us to live opposite our natural inclinations of wanting the best. This might be backward to our way of thinking, but in God’s thinking, people who receive the greatest honor are those who put others before themselves. One of the seven things the Lord hates is a proud look (Proverbs 6:17). God is not impressed with people who think they are so important. We need to remember that we are made out of dust and that God sits on his throne up in heaven. If we stay humble we will actually receive more honor than if we always want the best.

Sister Julie Elwell



Secondary Sunday School

March 26, 2017. V67, Q1, W13

Proverbs' Precepts

Friendliness

PROVERBS: NUGGETS OF USEFUL TRUTH OR ADVICE

Proverb: A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Proverbs 18:24

Scripture References: 1 Samuel 18:1-5; 2 Samuel 1:23-26, 20:30-42; John 15:13-17

Have you ever watched someone sit alone while they were surrounded by a large crowd of people? They usually look pretty lonely and forlorn. Maybe you have BEEN the person who feels alone in a crowd—no one to talk to, no one to make you feel included, no one with a friendly smile. That is a feeling none of us enjoy experiencing.

Thankfully, in those times, there is a friend we can turn to. Jesus, our wonderful Savior, is a friend who will never leave our side. He demonstrated His devotion to His disciples in many tangible ways while He lived on earth. He said, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Jesus was saying that His disciples were not just servants under Him—He had shared with them all of the things which He heard from God in Heaven. He kept no secrets from them, and made a covenant of friendship with them. He was open and honest with them. Most of all, He sacrificed His very life for them. He is TRULY the greatest friend any of us will ever have. What a wonderful thing to depend on!

What about earthly friends? All of us need someone to lean upon and trust as we go through life. They offer emotional and spiritual support when we need it most! But how do we have to act in order to find friends who will stand loyally by our sides, even when the hard times come? The proverb today answers that question. To make friends, you must be FRIENDLY.

Being friendly means a lot of things. It means reaching out and caring when someone is going through a tough trial; it means choosing not to quarrel when you disagree; it means being honest about how you feel; it means being selfless and choosing to serve them over yourself; it means avoiding things that will offend or hurt them. These are things that we can choose to do in our relationships. When your friends see you acting this way toward them, their devotion and loyalty to you will only grow. They will be encouraged to treat you in the same way you have treated them, simply because they feel loved and accepted by you.

THE HEALER

It all started on a beautiful fall day when my family and I were heading off to Dallas for the campmeeting. I had on high wedge boots dressed in my fall attire, feeling well-dressed for our trip. I galloped down the staircase and before I knew what happened, my ankle twisted and I flung forward onto the floor. I grabbed my throbbing ankle and screeched. After a few moments of agony, I composed myself and stood once again and continued on my way. I enjoyed going to the services and spending time with some good friends, but each day became harder and harder to walk. When we got back home, I was still in pain so my parents took me into the ER for an x-ray. The x-rays showed that I had a fracture, but the doctor spotted something else near the fracture. There was some kind of growth on my bone that is not on the average person's fibula.

Once we were redirected to a specialist, we received more information on what was attached to my bone. I honestly didn't know how serious this tumor was until the car ride to one of my first appointments with the specialist. My parents and I were crammed in my dad's old three seater pickup truck heading out to the Children's Hospital in Oklahoma City. My mom must have noticed my nonchalant stance when she asked me if I understood what it would mean to have cancer. She then began to explain the complications that came with the beastly disease, and I soon became more anxious. The only option, in our minds, was to trust in God and pray that He would take care of me on this journey. We arrived at the hospital and the doctor sat my parents and

me down. He told us that there was a possibility it could be cancer, and that if it continued to grow I would need a biopsy surgery to remove it. A couple weeks and a few MRI's later, we returned to the specialist to be told that the tumor in my leg had indeed become larger.

The surgery was scheduled, and my boot had been accompanying my right leg for quite some time. As we awaited the day, I tried my best to keep at life as usual. But one of those days was different. My mom was having one of those sponsored parties where all of her friends came over to look at all the newest and greatest purchases. The ladies started to dwindle down, and my grandmother and a few close family friends were the only ones left. Everyone was gathered around the living room chatting and such. Then, my grandma, Sister Marsha, wanted to anoint and pray for me. She rubbed some oil onto my forehead and we all bowed our heads in prayer. She prayed for healing and the room was filled, and I truly believe that God came down and touched my tumor. I don't know if the tumor was cancerous and God healed it or if it was never cancer to begin with, but one thing I do know is that God came down that night. To this day my grandma and I still talk about that night and how we felt God's presence. It was an incredible feeling I will never forget. My worries seemed to just lift into the air and vanish in front of me. From that moment on I had no fear of the future, only peace that God would take care of me. After the surgery was done and the long-awaited results came back, we learned that it was a nonossifying fibroma. This means that it was not cancerous, and the only thing left was for my leg to heal up properly.

In those seven long months, my family and I both had to lean on God and trust

What about your friends?

Write a few sentences telling how you met your best friend.

How do you treat your best friend compared to how Jesus treated His friends?

Write down a few ways you can be more like Jesus in your friendship.

Predict how your best friend will react when you start trying to be like Jesus.

Will your friend love you more for it?

KEY THOUGHT

Jesus will always be our closest friend, and we can follow His example in our earthly friendships as well.

MEMORY VERSE

These things I command you, that ye love one another. John 15:17

LESSON DISCUSSION

1. Discuss how it feels to be left alone and friendless.
2. What did Jesus do to display his love and friendship for His disciples?
3. Discuss David and Jonathan's friendship. How can you apply their actions to your friendships?
4. What are some things you can do in your friendships to show yourself friendly?

FRIENDLINESS CONTINUED

One of the greatest Biblical examples of friendship we have is that of David and Jonathan. The people loved David for slaying Goliath and fighting valiantly in the army. But King Saul quickly began to become jealous of David's popularity among the people. Even his own son, Jonathan, loved David in a way Saul could not understand. Why wasn't Jonathan jealous of David too, for David's popularity would surely mean that Jonathan would never be king. When Jonathan realized just how angry his father was, he snuck out to warn David that his life was in danger. These men were so close that even Jonathan's own father could not rend their friendship. 1 Samuel 18:1 says, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul," and that even in death, they were not divided.

Can you imagine having a friend like that? One who would betray even his own father's wishes to keep you safe? Are you that kind of friend to somebody else? It is part of God's plan for us to have friends like David and Jonathan. But even if you feel like you are friendless and alone, always remember that Jesus Himself is the ultimate friend.

Lindsey Gellenbeck

THE HEALER CONTINUED

that everything was in His hands. We chose to trust in Him that He would heal me in only a way that God could, and He did. This trial taught me to never doubt the power of healing and that if we consecrate our problems and afflictions into His hands, He will work it out more beautifully than anyone ever could.

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The Beautiful Way (primary) and *The Compass* (junior) Sunday school literature can be downloaded at sundayschoolliterature.com and churchofgodeveninglight.com/beautiful-way. Please email any questions to gellenbeck.lindsey@gmail.com.

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