



## Proverbs chapter 12:1-13:25

Taught at our Sunday evening service, 10th October 2021 @ Deal Christian Fellowship

**Reading:** Revelation 3:14-22

**Good evening. Let's pray.**

### Introduction

Tonight we are going to study chapters 12 and 13 of the book of Proverbs. As mentioned before, the book of Proverbs was largely written by Solomon - the king of Israel, David's son - and these chapters are found in the second main section of the book (that is, chapters 10 to 24) which contains Proverbs that he both wrote and set in order.

We'll again find some appear randomly placed, but with themes that emerge. And I encourage you to keep looking for more themes than I note, for in this remarkable book we call the Bible - the Word of God - we'll each find food that we need today.

### Themes in chapter twelve

In chapter 12, some of the themes we'll find are:

- Foundations (v3-7)
- What we do with our hands (v11-14)
- What we say with our mouths (v17-23)
- Anxiety & friendship (v25-26)

## Themes in chapter thirteen

In chapter 13, we'll see the following themes emerge:

- What we hear with our hearts (v1)
- Our words (v2-5)
- Riches vs riches (v7-8, 11, 22)

You may be wondering how a single verse can be a theme - well, it's actually a continuation of a theme from earlier chapters that we'll look at when we get there.

But again, as we study this, and as you read through it again at home, I hope you'll discover more than these themes.

## Chapter twelve

So let's dig into these chapters. If you have your Bible's, please turn to Proverbs chapter 12. We read in verse 1...

### **Proverbs 12:1**

Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge,  
But he who hates correction is stupid.

So we have a choice. Love instruction or hate correction. But, Solomon says, one of these is stupid. And this isn't the first time he's spoken on this topic. We read in chapter 9...

### **Proverbs 9:9**

Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser;  
Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

That's the standard we should aim for, noting that correction will be necessary along the way. We read in chapter 3...

### **Proverbs 3:11-12**

My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,  
Nor detest His correction;  
For whom the LORD loves He corrects,  
Just as a father the son in whom he delights.

God corrects us because He loves us. Not so that He can love us. Love comes before correction, not after. And we *have* to get over our own egos and our pride, and be willing to accept the correction God gives us through His Word, through His people, and through our circumstances.

It still may not feel great in the moment, but we need to recognise that God will correct us not only through His Word, but through others too - for we read in the Bible on many occasions of the need to rebuke, exhort, and correct.

Jon Courson makes such a clear comment on this verse:

Some people don't want to be educated. They don't want to be reproved. They don't want to be corrected. Consequently, they learn the hard way. Because our Father is committed to bringing us into maturity, He's committed to teaching us. The question is, what will it take for us to learn? Will we learn by being corrected in the Scripture, or will we have to learn by going through brutal times? Learn!" wisdom cries out. It's an opportunity for us to save ourselves a lot of heartache.

**Jon Courson**

So let us pay attention to the instruction we receive from God's Word this evening. We read in the next 2 verses...

### **Proverbs 12:2-3**

A good man obtains favour from the LORD,  
But a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.  
A man is not established by wickedness,  
But the root of the righteous cannot be moved.

The foundation upon which you build your life matters - not only now, but then.

We read Jesus' words in Matthew chapter 7:

### **Matthew 7:24-27**

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

"But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Do you want a firm foundation to your life? Listen to Jesus' words. Listen to His Word.

Verse 4...

**Proverbs 12:4**

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband,  
But she who causes shame is like rotteness in his bones.

The excellent wife doesn't need to be outrageously obvious. But the one who causes shame will certainly be known for the wrong reasons.

Single guys, should you be looking to marry, pay attention to this. You need to choose wisely. You need to marry someone who knows the Lord, who loves Him, who obeys Him. Someone with moral and spiritual strength. Someone who loves God more than they love you.

Single girls, should you wish to marry, are you aiming to be that type of wife? Married women, what type of wife are you? Are you growing in maturity in the Lord? Or do you cause your husband shame in any regard?

**Proverbs 12:5-6**

The thoughts of the righteous are right,  
But the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.  
The words of the wicked are, "Lie in wait for blood,"  
But the mouth of the upright will deliver them.

The upright build up, the wicked pull down. That doesn't mean we're not to correct, we've already seen that. But we are to be kind. At all times, our thoughts, and our words, should honour the Lord. Say nothing about others that you would not say in front of God. For you *are* saying it in front of Him. And when you say something about others, always remember that Christ died for them. That should change how you look at them.

**Proverbs 12:7**

The wicked are overthrown and are no more,  
But the house of the righteous will stand.

There couldn't be any clearer link to Jesus words of the wise and foolish men, who built their house on the rock and sand respectively. The day the wicked are no more is not yet, but it is coming.

But even right now, there are consequences to our actions, and to our inaction. We read...

**Proverbs 12:8**

A man will be commended according to his wisdom,  
But he who is of a perverse heart will be despised.

The wise man applies what he has learnt. And he'll be known for many good things. But contrast to the man who has a perverted or crooked heart, and how he'll be seen - not only in the light of eternity, but how he'll be seen now. You will reap what you sow.

**Proverbs 12:9**

Better is the one who is slighted but has a servant,  
Than he who honours himself but lacks bread.

In other words, better to be despised but work hard and enjoy it's reward, than to be one who talks about how great he is, whether in person or on social media, while being a lazy or lacking in diligence. Honouring yourself - that is, pride - puts you first and others second, to the detriment of all, including, it seems, to your pets.

**Proverbs 12:10**

A righteous man regards the life of his animal,  
But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

And is it any wonder that those who are cruel and unkind to their pets, are not likely to put other people ahead of their own needs or ambitions either. Solomon says even the most merciful action of a wicked person is still cruel.

We read...

**Proverbs 12:11**

He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread,  
But he who follows frivolity is devoid of understanding.

I don't know how many of you will be tilling your land this week, I suspect not many, but how many of you will go to work? And once you're there, will you work with diligence, or will you follow the frivolity of office, building site, or whatever venue you work in? It's perfectly good to enjoy the work you do, and the friendships you have with colleagues - but not when it leaves a noticeable impact on the quality and quantity of your work. I have seen those who treated every day like it was 4pm on a Friday, and who later have been made redundant, yet wondered why it happened to them. If you don't work well, you are devoid of understanding.

Verse 12 says...

**Proverbs 12:12**

The wicked covet the catch of evil men,  
But the root of the righteous yields fruit.

We risk getting this wrong when we are more focussed on what we can get, than what we've been given. For that root - Jesus - is what will bring real fruit in our lives.

**Proverbs 12:13-14**

The wicked is ensnared by the transgression of his lips,  
But the righteous will come through trouble.  
A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth,  
And the recompense of a man's hands will be rendered to him.

The result of your words will unsurprisingly depend on the words you use. If sin with your lips, you'll eventually get caught up in the twisted mess of your own words. But when you say what you ought to say you can be satisfied. Once again, there is this idea of sowing and reaping.

**Proverbs 12:15**

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,  
But he who heeds counsel is wise.

We read last week that...

**Proverbs 11:14**

Where there is no counsel, the people fall;  
But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.

And that counsel will bring instruction, which brings us back to our opening verse this evening:

**Proverbs 12:1**

Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge,  
But he who hates correction is stupid.

"I did it my way" might make a great line in a song. But it's not a bad plan for your life. Just as it was a bad plan for Solomon's son, Rehoboam, who refused the counsel of older men, leading to civil war.

**Proverbs 12:16**

A fool's wrath is known at once,  
But a prudent man covers shame.

That is, we can't just run into every situation with flailing arms shouting our mouths off. Love covers a multitude of sins, and is the path of the wise. Solomon continues...

**Proverbs 12:17-18**

He who speaks truth declares righteousness,  
But a false witness, deceit.  
There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword,  
But the tongue of the wise promotes health.

There is a difference between the word of the wise, and that of the world. Especially when the wise, use the Word of God. You see, the Word cuts. It's Intent is to cut out evil like a cancer. But the world stabs. It's intent is to leave no life left at all. Both hurt, but as we'll read later in Proverbs, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend."

**Proverbs 12:19-20**

The truthful lip shall be established forever,  
But a lying tongue is but for a moment.  
Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil,  
But counsellors of peace have joy.

So dangerous is the tongue that not only is most of James chapter 3 dedicated to it, but the Bible actually speaks more about the danger of it than it does about the abuse of alcohol. The challenge is, would you rather accept gossip or drunkard-ness in this church? Neither should happen, but we're probably far too comfortable with the former. Instead, we should pursue peace.

**Proverbs 12:21**

No grave trouble will overtake the righteous,  
But the wicked shall be filled with evil.

Whether you aim for righteousness or wickedness, you'll get what you want. You'll reap what you sow. Consider Romans 8:28 in light of this verse.

**Proverbs 12:22**

Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD,  
But those who deal truthfully are His delight.

In this book of Proverbs, there are four things we're told God delights in:

1. Just weights - that is, fairness (Prov. 11:1)
2. People blameless or upright in their ways (Prov. 11:20)
3. People that deal truthfully (Prov. 12:22)
4. Prayers of the upright (Prov. 15:8)

Consider that this day, this week, this month, you could actually delight the God who made the whole universe! The very God that saved you.

**Proverbs 12:23**

A prudent man conceals knowledge,  
But the heart of fools proclaims foolishness.

Finnis Dake comments: A wise man never brags on his education, knowledge, or experience, but a fool tells everybody how wise he is.

**Proverbs 12:24**

The hand of the diligent will rule,  
But the lazy man will be put to forced labor.

There is nothing about this that is unfair, right?! And even today we see this happen often, but this will play out fully in eternity when we shall reign with Christ. Crowns given to those that loved His appearing, that love Him.

**Proverbs 12:25**

Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression,  
But a good word makes it glad.

Anxiety is something that affects many of us. Myself included. And we can trace root causes to many things. But the challenge I have for you is how much can you lessen your own anxiety, and that of others? What I mean by this, is that it's hardly any wonder that we're anxious when we watch the news and spend hour upon hour scrolling through social media. Far better to receive a good word, and none better for your soul than the Word of God.

But also, how often do we fail to share kind words of encouragement to other? The words you fail to say, could be the words that lessen the anxiety someone else is experiencing. I fear that as a society we've become very poor at friendship. That needn't be the case within our church family. We could be just the ones that offer a good word, that makes someone else's heart glad.

So not surprising that Solomon then writes:

**Proverbs 12:26**

The righteous should choose his friends carefully,  
For the way of the wicked leads them astray.

Choose friends who will love you, correct you, and encourage you. And don't fill your days with those who would pull you away from the Lord.

Back to the topic of effort, we read...

**Proverbs 12:27**

The lazy man does not roast what he took in hunting,  
But diligence is man's precious possession.

Are we diligent in the jobs God has given us? or in our friendships and marriages that God has formed? or in teaching our children? or in serving among our church family? or in reading God's Word or in prayer to Him? We must not be lazy in these things.

**Proverbs 12:28**

In the way of righteousness is life,  
And in its pathway there is no death.

You will never come to harm by reading and obeying God's Word. And in doing so, you'll not only help yourself, but you'll help others too. There is no greater win win situation you'll ever face.

## Chapter thirteen

Now, chapter 13 begins with something that should sound quite familiar.

**Proverbs 13:1**

A wise son heeds his father's instruction,  
But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

What instruction? Well, through the course of the first 7 chapters Solomon wrote:



1:8 - My son, hear the instruction of your father...

2:1 - My son, if you receive my words...

3:1 - My son, do not forget my law...

4:1 - Hear, my children, the instruction of a father...

4:10 - Hear, my son, and receive my sayings...

4:20 - My son, give attention to my words...

5:1 - My son, pay attention to my wisdom...

6:20 - My son, keep your father's command...

7:1 - My son, keep my words...

So, are you listening? As already mentioned, Solomon's son Rehoboam didn't. But like him, you and I have no excuse for not following wisdom. We're fools if we don't.

#### **Proverbs 13:2**

A man shall eat well by the fruit of his mouth,  
But the soul of the unfaithful feeds on violence.

What you feed on is important. Often travelling to the US for work, I've had the pleasure of trying out some food there, Bison steak being one of my favourites, and I've learnt that feeding bison on corn makes their flesh tender on my plate.

Likewise, feeding on the Word of God will make us tender. But feed on violence, and our flesh will toughen up and become quite unpleasant. So perhaps we should consider the effect on us, if we graze on violent movies and computer games.

#### **Proverbs 13:3**

He who guards his mouth preserves his life,  
But he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.

Our tongues are fenced with teeth for good reason! We need to be very careful with them, as James warns:

#### **James 1:19-20**

So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

More so than ever, this applies to what we say online too. The world has too many keyboard warriors, whose keyboards know kindness. Let that not be us. Not only for others benefit, but for our own too.

#### **Proverbs 13:4**

The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing;  
But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.

Note that it's the *soul* of the diligent that will be rewarded. Perhaps materially too, but no guarantee. Rather, Jesus said: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." But in stark contrast, the lazy man never gets what he wants, because he won't lift a finger to get it (and should he get it, he would be too lazy to do anything with it anyway).

**Proverbs 13:5-6**

A righteous man hates lying,  
But a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame.  
Righteousness guards him whose way is blameless,  
But wickedness overthrows the sinner.

That is, righteousness results in protection, wickedness results in problems.

**Proverbs 13:7**

There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing;  
And one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches.

Isn't it foolish how we buy things we don't need, with money we don't have, to impress people we don't like. Save yourself heartache and don't pretend to have what you don't in order to keep up with the Joneses! But neither, as we read in Proverbs 3:28 and James 4:17, pretend you can't help someone when it is in your power to do so.

And finally, don't be deluded into thinking you're rich when you're investing in the wrong currency. Jesus wrote to the church in Laodicea, saying:

**Revelation 3:15-17**

"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—

True riches come from our walk with the Lord, not from our pay check or investments.

**Proverbs 13:8**

The ransom of a man's life is his riches,  
But the poor does not hear rebuke.

The problem of the rich man is that he will say "take it all but spare my life" thinking his worldly goods will protect him. But the problem of the poor man is thinking he has nothing to lose.

**Proverbs 13:9**

The light of the righteous rejoices,  
But the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

We talk about Hollywood stars or the insta-famous etc, but all the stars the world can offer are darkness in comparison to what Christ has done in us. We read in Ephesians 5 "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord." Our whole identity has changed.

**Proverbs 13:10**

By pride comes nothing but strife,  
But with the well-advised is wisdom.

This is talking of the difference between saying "I know it all" and "I have much to learn". And that difference is pride. Paul warns in Romans chapter 16:

**Romans 16:17-18**

Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

**Proverbs 13:11**

Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished,  
But he who gathers by labor will increase.

That is, wealth that is fraudulently obtained will not be permanent. But the fruit of the faithful will give riches beyond money.

**Proverbs 13:12**

Hope deferred makes the heart sick,  
But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.

How true this is! But while this may be a factual statement - we should ask ourselves how we can help each other, because waiting, for whatever it is, is really hard. In my life, the thing I had to wait the longest for was to be married. But it's been true of waiting for children too. There's been tears with both. And I'm sure you've also had things you've waited for, or indeed *are* waiting for now.

So what do we do to help? First we can ask about the situation. Second be sensitive to it. And third be careful with what we say. For often, in wanting to say something, we say something unhelpful - such as "I'm sure the right person will come along" - when we don't know that. Let us not make the heart feel any more sick than it is by giving false hope, or meaningless statements.

**Proverbs 13:13**

He who despises the word will be destroyed,  
But he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.

How you view the Bible will dramatically affect your life - is it mere advice? ancient irrelevant writings? Or the Word of God? If you really believe it to be the Word of God, why not read it?

It's been well said that the man who doesn't read has no advantage over the man who can't. Think of that in the context of the Bible. People like William Tyndale literally died so that you can read the Bible in your own language. But that effort is pointless if you don't actually pick it up.

But if you do read it, believe it, and live it, then you'll find great reward.

#### **Proverbs 13:14-15**

The law of the wise is a fountain of life,  
To turn one away from the snares of death.  
Good understanding gains favour,  
But the way of the unfaithful is hard.

The way of the unfaithful is indeed hard. From divorces and the splitting of finances, to your children detesting your unfaithfulness, to perhaps seeing them repeat your mistakes - unfaithfulness will hurt many and be hard on you too.

But the Bible, However, is written that you might become wise and obedient to God in all things - and to keep you from going down that road.

#### **Proverbs 13:16**

Every prudent man acts with knowledge,  
But a fool lays open his folly.

The prudent man *knows* how to act, the fool says "I didn't know". That may be a reason, but it's not an excuse. Your foolishness now, in failing to gather wisdom, will result in more foolishness then.

#### **Proverbs 13:17**

A wicked messenger falls into trouble,  
But a faithful ambassador brings health.

So then, the question is; How well do you represent God? Are you a faithful ambassador? Do you use what he has given you well? Are you relaying the message, His gospel, that He has given you?

#### **Proverbs 13:18-19**

Poverty and shame will come to him who disdains correction,  
But he who regards a rebuke will be honoured.  
A desire accomplished is sweet to the soul,  
But it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.

Once again Solomon reminds us of the need to accept correction, because evil is never satisfied, and will always try to take us further than we wanted to go. As such, we once again read of the importance of choosing good company...

#### **Proverbs 13:20**

He who walks with wise men will be wise,  
But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

Choose your friends wisely, for often unnoticed to you, you'll become like them.

**Proverbs 13:21**

Evil pursues sinners,  
But to the righteous, good shall be repaid.

The evil man has much to fear of what is coming, but the righteous man who fears the Lord has much to look forward to in Him.

**Proverbs 13:22**

A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children,  
But the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.

That means it is not necessarily a financial inheritance (though diligence and hard work may result in that) but legacy of truth, kindness, fairness and most importantly faith in God are the things you want to leave to your children and grandchildren.

**Proverbs 13:23**

Much food is in the fallow ground of the poor,  
And for lack of justice there is waste.

The point here is that although you may have little, you should be wise in how you use even that.

**Proverbs 13:24**

He who spares his rod hates his son,  
But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

That might not be politically correct, but it is very helpful. We are to discipline our children, or others will have to - whether that be the Police, courts, or managers. Discipline will happen one way or another, so far better that it comes promptly from parents, who should be the ones that love their children the most. Don't wait it out hoping for the best. You don't want to end up as Eli or Samuel did. But also, note, we shouldn't discipline out of wrath, but out of love. Not when we're angry, but when we can calmly talk and explain.

**Proverbs 13:25**

The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul,  
But the stomach of the wicked shall be in want.

As I'm sure all dentists will agree, sin is like candy-floss. It's appealing to the eye, and even the mouth finds it enjoyable, but it doesn't satisfy, and can lead to lasting damage.

We need a healthy diet. One that satisfies. And the only thing that will satisfy is Jesus and His Word.

**Summary**

My summary tonight is simply to leave you with some application questions...

### **Application questions**

- Do we hate correction (are we stupid)?
- Are we delighting the Lord?
- Are material or spiritual riches our aim?
- Could we be better at encouraging? And what will we do if so?

**Let's pray.**