

Marks

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

of Discipleship

June 27, 2021

Day 1: Proverbs 13:4

The appetite of the lazy craves, and gets nothing, while the appetite of the diligent is richly supplied.

Diligence is a quality of being wise. A wise person is one who combines knowledge with morals, experience with patience. A wise person is humble when expressing their opinions. The wise person has a commitment to the truth and is always ready to change their mind if new information comes along. The lazy person does not see the value in work so they do not value what they have. The wise person, because they appreciate what they have, always has enough.

Question: Do you find yourself in the position of the lazy one?

Challenge: Write your own definition of wisdom.

Scripture: Proverbs 13:12-25

Day 2: Proverbs 10:4

A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

A diligent person thinks of the future. They make goals for the very near future, the mid future, and the long term future. In addition to goals they apply values to these goals to make sure the goals honor God. The slack hand is simply one who thinks just 'present' is important. They think about doing what is easiest for them personally. They will not become rich but will always be in want. In our time the slack hand is one that uses their credit card too much.

Question: Why is goal setting important or why is it not important?

Challenge: Write down for yourself two short, mid, and long term goals. Make sure one in each category relates to your faith.

Scripture: Proverbs 10:1-14

Day 3: Proverbs 21:5

The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to want.

The diligent person knows to take time to think something through before making a decision. This is especially true in a community that has a number of interconnected relationships. The implication is that plans made in haste are ones that will benefit just the person but may harm others. For example in building a house; if proper attention is not taken to the foundation then the house will not stand very long. It might even come down when it is full of people you care about, like your family. Even a diligent person cannot foresee the future but patience in decision making can help us avoid most of the problems we cannot see now.

Question: Which decisions do you find are the hardest for you to make? Decisions about buying, decisions about relationships or some other category of decisions?

Challenge: Give an example of a hasty decision you made and one that was planned out.

Scripture: Proverbs 1:1-19

Day 4: Proverbs 21:17

Whoever loves pleasure will suffer want; whoever loves wine and oil will not be rich.

To love something means that you are willing to give up some of yourself so that the object of your love might grow and prosper. If pleasure is what we love it will grow and with each growth spurt it demands more of our love so that we will be consumed by pleasure and never be satisfied.

Question: Why isn't pleasure satisfying?

Challenge: Who or what have you loved that you have given up some of yourself for it?

Scripture: Proverbs 21:1-17

Day 5: Proverbs 21:20

Precious treasure remains in the house of the wise, but the fool devours it.

The wise person does not spend just to spend. The wise person is not afraid to spend but does so when needed. One of the main reasons people will spend when they do not need to is that they enjoy the feeling of power it gives them. Too often we feel powerless to do something we want to do and spending gives us that feeling of power. With credit we can devour our income on a foolish thing - interest. If we are willing to pay someone to use their money so we can feel powerful that is foolish.

Question: What percent of one's income should one save?

Challenge: Draw up a budget for yourself that includes your charity giving first.

Scripture: Proverbs 22:1-16

Day 6: Proverbs 21:21

Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life and honor.

Righteousness in this verse means following the intent of the moral code as well as its law. We have laws against stealing. If someone takes something that is not theirs and excuses that action by saying no one is hurt or no one will miss it, they are not following the intent of the law. The law's intent is not to punish but to tell me what is wrong. If I do something that is legal, like damming a river on my property, but I am "stealing" food from those downstream I may be legal but still stealing. The intent of the law is to help us feel safe and to provide a safe community. An honorable person lives by a set of values that acknowledge God as creator and humans as ones for whom Christ died. By following the intent of how God wants us to live and practicing kindness we will find life. "Love the Lord your God with your entire heart, mind and soul and your neighbor as yourself."

Question: How does God want us to love him?

Challenge: Put these words in the order of their importance to you: honor, safety, money, family, happiness, food & shelter, vacation, country, church, truth, peace, love.

Scripture: Proverbs 28:1-20