

Proverbs Chapter 3
Week 10, v.29-31

Review Pr 3: 27-28 What does it say? What does it mean? How is it applied? Give an example of how this truth worked itself out in your life last week.

Quick review of our study so far:

Prov 3:1	the importance of keeping God's instruction foremost in our thoughts and actions
Prov 3:2-4	the benefits of keeping God's commandments; the necessity of a consistent reminder of God's Word, resulting in action stemming from the heart
Prov 3:5-7	trusting in God for His direction, not ourselves; seeking wisdom: the fear of the Lord
Prov 3:8-10	the blessings of seeking wisdom; the importance of giving completely to God with the right heart and the blessings received from that action
Prov 3:11-13	God's discipline in our lives is the proof of our relationship with Him; the blessings of wisdom
Prov 3:14-18	the value and blessings of finding wisdom
Prov 3:19-22	God's wisdom, power and understanding; the blessing of our response to follow Him
Prov 3:23-26	blessings of security, peace and confidence in the Lord
Prov 3:27-28	the importance of giving completely and quickly to others

Do you know anyone who just seems to cause trouble? When they enter a room, there is an immediate feeling of "oh no"? Or, when their name comes up in conversation, it is no surprise that it is connected with some kind of problem.

Do you cause trouble? Are you always looking to disagree?

In the next three verses, we will look at a list of three “do not’s”.

Pr 3:29-31 *Do not* devise harm against your neighbor, while he lives in security beside you. *Do not* contend with a man without cause, if he has done you no harm. *Do not* envy a man of violence, and do not choose any of his ways.

Verses 29 and 30 say, “Do not cause trouble”! In other words, do not be the reason for bad things to happen to the people you know.

Pr 6:12-14 A worthless person, a wicked man, is the one who walks with a false mouth, who winks with his eyes, who signals with his feet, who points with his fingers; who [with] perversity in his heart devises evil continually, who spreads strife.

For what reasons do people cause trouble? Have you ever caught yourself in the midst of a conversation or action and realized it was not honoring to God? Looking back at that time, why did you go there? Have you ever wished you had never said something because of the trouble or hurt it caused?

Ro 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

Ro 14:19 So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

Ro 15:2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.

Is it possible to be at peace with everyone? What do you do when it is truly difficult?

Even when it is difficult to be at peace with others, (i.e. they do not desire it) we still have the responsibility to do everything within our means to maintain peace. We may find ourselves in the midst of a problem but we should not be the one who

causes it. We cannot be responsible for how others act but we are held accountable for our actions and responses to others.

Mt 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called Sons of God.

Mt 5:39-41 "But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two."

Heb 12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no-one will see the Lord. (NIV)

Ps 34:14 Depart from evil, and do good; Seek peace, and pursue it.

What does seeking peace at all costs mean for us? (Letting go of our "rights"; not having to prove our point; speaking slowly, after careful thought; using discernment in what we share; never seeking revenge; and being okay when something is "not fair" or when we have been cheated or wronged)

Pr 17:14 The beginning of strife is [like] letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

Pr 12:13 An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous will escape from trouble.

Ro 12:14, 17a Bless those who persecute you; bless and curse not. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.

1Co 6:6-7 Must Brother go to law with Brother, and that, too, before unbelievers? To begin with, it is undoubtedly a loss to you to have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather let yourselves be wronged? Why not rather let yourselves be cheated?

The one word that comes to mind as we look at what our response to others should be, especially in difficult circumstances, is HUMILITY. *What do you think?*

Pr 3:31 Do not envy a man of violence, and do not choose any of his ways.

A “man of violence” [chamac], refers to a man of violence, of unjust gain, an unrighteous man, an oppressor, a false witness.

Ps 37:1-2 Do not fret because of evildoers, be not envious toward wrongdoers. For they will wither quickly like the grass, and fade like the green herb.

(whatever glory or gain they have is not lasting)

Pr 23:17 Do not let your heart envy sinners, but [live] in the fear of the LORD always.

Ps 73:1-3 (A Psalm of Asaph.) Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart! But as for me, my feet came close to stumbling; my steps had almost slipped. For I was envious of the arrogant, [as] I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Do the foolish (those who are unsaved) prosper? What is your reaction to their success? Have you ever, even just for a passing moment, faltered in your faith as you witness the apparent blessings of worldly men?

Envy is an ugly word, yet most of us have experienced this feeling at some time. It means to be jealous. *What are we losing sight of when we are tempted towards jealousy? Knowing the gift of eternal life we have in Christ, and understanding its value, how can we possibly be jealous of anyone? In those times when we waver, is our focus on eternal rewards or temporal rewards?*

Have you ever seen a candle flicker? *What causes this? What are the two options we have to stop it from flickering?* Either move it out of the draft or extinguish it. When you catch yourself entertaining doubt about your Savior, you can choose to be reminded of His promises and love for you by going to His Word (moving out of the

draft), or you can allow that doubt to cause you to envy the lives of the worldly (allowing the draft to snuff out your purpose and focus).

Part of Adam Clarke's Commentary on this verse says, "O how bewitching is power!"

What do you think of this statement?

The Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Commentary says, "the prosperity of the wicked [is] transient, and their destiny undesirable".

What is the eternal destiny of evil-doers? Where is their reward? Have you ever heard of the word superficial? It means to be concerned with or understanding only the obvious; relating to or affecting the surface of something; having little significance or substance.

Now think of the words temporal and eternal.

Temporal – relating to measured time, brief, of this world

Eternal – existing through all time without beginning or end

Where will your rewards be? Are you more concerned with superficial rewards here on earth or in eternal rewards?

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Read verses 29-31 again. What stands out to you the most in this section of scripture? Is there something you need to be more aware of or need to look at more closely?

Are you at peace with those around you? If not, have you taken *every* step possible to promote a good relationship in that circumstance?

Do you find yourself “needing” to prove your point of view, wanting to seek revenge or point out when something or someone is unfair? Would God’s Word have you change these attitudes? Why? Will you take the steps necessary to do so?

Have you ever been envious of someone else’s apparent successes – in family, career, position, lifestyle, etc.? It sounds like this: “I wish I had...”, “It must be nice...”, “Why them and not me?” or “Why me and not them?” What can you do when you are tempted to think this way?

At Home

Take the time to **review** verses 29-31, work on memory verses, and pay close attention to personal **application**.

Please be prepared to look at Proverbs 3:32-35 next week. As you read/study, jot down what you discover. Memorize the passage. Use any reference tools you have to look up a few main words in the passage. What questions come to mind that will help you to apply what you read?