

## Proverbs Chapter 18

**Proverbs 18:1 "Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh [and] intermeddleth with all wisdom."**

This scripture refers to a man who seeks selfish gratification and accepts advice from no one.

A man must desire to have wisdom before it comes to him. The Bible says if you want wisdom to pray and God will give you wisdom. We see here a man who has separated himself from the world. He is seeking wisdom, so he separates himself and prays.

One problem with so many today in communicating with God is that we don't want to separate ourselves and think on the things of God and pray, but we will get answers for our prayers and we will receive wisdom in the process.

**Proverbs 18:2 "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself."**

A fool is not interested in learning. He just is interested in his own thoughts. Today, in our society, the favorite statement is "I need to get off and find myself". This is foolish talk. In finding yourself, you are pleasing your own flesh. If this is a married person doing this, they usually find more than themselves. This type of activity breaks up families.

We must somehow get our eyes off of ourselves and stop trying to please self. Only a fool pleases self. A wise person is interested in pleasing God. Go off and seek God.

**Proverbs 18:3 "When the wicked cometh, [then] cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach."**

"Ignominy" means reproach, confusion, dishonor, or shame. We see in this that the sinful man despises those that are good. 2 Timothy chapter 3 describes the sinful last days and lists as one of the descriptions of the people as "despisers of those that are good".

Sin and punishment are inseparably connected, as evil produces both the feeling of contempt in others and its manifestation, scorn.

This is saying, these wicked tries to condemn the good. The evil one is not only a fool, but full of shame and confusion and is dishonored by all.

**Proverbs 18:4 "The words of a man's mouth [are as] deep waters, [and] the wellspring of wisdom [as] a flowing brook."**

The man's words of his mouth, springs from the well which is his heart. A person of wisdom has beautiful words springing forth and continuing as a beautiful brook. His words are not a strong river that will bowl you over, but a gentle brook which soothes.

Wise speech is like a deep, inexhaustible stream of blessing.

**Proverbs 18:5 "[It is] not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment."**

We can learn from this that the wicked's testimony is not to be believed, especially when it is against the righteous. The wicked person has a selfish reason for his testimony and does not usually tell the truth.

To judge a matter by what a wicked person says would be wrong.

**Proverbs 18:6 "A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes."**

We see here that the fool starts the argument, and then says, "Let's just settle this with our fists".

The fool self destructs.

**Proverbs 18:7 "A fool's mouth [is] his destruction, and his lips [are] the snare of his soul."**

This is a continuation of verse 6. This fool gets into all kinds of trouble with what he says because his words are not guided by anything except his selfish desires. He is not controlled by the Lord, and is apt to use cutting remarks, and even cursing.

The tongue is a mighty weapon and either brings death or life in its speaking. With the tongue, confession is made unto salvation. You can read this (in Romans 10:9-10).

**Proverbs 18:8 "The words of a talebearer [are] as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly."**

The words of a talebearer are whisperings that they would not dare say in front of the person they are talking about. These tales have one purpose and that is to destroy. The people listening just love to hear something bad about someone else. The common way to say this is that the listener swallows this lie up (hook, line, and sinker).

The word being used here comes from a Hebrew word, meaning "to swallow greedily." The proverb is repeated (in 26:22).

In other words, they think this is so good that they get it all down deep inside of them so they, too, can drag it out and do harm with it. The talebearer is not the only guilty one here, but the listener is equally guilty.

**Proverbs 18:9 "He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster."**

Neither the lazy nor the waster will have anything. One is too lazy to work and make anything, and the other throws away everything he makes.

To leave a work half done or poorly done is to destroy it.

**Proverbs 18:10 "The name of the LORD [is] a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."**

Christians depend upon the name of Jesus Christ. His name is so powerful (the name of Jesus), that at His name all knees shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord. We even pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. He is our strong tower.

Acts 17:28 "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."

We see from this, without the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we would not even exist. Salvation is in the name of Jesus. In John, we see that if we are Christians, we are in Him and He is in us.

The expression "The name of the Lord" is found only here in Proverbs and stands for the manifest perfections of God such as faithfulness, power, mercy and wisdom, on which the righteous rely for security.

**Proverbs 18:11 "The rich man's wealth [is] his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit."**

Most rich people are very proud of their wealth. They feel safe because of their riches, but if they are not careful, their pride and conceit will build a wall around them that others do not care to come in to. The rich man sometimes thinks his riches will save him from harm, but God will not be impressed by his riches. We dealt with this more thoroughly, earlier in Proverbs.

**Proverbs 18:12 "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honor [is] humility."**

We see here that a haughty heart (thinking too highly of self), will bring destruction. It turns all away from you. A humble man that stands before God and man will be loved and honored by men on the earth, and God will have great love for him, as well.

**Proverbs 18:13 "He that answereth a matter before he heareth [it], it [is] folly and shame unto him."**

A person who answers a question before he hears the question is a fool. How can you answer before you hear the question?

This just makes that person look very foolish.

**Proverbs 18:14 "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?"**

When the spirit is broken, people lose hope. I have heard doctors of medicine say that there is an element, other than the severity of the illness, and other than the medicine they have to give for a certain illness. It is called the will to live.

A person who says in his spirit, "I will not die", heals faster and to the amazement of the doctors sometimes lives when all human hope is gone.

On the other hand, you can give someone medicine that should cure them, and if they have no will to live, they will probably die. The spirit of man is his life. Many die from a broken heart soon after they have lost a loved one.

**Proverbs 18:15 "The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge."**

We see here someone eager to learn by doing and by listening.

**Proverbs 18:16 "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men."**

We see that a gift sometimes softens the heart and makes the way easier. This is not the word for a bribe, but rather the word for a present given to someone.

I think a very nice gesture is to carry flowers or candy to the host when you are invited to dinner. It is just a way of showing you appreciate the effort she has gone to, to prepare the meal. Little gestures of friendship make everyone feel good.

**Proverbs 18:17 "[He that is] first in his own cause [seemeth] just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."**

We see in this that the first man here is having an argument with his neighbor. When the first man tells his story, we have a tendency to believe his story is right and the neighbor is wrong, until we hear the other side of the argument. Then we get all the facts from both sides and can more effectively judge who is right.

The moral of this is, cross examination avoids hasty judgment.

**Proverbs 18:18 "The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty."**

If it is too difficult to decide who is right and who is wrong, the next best thing to do is to cast lots and let God decide. Whatever the outcome is, it is settled by the lot. They can go back to being friends. Strength of body has not settled this. The lot settled it.

**Proverbs 18:19 "A brother offended [is harder to be won] than a strong city: and [their] contentions [are] like the bars of a castle."**

We see that hurt feelings between physical brothers and between close friends are much harder to overcome than to go to war and take a city. They won't forget it. They have their guard up to any reconciliation you try to make.

There are no feuds as difficult to resolve as those with relatives; no barriers are so hard to bring down. Hence, great care should be taken to avoid such conflicts.

The Bible says that if we expect to be forgiven of God, we must forgive our brother. In fact, we are to forgive them as many times as they ask us. Over and over again, the Bible says 70 times 7. If your brother asks you to forgive, you must forgive.

**Proverbs 18:20 "A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; [and] with the increase of his lips shall he be filled."**

We have to accept whatever comes our way when it is the result of what we have said, good or bad.

The consequences of one's words should produce satisfaction and fulfillment.

**Proverbs 18:21 "Death and life [are] in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."**

The greatest good and the greatest harm are in the power of the tongue.

We have used the Scripture (in Romans 10:9-10), so many times in this lesson. We learn in it that we must confess the Lord Jesus with our mouth to be saved. If we are ashamed of Jesus before men and do not confess Him, we are doomed to hell. If we do proclaim belief in Jesus with our mouth and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved.

**Proverbs 18:22 "[Whoso] findeth a wife findeth a good [thing], and obtaineth favor of the LORD."**

God's plan is for one woman and one man to be married and become one flesh. They are to live together in peace and harmony and build a home for them and their children.

(In chapter 31 of Proverbs), we will go into the things that make a good wife. A wife should help her husband in everything and make him happy.

**Proverbs 18:23 "The poor useth entreaties; but the rich answereth roughly."**

We see in this that the poor man is humble and must speak softly, but the rich man who is very proud speaks harshly to those he feels superior to.

The rich do not need favors from others, so they do not care how they treat people.

**Proverbs 18:24 "A man [that hath] friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend [that] sticketh closer than a brother."**

Some of the best advice I ever received in my life was: If you want to be loved, you must love the other fellow first. This is why you see one person with many friends and another with none. The humble person, who goes out of their way to be friendly, will have more friends than they can count.

Conversely, the person who makes friends too easily and indiscriminately does so to his own destruction.

The best friend you can have loves you, not because of what you have done, but in spite of what you have done. Their love has no conditions attached.

This is the kind of love Jesus had for all of us when He came and died on the cross for us while we were yet in sin. He died for us and saved us, not because we were worthy, but because He loved us.

### **Proverbs 18 Questions**

1. What is the first thing we must have to get wisdom?
2. How does the Bible say to get wisdom?
3. What is one reason many have problems hearing from God today?
4. In verse 2, what is wrong with the fool?
5. Why is it so dangerous to go off and find yourself?
6. What does "ignominy" mean?
7. In 2 Timothy 3, what do the evil think of the good people?
8. What are the words of a man's mouth compared to in verse 4?
9. What organ in our body is the wellspring speaking of?
10. Whose testimony cannot be believed?
11. A fool starts an argument and wants to settle it how?
12. What is the snare of a fool's soul?

13. What are a fool's words guided by?
14. Who are talebearers?
15. What is a talebearer's only purpose?
16. Who is guilty of sin besides the talebearer?
17. Who is brother to a great waster?
18. What of the Lord is as a strong tower?
19. At whose name will all knees bow?
20. In Acts 17:28, what do we find out about Jesus?
21. A rich man's conceit is as what?
22. What comes before destruction in a man?
23. To answer before you hear the question, is what?
24. What sustains a man in his infirmity?
25. A man's gift \_\_\_\_\_ .
26. Who will you ordinarily side with in an argument?
27. In an argument, what can you do to settle it, if both parties seem right?
28. What is harder to win over than a strong city?
29. Death and life are in what?
30. When a man findeth a wife, it is a good thing and he pleases who?
31. Who answers roughly?
32. How can a man have friends?
33. How did Jesus show us the kind of love we need to have for each other?