

What Voices Will You Listen To?

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[0 : 00] Please take your Bible and turn with me tonight to Proverbs 1.! If you were part of Grace Fellowship Church back when I was one of the pastors, you might remember struggling to stay awake on Sunday afternoons after fellowship lunch.

As I would sort of cherry pick individual Proverbs and preach one of them on a Sunday afternoon after that lunch and another one a different time. And Jason reminded me today of my outline for most of those, state, illustrate, apply, which can work for an individual proverb.

But maybe you remember some of that and maybe you don't and that's okay if you don't. I have often, or I have long, loved the book of Proverbs.

That goes back to my childhood. I find it extremely instructive, especially for the young, but really for all of us. So it's obviously a book of great wisdom that meets us at every point of our lives.

You'd be hard-pressed to not find a proverb that applies to some part of your life today. It's eminently practical and very useful. Well, down in Warsaw, I've finally gotten around to actually preaching, not just individual Proverbs, but preaching through the book of Proverbs.

[1 : 46] And so what we're doing, we're preaching Proverbs 1 through 9 expositively. And Proverbs 1 through 9 read very differently from chapters 10 through 31. Proverbs 1 through 9 are a father's speeches to his son.

They are lessons about wisdom. They are discourses about wisdom. And you can preach them and read them expositively. They hang together. They tie together. And then after that, in 10 through 31, at least largely in those chapters, it's more a collection of sayings of wisdom, individual Proverbs, that are easy to cherry-pick.

And here's a proverb about this subject. And here's one about this subject. And so my goal is to preach, not all tonight, down in Warsaw is to preach chapters 1 through 9, going through that consecutively like we do most books of the Bible, and then to preach chapters 10 through 31 in a topical way, gathering the different Proverbs that speak to a particular subject and zooming in on that.

Well, all that to say, I want to open up for us tonight one of these discourses or lessons on wisdom from a father to a son. One of the ones, it's actually the first one that you find in Proverbs.

And just let me say that just because Proverbs is written from a father to a son doesn't mean that fathers and sons are the only people that Proverbs apply to.

[3 : 07] Proverbs speaks wisdom to all of us. And so if you're not a father or not a son today, don't tune me out tonight and say, well, there must be nothing here for me, because right away in verse 8, which is where we're going to pick up, he says, my son, I'm a son, so that doesn't apply to me.

No, not at all. It does apply. You can take the wisdom that's spoken from a father to a son and apply it to all sorts of people in all different walks of life. And so let's have a look and see what Proverbs has to teach us tonight.

We live in an age where there are many voices competing for our attention, crying out, trying to get our attention and to get us to listen to that voice.

You can't avoid this. The voices come from everywhere. They surround us every day. They come to you through your radio or through your podcast player or through your television. They're on your computer and your MP3 player and your phone and other digital devices.

There are voices on billboards as you drive down the road, on magazines as you walk by them in the store. They come from teachers, peers, siblings, parents, pastors, and friends.

[4 : 14] And I hope not least for most of you, there is the voice of God Himself speaking to us in His Word as we pick this up daily and read it. There are a multitude of voices speaking to us in our day and age.

It can't be avoided. Now, some of those voices, I hope, are in concert. They are in agreement. I hope that what you hear from your pastor and your parents is the same as what you hear from the Word of God as you read it.

Many other voices will agree in seeking to turn you away from the voice of God and the voice of truth. And the question in all of that is to whom will you listen?

Which of those voices are you paying heed to? Are you paying most attention to? Are you being most influenced by?

That's the question before us here in Proverbs 1 tonight. And so I want to look at the first of these speeches from a father to a son. The first seven verses are sort of an introduction to the whole book of Proverbs.

[5 : 19] And then dad launches in to his first speech. And so we'll read from verse 18 down through verse 19. This father's lesson for a son on wisdom.

Proverbs 1.8. Now, this is God's Word. Hear, my son, your father's instruction. And forsake not your mother's teaching. For they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, come with us. Let us lie and wait for blood. Let us ambush the innocent without reason.

Like Sheol, let us swallow them alive and whole like those who go down to the pit. We shall find all precious goods. We shall fill our houses with plunder. Throw in your lot among us. We will all have one purse.

My son, do not walk in the way with them. Hold back your foot from their paths. For their feet run to evil and they make haste to shed blood. For in vain is a net spread in the sight of any bird.

[6 : 20] But these men lie and wait for their own blood. They set an ambush for their own lives. Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain. It takes away the life of its possessors.

I hope you can see right off the bat that the father is concerned for the well-being of his son. He knows that his son is hearing competing voices.

He's hearing his voice, my son. And he's hearing the voice of sinners. He's saying, my son, you need to listen to me. And so tonight, I want us to think about this in three main points.

First, a parent's plea. And then sin's seduction. And then we want to talk about a child's choice. So a parent's plea, sin's seduction, and a child's choice.

Now again, I'm not a parent. I'm not a child. If you're not a parent, maybe you do have the opportunity to speak wisdom into someone else's life. Someone that you're mentoring or discipling or a friend or a co-worker.

[7 : 25] Someone where you are the voice of wisdom in their life. Whether you're a parent speaking to your children or not, you have the opportunity to speak into someone else's life. And if you're not a child listening to your parents' voice of wisdom, you do have voices of wisdom speaking into your life.

They come from maybe a spouse, maybe a friend, maybe, I hope, your pastors you're listening to. And so you too, all of us, will have a choice to make. Whether the question is your parent's voice. Maybe it's not your parent. Maybe it's that pastor or someone else. So again, if you're not a parent or a child, please still listen. But we're going to start with the parent's plea tonight.

And notice about that. First of all, that wise parents teach. Verse 8, hear my son your father's instruction and forsake not your mother's teaching. So that my son, if you want to do some study of Proverbs, watch for that in those first nine chapters of Proverbs.

You'll see it repeated again and again. My son, my son, my son. And then it drops off after chapter 9. And you see these again. Father instructing his son. He's intent on making sure that his son knows the wise way to walk through this world.

[8 : 35] The instruction or discipline, we could say, of a father. And the teaching, or we could say law of a mother, must be communicated if the child is to hear it.

And we might read these verses and immediately think of application for children. Especially those of us who are parents. Listen, you need to hear your parents' wisdom. And we want to apply to them. But I want us to start tonight with an application for parents.

In this world, with so many competing voices speaking into our children's lives and into our lives, parents, hear me, it is your voice that your children should hear first and most often and most clearly and most persuasively.

It's your responsibility to teach the law of God, to instruct and discipline the children God gives to you.

Hear, my son, your father's instruction, forsake not your mother's teaching, assumes that the parents are doing some teaching. And that's a parent's role, to instruct, to teach their children.

[9 : 41] Hear, my son, might have stirred up some memories for the Israelites. There's something known as the Shema, and Shema is the Hebrew word for hear. And maybe you know it from Hebrews 6.1. Hear, O Israel, or not Hebrews 6.1.

That's really bad. That's bad on a lot of levels. It's Deuteronomy chapter 6, and it's not verse 1. It's verse 4. So anyway, from Deuteronomy 6, verse 4.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And then he quotes what Jesus quotes as the greatest commandment. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your might.

And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

All of Israel was to hear and obey. And so Solomon, the father here, it may not be Solomon at this point, but whoever the father is, and we take it to be Solomon, hear my son.

[10 : 46] Hear. I've heard that before. Shema. Hear, O Israel. And they were to hear and obey, and they were to pass on God's direction to their children all the time.

When they were in the house, when they walked by the way, when they got up, when they lay down, they were to be passing on God's direction to their children. And guess what? It's still for us to do that. Not just Israel in the Old Testament, but us as well.

To pass on God's truth to the next generation. Hear my son. Should often be on our lips. Now, for you children and young people, I want to get especially to you in a moment.

But for now, notice that when your parents are instructing you, when they're saying, listen, they're not nagging you. They're not trying to embarrass or annoy you, or be super restrictive to you.

They're not trying to weigh you down. They are fulfilling God's calling on their lives as parents.

They're doing the good work that God has given them to do.

[11 : 54] To teach their children. That's what they're called to do. It's what they must do. Now, that was the Old Testament Israel. Proverbs.

New Testament 2. Ephesians 6. For fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. And it's not just for dads.

It's for mothers. Both father and mother. The mother's law or teaching is mentioned here in verse 8. Forsake not your mother's teaching. And you'll see that later in Proverbs.

If you keep reading down in Proverbs 31, verse 1, the words of King Lemuel, an oracle that his mother taught him. Hope you don't have a problem learning from a woman.

The Bible gives us the voice of a woman speaking to us. There in Proverbs 31. And of the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31, verse 26, she opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

[12 : 52] Where did Timothy, that's Israel, Old Testament, still applies to us, but I'll tell you it's in the New Testament too. Where did Timothy learn about God's truth from? From his mother and grandmother, Lois and Eunice.

Moms, you often by sheer amount of time and volume of words have the most opportunity to speak to your children. May God help you to fill your mind and your heart with wisdom and truth and the law of God so that you can effectively point your children in the way of truth.

The only way that fathers or mothers can profitably call our children to listen to us, say, here, listen to me, and have something good to say that is worthy of being heard.

The only way that can happen is if we are soaking up God's truth. If what's coming out of us is God's wisdom. And so we need to be studying God's word, listening to His voice in His word and proclaiming it.

And so are we doing that, parents? Are you the clearest voice influencing the impressionable minds of your children? Because no matter how much you shelter them, and to some degree we must do that, but no matter how much we do that, I guarantee that you are not the only voice your children are hearing.

[14:12] Period. You're not. They are or they will be hearing other voices, and they will need your biblical voice to interpret and to navigate all the other voices that are competing for their attention, for their minds, that are competing for their very souls.

So wise parents teach. But notice a few characteristics of their teaching. Wise parents teach attractively. Verse 9. For they're a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. And I've often thought of this verse from the child's perspective. Too often children think of their parents' teaching as something that's ugly, and it weighs them down, and it makes them out of place with their peers. And rather they need to view it as something that makes them beautiful, something that adorns them, something that is useful and a blessing to them. But perhaps we could note, parents, that from our side, our perspective, our teaching really must be beautiful for it to adorn our children and make them beautiful. It must be God's wisdom and not our own.

And here's where it starts to get really hard as parents. It must be taught with humility and gentleness and grace and firmness and love.

[15:37] Too often, we're spouting our own wisdom instead of God's. Too often, we're teaching what is right. Maybe teaching God's wisdom, but doing it in the wrong way with the wrong motive out of our own comfort and our well-being and our desire for peace and quiet and comfort rather than the motive of God's glory and the eternal good of our children.

We're annoyed because they're bothering us and so we teach them the right thing, but in the wrong way and with the wrong tone of voice even. And too often, we do it and with a short temper, we do it harshly, sometimes full of arrogance as though we have never struggled with the very thing that we're instructing them on even though we have.

We have this sort of, I can't believe you did that. And you know who has done the very same thing? Me. That's not teaching that adorns.

It's not teaching that's a graceful garland and maybe that imagery doesn't resonate. I don't want a garland on my head. Alright, well, whatever it is in our culture that makes us beautiful, that's not beautiful clothing.

It's not beautiful jewelry. It's not beautiful attire. If we teach it with arrogance and with harshness and with a short temper, it's teaching that drives away.

[16:56] Wise parents teach true wisdom in an attractive way. Wise parents reason with their children. They don't just say, do this, don't do this, and that's it.

Think about what we've just read here. It's almost role playing on the part of this dad. The parent here doesn't just say, look, sin is going to look good.

Watch out for the bad guys who will lead you astray. When sinners entice you, do not consent. And that's it. That's not what he does. He says those things, but then dad takes on the role of an enticing sinner and he shows his son just what that sinner and that enticement and that seduction might sound and look like.

Here, son, are some of the words that they might use to get you to turn aside into the way of evil. And that's what verses 11 through 14 are.

If they say, come with us. It's not actually sinners saying that. It's dad saying, if they say, and then suggesting some things that sinners might say. That's creative parenting.

[18:01] He's almost role playing. His teaching is carefully thought out and reasoned. It's persuasive. It's realistic. Later, I want us to see that it exposes the lie of sinners.

Wise parents know the ways of the evil and prepare their children for it. Not just shelter them from it. Parents know that evil cannot be avoided in this world.

It can't. It's everywhere. And so they let their children know what's coming. This is what you are going to face in this world.

This is what it will be like. And they equip them to handle it. Now, it's no guarantee that the children will heed their parents' teaching. Rehoboam certainly didn't heed Solomon's wisdom.

Nor did Solomon heed his own wisdom. But this is what we must do. And pray that God will use it in their lives. Wise parents teach attractively. Wise parents plead with their children.

[19:02] Don't just present facts. Let's call our children to action. Verse 8, Hear my son. And of course, we've got to give them something worth listening to, but call them to listen. Let them see your urgency.

Alright, kids. There's going to be evil in the world. Don't give in. No, it's life and death. Hear my son. Verse 10, Do not consent.

Don't just call them to hear. Call them to action. Sinners are going to entice you and when they do, don't give in. Don't go with them. Don't listen. Verse 15, Don't go with them.

Do not walk in the way with them. Hold back your foot from their paths. There's a way that you want to be in, son, and a way you don't want to be in. Don't go down the path of the wicked.

Chapter 4 and verse 19, The way of the wicked is like deep darkness. They do not know over what they stumble. Son, don't go down that path. Do go down the path of wisdom.

[20 : 01] That's the place to be. Chapter 3 and verse 17, Her wisdom, her ways, our ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. Proverbs reasons. Solomon, this dad, reasons with his son and calls him to action.

Don't go down that path. Don't consent. Hear my son. He pleads. He begs. His son can't avoid the earnestness.

of this father's plea. That's a little bit about the parents' plea. Parents, we must be active in instructing our children and calling them to walk in the way of wisdom and to flee from the way of sin.

Let's do that in a way that's attractive, well-reasoned, and let's plead with urgency as we call them to action. Or as you have opportunity to interact with other people who are not your children, but perhaps friends or co-workers, show them the urgency of what you're talking about.

Call them to action. Reason with them. Make sure your teaching is attractive. Let's get the logs out of our own eye and come with humility to our children and to others who need wisdom.

[21 : 14] Second, sin's seduction. So parents' plea now sin's seduction. And again, it's not just children that face the seduction of sin.

It's all of us. And so we all need this warning. This is what the seduction and enticement of the sinner look like. Make sure we're aware and ready. It doesn't matter if you're old, young, parent, child.

We all must face the reality that sometimes sin will look good and people will try to get us to turn aside into it. So what will sinners say?

What is their draw and their attraction? Think with me about some of the attraction of sin. Don't be afraid to teach your children that there is an attraction to sin. If all you ever say to your children is sin is ugly, it's horrible, it's bad, it's no good, there's no reason you would ever want to go that way and you never say some of what Dad says here.

All of those things are true. It's ugly. It's no good. You never want to go that way but sin's not always going to look that way. When you look at it, you're going to think, I know you said it's bad. But this looks really good.

[22 : 20] Dad is honest about that. He helps his son see the attraction of wisdom so that he's better equipped to reject it when it comes. So part of that attraction is companionship.

Come with us. Verse 11. Come with us. Verse 14. Throw in your lot among us. We will all have one purse. The wicked offer a community, a brotherhood, a fellowship, as it were.

Jim Neuheiser has a book on Proverbs and he's helpful in drawing out the importance of the family at this point. If a person doesn't have parents to instruct them and then have helped them to create a primary community to find a place and a home, the draw of sinners will be all the greater.

There's no wonder, he points out, no wonder gangs have such success in recruiting those with a poor home life or no father figure in their life. They offer them a community which is something that they don't have.

You see that? Come with us. Throw in your lot among us. We will all have one purse. And so another challenge for us is to cultivate strong, healthy families so that this aspect of sin seduction doesn't carry as much attraction for us.

[23 : 39] I think also here of the importance of the local church as a place of community and fellowship to counter that appeal of the brotherhood of the wicked. And here's where the church should be able to assist single moms and those who have come from broken homes.

The bonds of the family of God are crucial in resisting the seduction of sin. If people don't have a place to call home, a people to call family, then the call of the wicked come with us.

That will be very attractive indeed. So may our homes not be hostile places and may our church be welcoming families so that the appeal of the wicked won't be so appealing because of the with us is

part of the attraction.

Don't read over those words. Those are important here. But another part of the attraction is the thrill, the excitement of violence. If they say, come with us, let us lie and wait for blood. Let us ambush the innocent without reason.

Swallow them alive like she'll hold like those who go down to the pit. Part of the seduction is the adrenaline rush of doing what is forbidden. Make no mistake, there is a certain pleasure in sin.

[24 : 49] It's fun. It feels good. Think about it this way. Have you ever thrown a surprise birthday party for someone? As the moment gets closer and you turn off the lights in that room and shut the door, your heart rate starts to go up a little bit.

There's a bit of an adrenaline rush and as you hear the door turning, there's that anticipation and it builds and what you're doing really in some ways is ambushing the innocent.

Right? Now, you're not doing it to kill them. You're doing it to bring joy to them and to celebrate with them. But you're setting an ambush and that adrenaline rush, that almost enjoyable fear when they open the door and the lights go on and surprise and then their heart rate shoots through the roof if they didn't actually know it was coming.

That's something of there's an enticement to that. And so don't just read this and go, oh, I would never try to ambush someone and kill them. That killing someone holds no attraction for me.

I don't see why that would be an attractive thing. Don't just read past that. Think about that excitement and adrenaline that comes with doing something that is forbidden, something that is surprising to the person on the other end.

[26 : 05] It feels good. But make no mistake, any pleasure that comes from it will be temporary and short-lived. Now, we're talking about the seduction of sin here. I want to hold off for a little bit before we expose the reality that it's temporary.

But for now, see that the thrill is part of the draw of sin. And then some people sadly do find pleasure in the violence itself, even in murder.

Let's do it for no other reason than our own pleasure. And maybe for our own gain to rob them. It's ugly, but that's the reality. And those temptations are not imaginary.

One commentator drew this out. When Jesus tells that story of the Good Samaritan that's attacked and robbed and left for dead on the side of the road, we don't read of anybody saying, oh, come on, Jesus, that never happens.

That's a real thing. people lie and wait for blood. And there's an attraction to it. There are real temptations, and a faithful parent won't withhold that sad truth from his child.

[27 : 11] There's many other seductions we could talk about. You know, if you're thinking about a gang that's offering a family to someone, there's drugs and dealing those drugs, there's prostitution, there's sex trafficking, but the attraction and evil behind them are all the same.

they're offering the community and the excitement that's warned against you. And we said, you know, I would never kill someone, but don't even write that off too quickly.

Maybe a little unjust game, but killing is surely beyond you. Well, remember how Jesus looks past outward deeds to the heart. And when you are tempted to mock someone, or to say hurtful things to someone, because of who they are, maybe the color of their skin, their race, their nationality, their economic status, their personality, their weight, their political views.

Everybody else at school is making fun of this person, and you don't say anything, but you chuckle right along with them. And you don't encourage that person that's hurting.

when you go along with that crowd, Proverbs speaks of words that are like a sword thrust.

[28 : 34] You can kill with your tongue without ever shedding a drop of blood. And so, again, don't just read over this, ah, there's no temptation there for me, my kid would never want to kill someone.

Oh, they will be tempted to go along with the crowd, or to do it themselves, and to say hurtful, cruel, unkind, brutal things. The seduction of sin is real.

And when you do that, then you feel a little bit better about yourself, and drop them down a peg.

There's an attraction there. There's a seduction of sin there. And of course, seductive sinners offer wealth.

13 and 14, we'll find all precious good, we'll fill our houses with plunder. Throw in your lot, we'll have one purse. They suggest that in their path is great wealth, goods, plunder, they'll certainly share it with you.

Proverbs has a lot to say about wealth. It's a legitimate pursuit to reward for diligent effort, not for the lazy, and not for the wicked. Wealth, when it's obtained by fraud, is no good.

[29 : 36] You might get wealth that way, but it will rot, and it will rot you. But isn't money, the love of money, a common temptation? Paul comes to that too in 1 Timothy 6, for the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

It's through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. When you're trying to figure out what's going on in a complex investigation, what do they say? They say, follow the money. Greed will rot your soul, and lead you to do all sorts of evil, so that you can have that wealth.

The illegitimate pursuit of wealth won't satisfy. It will kill. Proverbs comes to this later, but the seduction of sexual sin too will call for your attention and your heart.

And so you see the enticement. Sin looks good. It sounds exciting. It promises that community that we were built with a need and a longing for. It offers the wealth that we think we can't live without. And again, good parents, good friends, faithful friends will point this out. Paint sin in all of its ugliness. Yes. But make sure also that the one you're teaching knows that our sinful hearts will be drawn out to the seduction, the attraction that sin holds before us.

[30 : 58] The dad in Proverbs doesn't hide that reality. Listen son, it's going to look good. But friends, that leaves us with a choice. So we come to the child's choice.

So parents plea, sin seduction, and now a child's choice. The choice that we all have to make, children or not, to whom will you listen?

Whose call resonates with you? Do you prefer the seduction of sinners or the plea of parents? And Proverbs sets this up through the whole book.

There's the call of wisdom and there's the call of falling. Sin seduction and a parent's plea. Who will you listen to? Who are you listening to? Remember, there's many competing voices, but we could really reduce them all down to these two categories.

Voices calling us to God's wisdom and voices calling us to reject God. Sinners have a plea just like the parents do. Come with us. Let us lie and wait for blood.

[32 : 05] Throw in your lot with us. They seek to turn you aside to their way, that way of the wicked. The seduction of the pleasure of sin will seek to destroy you. Will you listen to that appeal?

Will you give in to that? Or will you listen to your parents? Hear my son, your father's instruction. Verse 16, my son, do not walk in the way with them.

There's the voice of wisdom. So, maybe your parents, if you're a child, maybe your parents are unbelievers, or they were, you're not a child under your parents' roof anymore.

Whatever the voice of wisdom is speaking into your life, maybe it's your parents, maybe it's your own reading of God's word, maybe it's the faithful preaching of that word, at the church, friend or mentor who's speaking that truth to you, whose voice will you listen to?

That voice or the voice of the wicked? God calls us to listen to his voice. Hear. Listen. Children, listen to that teaching and instruction of your father and mother or other voice of wisdom.

[33 : 14] There is something prideful in us as children and as adults. I think we see it especially in the youth that make us think we know better than our parents and that we don't need them or what they have to say.

Come on. Mom and dad, really? Whatever. I know better. That is a sinful instinct.

That is the definition in Proverbs of a fool. In Proverbs, as you read, what you'll find the fool is, he's the one who will not listen to the voice of wisdom.

The fool is wise in his own eyes. He thinks he knows. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Fools reject it. And so often I think we see this in young people. And so Proverbs, a father to a son. And so young people especially, let me challenge you to be humble enough to admit your need for help and listen.

[34 : 24] The nature of the fool is to reject others and to listen only to himself. and you think, I know, I was a young person too. Not anymore, but it was. But still sometimes I think I know better.

I hear the voice of wisdom, come on, I know better. You are old fashioned, you are out of date, you don't know, you didn't live in the era I live in, my challenges are different than yours, I know better than you.

but God calls us to listen to his voice through our parents, through our pastors, through wise friends. Think about this, even Jesus, Jesus who is wiser than Solomon submitted himself to his parents and listen to them, Luke 2, 51 and 52, and he, Jesus, went down with them, with Joseph and Mary, and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them.

His mother treasured of all these things in her heart and Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. If there was ever someone that could say, listen mom and dad, I got this, I know better than you, it was the son of God.

Is that what he did? He listened, he submitted himself to them. And so must we do. So here, listen, verse 10, do not consent.

[35 : 50] Here's your choice, the enticement of sinners or your parents' ways. When sinners entice you, do not consent. Don't give in. Don't do what they say. Don't walk in the way with the wicked. If sinners entice you, and then you know that familiar verse in Psalm 1, blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners.

That's who's here in verse 10 enticing you. The wise person, the blessed person, doesn't walk in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of scoffers. Don't go with them. Verse 15.

My son did not walk in the way with them. Hold back your foot from their paths, for their feet run to evil and they make haste to shed blood. Sometimes as parents we feel like we need to repeat ourselves and say the same thing in about four different ways or five or six or ten different ways. And I want you to listen to this wise dad do that. This is over in chapter 4 but it's the same as what he's saying here in verse 15. Don't walk in the way with them. Hold back your foot. Listen to chapter 4 verses 14 through 17.

Do not enter the path of the wicked and do not walk in the way of the evil. Avoid it. Do not go on it. Turn away from it and pass on. Six times he says get away from the way of evil for they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong.

[37 : 07] They are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble for they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence these people who are enticing you they can't live without it it's their food and drink wickedness is don't go on the way with them you have a choice to make young people you're going to listen to that voice of wisdom or you're going to go on the way with the evil I know that being with them sounds good but don't go hold back your foot from even starting down that path the further you go you may think that obeying your parents will put you on bad terms with your friends or the rest of the world that seems to be very much going against Christianity and doesn't it feel that way you're looking and all of culture is going this way it's like a flood it's like you see a video of a flash flood a torrent coming down a dry gully and it's washing everything sounds like going this way is good and here are your parents saying

I want you to go against that I want you to walk in this way and you're thinking mom and dad you are crazy and God says listen don't go in the way with them don't go with the flow don't go with that current of culture and society it will carry you to your grave and eternal death you may think that obeying your parents will put you on bad terms with your friends and the rest of the world but far better to be on the right side with God than with the world facing judgment at the hands of God and make no mistake going that way of the wicked will land you before the throne of God without a shred of hope or any plea to make and you will be judged and face punishment for all eternity and let me say the only way to be ready to face that judgment is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I don't have time to unpack all of this but the

New Testament tells us that Jesus is the wisdom of God and Proverbs tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and so if you want to be truly wise in this world you must fear the Lord you must have a relationship with the Lord and you can only do that through the Lord Jesus Christ he is the way I am the way the truth and the life the way of wisdom is the way of walking with Jesus the only way you will be able to resist temptation the only way you can find forgiveness for all in your own strength the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and so if you want to be able to stand before the judgment throne of God in that great day and be entered into eternal glory the only way is not by what you have done but what Jesus has done so you must embrace him that's the way of wisdom this world will tell!

Jesus is crazy don't listen to him Jesus says come unto me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest and he will you come to the savior you'll find forgiveness and strength to resist temptation young people if you are thinking your parents are fools and this choice is a no brainer you're going with the world listen you are the!

you may! think that's really your parents teaching doesn't make you ugly it adorns you it makes you beautiful you think pleasurable sin or boring righteousness let's have a little fun that's the reasoning of a fool I want you to see here what this wise parenting reason parents reasoning exposes and parents this is part of our wise reasoned teaching don't just show the enticement of sinners do that we've talked about that show why it's folly show your children the reality verse 18 but these men lie and wait for their own blood they set an ambush for their own lives such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain it takes away the life of its possessors proverbs peels back the curtain for us so we can look behind what the wicked are offering to see what's really there and listen satan and his followers will do this like a good fisherman they will show you the bait they will hide the hook you go fishing you don't just drop a hook in the water you disguise it make it look good to that fish so he wants to bite it that's what satan does he does the father is exposed!

[42 : 17] look sin is going to look really good but a wise parent will tell their children about the hook behind the bait look what he says he's wicked verse 16 they're running towards evil they're hastening to shed blood they are actually bringing about their own death verse 17 there's two ways to take that I'm not going to get into that the imagery of the bird in vain as a net spread in the sight of any bird I'm not going to try to explain that I think the point comes in the next two verses and it's clear the wicked think that they're lying in wait for the blood of their victim but it's their own blood they're setting an ambush against the innocent but they're ambushing their own lives I want to read verse 11 and verse 18 back to back verse 18 flips verse 11 on its head here verse 11 here's dad taking on the role of the sinner if they say come with us let us lie and wait for blood let us ambush the innocent without reason and then he's back as dad again in verse 18 and he's unmasking the evil listen son these men lie and wait same language as verse 11 let us lie in wait for blood these men lie in wait for their own blood they set an ambush same same as verse 11 they set an ambush for their own lives they are plotting evil against others and they are destroying themselves remember who

Haman was story of Esther he hates Mordecai's guts and all the Jews and he plots their destruction and he builds this gallows 50 feet high so that Mordecai can be hung on it and Haman is he is ambushing the innocent without reason you know the end of the story you don't have time to tell it all Haman gets hung on his own gallows he ambushed his own life perfect illustration of what's going on here in Proverbs chapter 1 sin promises the good life and it delivers death same with illegitimate gain ill-gotten gain verse 19 such are the ways of everyone it's greedy for unjust gain it takes away if you are filled with greed and consumed with that desire for money and the wicked are holding that out and it's so attractive to you know this it takes away the life of its possessors you're full of that greed your life is done it will take away your life if you don't repent and believe there's something more valuable than wealth anyway

Proverbs 3 15 of wisdom she is more precious than jewels nothing you desire can compare with her remember what the one greater than Solomon Jesus said for what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul and so Proverbs will all along the way point out the the faultiness of this thinking of the wicked are pursuing their own good but they they hurt themselves a man who is kind benefits himself but a cruel man hurts himself cruel man is trying to hurt other people but what does he do he hurts himself and Proverbs shows that again and again here's the reality if not in this life certainly in the life to come Proverbs 13 21 and 22 disaster pursues sinners but the righteous are rewarded with good you need to know that before the temptation comes it's going to look really good but if you give in and you go down that road whatever goodness it offered will be so fleeting and temporary compared to the eternity of suffering that you bring on your head that it shouldn't even be a debate it's not worth it

Proverbs exposes the lie listen to that while you were young and if you're old it's not too late to have the lie exposed and to repent and to come to Christ don't expect the voice of seduction to always take the form of a physical person in front of you saying hey let's go rob a bank and kill someone it will be much more subtle than that it will come in slick packaging and movies and music where vice is made to look like virtue and wealth looks like the ultimate good where women look like a commodity to satisfy the lust of men where violence is a good means to whatever end you desire might come in the form of a peer someone who's been a good friend who seeks to lead you astray it might come I pray not it could come from a sibling mom and dad will never know Satan wants to destroy you however he can so he will do whatever he can to see you go down that way of folly to your death but and Proverbs takes us behind the scenes to see that those people

that look so happy and glamorous and fulfilled and who seem to have so many friends they're actually all bankrupt and empty and are destroying themselves listen to the voice of wisdom which will you choose will you heed the voice of wisdom it's ultimately a choice of following the way that that leads to eternal life if you heed the voice of wisdom and if you heed sin, seduction and go that way it ends in death that way of eternal life that is the way of Jesus Christ the savior of sinners Jesus who for all outward appearances in many ways looked so weak when he walked through this world he is actually mighty to save and trust him to give you the grace to listen to him and shun the seduction of evil and find forgiveness for your sins who will you listen to let's pray father we thank you for the truth of your word that so clearly points us to the right way on which to walk we pray that you would give all of us grace to heed the voice of wisdom and to reject the seduction of sin that seems so appealing we pray that you would humble us as parents give us wisdom to instruct our children in the way of truth and we thank you that you have called us out of darkness into your marvelous light thank you that you've given so many here grace to heed that call do it for others here we pray for Jesus sake and in his name amen so many years