

Message #95

Proverbs 23:9-16

**WISE PEOPLE LISTEN TO LEARN AND APPLY THE WISE INSTRUCTIONS OF GOD BECAUSE THEY WANT THE BLESSINGS OF GOD.**

We are in the section of proverbs called the “words of the wise” (22:17). In this section we look at four more of the 30 sayings of the wise:

**WISDOM CHALLENGE #1 – A wise man will not give knowledge to fools (Saying #9). 23:9**

The challenge for the wise in Proverbs 9:8 was not to reprove a scoffer; the challenge here is not to speak to one. The noun “fool” describes one who is impious, who gives the impression that he is a very large giant, a dominant know-it-all. When the text says, “do not speak” it is not referring to saying “hello,” rather refuse to present wise, godly instruction to the ears of a fool. The reason not to speak to this one is because he will “despise” the instruction, literally in Hebrew he will hold it in contempt and trample it down.

**WISDOM CHALLENGE #2 – A wise man will not tamper with boundaries of those helpless and poor (Saying #10). 23:10-11**

Wise people do not tamper with ancient landmarks (22:28) and to do so against one who is helpless and poor is to make one highly accountable to receive the chastisement of God. Ancestral property was given by God to the families of Israel and to tamper with it was a violation of the law of God (Deut. 19:14). **Verse 11** states two reasons for not tampering with boundaries; 1) God is their redeemer; 2) God will plead their cause. Widows and the fatherless have always been and will always be special to God and they are not to be mistreated (Ex. 22:22; Deut. 14:29; 24:17-18). According to Levitical law, the nearest kin was responsible to redeem the land of the fatherless, but under no condition were the boundaries to be altered or sold (Lev. 25:34).

**WISDOM CHALLENGE #3 – A wise person will give ears and heart to gaining God’s knowledge. 23:12**

Most believe this is not one of the 30 sayings, but a brief statement exhorting one to hear the 30 sayings.

**WISDOM CHALLENGE #4 – A wise parent will not withhold corrective discipline from children (Saying #11). 23:13-14**

There are basically two reasons why: 1) It will not kill him (**23:13b**); 2) It will stop him from being executed (**23:14b**). A rebellious child could be executed by stoning (Deut. 21:18-21). A parent could perhaps prevent this through physical discipline.

**WISDOM CHALLENGE #5 – A wise parent finds great joy in a wise child (Saying #12). 23:15-16**