

Message #52

Proverbs 15:13-17

A PERSON WHO IS INTERNALLY DEVELOPING IN THE WISDOM OF GOD IS A PERSON WHO IS TRULY RICH.

The five proverbs in this section focus on internals, not externals.

Proverb #1 – Wise people desire a merry heart, not a sorrowful heart. **15:13**

There is a contrast in this proverb between a merry heart and a sorrowful one, and also between the impact that each heart makes. The noun “face” in Hebrew is literally “faces” plural. A plural in Hebrew may be used several ways: 1) To communicate a large number of similar items; 2) To refer to the total quality of something; 3) To refer to a full manifestation of something (Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, pp. 396-400). Solomon uses “faces” to express a total, full joy. Full joy comes from the heart, not the face. Sid Buzzel said, “Happiness and depression are issues of the heart” (p. 938).

Proverb #2 – Wise people want a searching heart, not a stagnant heart. **15:14**

The wise person seeks knowledge, but the fool feeds on foolishness. The wise person is not content with what he knows, but is constantly searching and studying; but the fool just continues to drift along in the same ignorant pasture of thinking.

Proverb #3 – Wise people want a feasting heart, not an afflicted heart. **15:15**

What is contrasted here is a person who is “afflicted” (wretchedly poor) versus one who is continually feasting. The determining factor has nothing to do with money, but the condition of the heart. One whose heart is right before God is one who will continually enjoy life.

Proverb #4 – Wise people want a fearing heart, not a financial heart. **15:16**

This proverb is the first of 15 “better than” proverbs: **15:16, 17**; 16:8, 19, 32; 17:1; 19:1, 22; 21:9, 19; 25:7, 24; 27:5, 10; 28:6. The point of this proverb is plain—wise people are more concerned with their attitude toward God, than their money in the bank.

Proverb #5 – Wise people want a loving environment, not a wealthy one. **15:17**

Note the point—it is better to eat vegetables with someone who loves you, than steak with someone who hates you. The menu is totally inconsequential when compared to the person with whom you are eating. Sid Buzzel said, “Normally people would choose luxury over privation, but what is more important is love. Many people have found that a home where material possessions are few but love for each other is present is far better than a house of great opulence where people hate each other. Love makes one’s difficult circumstances endurable, whereas hatred undoes all the enjoyments that good food might otherwise bring” (p. 938).