

September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Proverbs 16:27-28 & 17:14** - "Called to be Peaceful"

A. Proverbs is a book of Wisdom— **"The words of the wise"** to teach us how to live to God's glory.

B. Today's area of guidance from Proverbs is how to be peaceful.

1. The opposite of peace is strife. Heb wd for "strife" can be translated "quarreling" or "arguing."

→ A huge motivator to avoid strife is found in **Prov 18:19** **"A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, & contentions are like the bars of a citadel."**

2. Peace is a God-wrought fruit of the Holy Spirit (**Gal 5**).

<u>God calls you to be peaceful for Christ</u>	<u>I. HOW TO AVOID STRIFE</u> <u>II. HOW TO HANDLE DISAGREEMENT:</u>
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I. HOW TO AVOID STRIFE

A. Be careful how you speak & what you say to avoid strife.

1. **Prov 16:27-28** **"A worthless man digs up evil, while his words are like scorching fire. 28A  
perverse man spreads strife, & a slanderer separates intimate friends."**

2. The Proverbs tell us we ought to overlook & conceal another's sins when possible:

a. It is your **"...glory to overlook a transgression"** (**Prov 19:11b**).

b. **Prov 17:19** **"He who conceals a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends."**

1) You have not overlooked the another's sin if you keep bringing it up.

2) If the issue keeps coming up, read **Mat 18:15-20** & seek to carry it out.

3. During your conversations, remember **Prov 15:1**: **"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."**

B. Try not to let a conversation about differing opinions turn into an all-out argument.

1. **Prov 17:14** **"The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out."** Imagine a dam with a small leak.

Some practical ways to put water on the smoldering disagreement include:

a. Let the other person have the last word. You don't always have to be right.

b. Depending upon if it is a Christian family member or friend, suggest praying.

c. If either of you get heated, separate yourselves.

2. **Prov 20:3** **"Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, but any fool will quarrel."**

C. Avoid gossip & slander; also avoid those persons who gossip or slander others.

1. **Prov 17:4** **"An evildoer listens to wicked lips; a liar pays attention to a destructive tongue."**

2. → Turn to **Prov 26:18-26**

3. **Prov 22:10** **"Drive out the scoffer, & contention will go out, even strife & dishonor will cease."**

→ Turn to **Titus 3:1-11**

D. Jesus tells us, **"blessed are the peacemakers"** (**Mat 5:9**) yet wisdom says we should pray about whether to get involved in the quarrels of others in the first place. **Prov 26:17** says **"Like one who takes a dog by the ears is he who passes by and meddles with strife not belonging to him."**

E. Avoid spreading news in an unnecessary fashion. **Prov 24:28a**: **"Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause,..."**

F. Avoid the strife of revenge: **Prov 24:29**: **Do not say, 'Thus I shall do to him as he has done to me;**

## II. HOW TO HANDLE DISAGREEMENT:

A. Restrain your anger as you discuss your differences even if the other party gets angry.

1. **Prov 15:18**: “A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute.”
2. **Prov 30:33** “For the churning of milk produces butter, & pressing the nose brings forth; blood so the churning of anger produces strife.”
2. **James 1:19-20** “...everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak *and* slow to anger; <sup>20</sup>for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.”

B. Be wise & careful when you have a dispute with a neighbor: **Prov 25:8**: “Do not go out hastily to argue *your case*; otherwise, what will you do in the end, when your neighbor humiliates you?

→ This same chapter goes on to say that we ought to settle & keep matters in private. **25:9-10**: “Argue your case with your neighbor, & do not reveal the secret of another, <sup>10</sup>Or he who hears it will reproach you,”

C. If you cannot overlook a sin / transgression, Jesus tells you to follow **Mat 18:15-20**:

**Step 1: (v15)** “If your brother sins, go & show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.”

a. If confronted with gentleness rather than harshness, this process may build your bond in Christ.

- 1) We need others to help us in our growth of sanctification.
- 2) **Prov 27:6a** “Faithful are the wounds of a friend,...”

b. If he apologizes to you & you settle the matter, what need is there to tell others?

c. The majority of problems can & should be handled with step 1 of **Mat 18**.

**Step 2: (v16)** “But if he does not listen to you, take 1 or 2 more with you, so that by the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses every fact may be confirmed.”

**Step 3: (v17)** “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church...”

→Steps 2 & 3 Combined involve the wisdom & frequent success of many counselors (**Prov 15:22**)

D. If your opponent dishes-out insults or anger, patiently defend yourself while being kind & giving to him or her. **Prov 25:21**: “If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; & if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; <sup>22</sup>For you will heap burning coals on his head, & the Lord will reward you.”

E. Some disputes can be handled with the toss of a coin or some dice.

1. **Prov 16:33**: “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.”

2. **Prov 18:18**: The *cast* lot puts an end to strife & decides between the mighty ones.

a. This works especially well with kids as well as with the mighty.

b. In **Acts 1:26**, Matthias was selected by prayer followed by the drawing of lots.

Conclusion & further application: