

Sermon to the Saints of God assembled at Topeka, KS: Sunday, May 28, 2023

### **Proverbs 6 – Part 3:**

### **Keep thy Father’s Commandment, and Forsake Not the Law of thy Mother**

**Part 1** - Go To the Ant (Proverbs 6:1-11) – January 29, 2023

**Part 2** - 7 Things that God Hates (Proverbs 6:12-19) – April 2, 2023

My friends, we are continually and increasingly vexed by the brazen defiance of wicked men, who tempt God with their every breath. We are vexed much as our brother Lot was vexed: *“And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:”* (**2Peter 2:7-9**) Contention and violence dwell around every corner; the air crackles with satanic efforts and energy. But ... we must press forward with our eyes upon God. We have not yet attained the prize.

**Philippians 3:1-21** *“1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. 3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. 4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; 6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 ¶ And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 ¶ Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us*

*mind the same thing. 17 ¶ Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.) 20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”*

We have not yet attained, my friends. While our hearts must be set firmly upon eternal and heavenly things, our hands must be diligently engaged in practical godliness and holiness. That will be our lot, until the day that we are delivered from these bodies of sin, and present with our Lord. With that in mind, we will return to our examination of the practical wisdom that our merciful Father has supplied us in Proverbs chapter 6.

In part 1 of this series:

- We considered the dangers and consequences of making foolish surety for another:
  - **Proverbs 6:1-5** *“1 ¶ My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, 2 Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth. 3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend. 4 Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids. 5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler”*
- We considered the ways of the ant, and the dangers of being a selfish, lazy, sluggard:
  - **Proverbs 6:6-11** *“6 ¶ Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: 7 Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, 8 Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. 9 How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? 10 Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: 11 So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.”*
  - Specifically, these amazing, tiny creatures instruct us to be orderly, strong, industrious, cooperative, undeterred, prepared, patient, focused, purposeful, reliable, resourceful, committed, and selfless.
  - Furthermore, they make up a superorganism, wherein selfish desires are trumped by the needs of the colony around them. This is reflective of our duty within the body of Christ: our selfish desires are trumped by the needs of the body around us.

In part 2 of this series:

- We considered the nature of the reprobate sinner:
  - **Proverbs 6:12-15** *“12 A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. 13 He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers; 14 Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord. 15 Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.”*
- We considered the sins that every one of us are prone to; those things that are an abomination to God; those things that we must actively make war against, and mortify in our vile flesh:
  - **Proverbs 6:16-19** *“16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”*

Today, we will consider the remainder of the chapter, verses 20-35:

**Proverbs 6:20-23** *“20 My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 21 Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. 22 When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. 23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:”*

- My son ...
  - The book of Proverbs is largely made up of isolated bursts of wisdom. However, the first 9 chapters contain one continuous instruction from Solomon to his son. These chapters are peppered with the phrase: “my son”. While Solomon may have written these words as a father, he is also a type of the triumphant Christ – the King of Peace - and a man endowed with godly wisdom more than any other man. The Holy Spirit gave him these words, and preserved them for our learning and admonition.
  - Here we see Solomon executing on the primary duty of every parent: preserve the heritage of the Lord. (**Psalms 127**) Teach it to our children continually, binding it upon them with our might (**Deuteronomy 6**), and with the steady determination and confidence that can only come from faith. Trust that the outcome is God’s to determine, and it will glorify Him; put our hand to the work despite the resistance of our own flesh, our children, and the satanic rebellion of society around us. Our duty as parents is to ensure that the commandment of a father and the law of a mother is in fact the commandment and law of our heavenly Father. We must keep putting our

shoulder to that plow, even as our hearts are burdened down with the crippling weight of our own sins. Consider Solomon in this regard; he lived a lavish life with 1000 wives; physical adultery that invited spiritual adultery (idolatry) into the entire kingdom. Yet, here he is teaching his son from the perspective of a man who has been instructed by bitter experience. He didn't quit the field – he stayed upon God, and continued in his duty.

- These chapters contain more than the simple instruction to obey your parents; they contain the substance of what those commands rightly should be. There are three major themes that Solomon keeps repeating throughout these chapters:
  - Fear God, seek Him, obey Him, and learn Wisdom
  - Cleave to good
  - Eschew evil
- It is a parent's never-ending duty to their children to teach these things, and to help their children to apply them practically, thereby setting straight paths for their feet. Consider these samplings from the first 5 chapters.
- **Proverbs 1:7-10** *"7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. 8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: 9 For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. 10 My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."*
- **Proverbs 1:15-17** *"15 My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path: 16 For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood. 17 Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."*
- **Proverbs 2:1-6** *"1 My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; 2 So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; 3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; 4 If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; 5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. 6 For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."*
- **Proverbs 3:1-5** *"1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: 2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: 4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding."*
- **Proverbs 3:11,12** *"11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: 12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."*

- **Proverbs 3:21,26** *“21 ¶ My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: 22 So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. 23 Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. 24 When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. 25 Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. 26 For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.”*
- **Proverbs 4:1-27** *“1 Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. 2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. 3 For I was my father’s son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. 4 He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. 5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. 6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. 7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. 8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. 9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. 10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. 11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. 12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. 13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life. 14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. 16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. 17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. 18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. 19 The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble. 20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. 24 Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. 25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. 26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. 27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.”*
- **Proverbs 5:1-9** *“1 My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: 2 That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. 3 For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her*

*mouth is smoother than oil: 4 But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. 5 Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. 6 Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, that thou canst not know them. 7 Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. 8 Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house: 9 Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:"*

- Bind them on your heart; Tie them about your neck
  - **Spurgeon:** *"The law of God should be so dear to us, that it should be bound about the most vital organ of our being, braided about our heart. That which a man carries in his hand he may forget and lose, that which he wears upon his person may be torn from him, but that which is bound about his heart will remain there as long as life remains. We are to love the Word of God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; with the full force of our nature we are to embrace it; all our warmest affections are to be bound up with it. When the wise man tells us, also, to wear it about our necks, he means that we are never to be ashamed of it. No blush is to mantle our cheek when we are called Christians; we are never to speak with bated breath in any company concerning the things of God. Manfully must we take up the cross of Christ; cheerfully must we avow ourselves to belong to those who have respect unto the divine testimonies. Let us count true religion to be our highest ornament; and, as magistrates put upon them their gold chains, and think themselves adorned thereby, so let us tie about our neck the commands and the gospel of the Lord our God."*
- Father and Mother
  - Why specifically call out both parents? The husband is the head of his house, and is to rule it well. His commandment is the rule of his house. A wife is supposed to guide the house daily in alignment with that rule. So why call out both?
  - In a practical sense, children are apt to try to browbeat and manipulate their mothers, or to be disrespectful to them. "I'm good to follow Dad's instruction in the broad strokes, but Mom is an overreaching harpy that's trying to dictate the affairs of my life". Shut up and submit yourself! Here Solomon is highlighting her blessed role, and the authority that she carries. She is to be honored and obeyed.
  - Further, consider the antitype of father and mother: Christ and his Bride, the Church. Christ is the Lawgiver; His rule is the church's commandment. We each play the role of mother and children from moment to moment in our days. As His Church, we are to guide according to His commandment. As the children of the church, we are to submit ourselves to her. It will never do to

say: “I’m good with God’s commandments, but the church is an overreaching harpy trying to dictate the affairs of my life”, and therefore believe that we can stand aloof from her, in our own integrity.

- Law and Commandments
  - These are restrictive words; issuing laws and commands implies the appropriate use of authority. The human heart, further agitated by Satan’s hissing, despises authority, and seeks to overthrow every form of it. It must not be so among the servants of God. We must use the authority that God gives us, with zeal and faith. If we shy away from that, then we are conformed to the world, and we will find ourselves where Eli did: “*For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.*” (**1Samuel 3:13**) Restraining our children to obedience, in the measure that we are able, does not remotely guarantee that they will be saved, or that they will even obey; but it brings us the peace of God that will only be found in **our** obedience.
- Practical warnings for parents and children:
  - Parents have natural affection for their children; we want to make our children happy. How often do we let our natural affection turn to inordinate affection, whereby we move away from the clear lines of God’s instruction – and even our own previous instruction – to accommodate a mewling child. Mewling, whining, persistent, crafty, manipulative, aggressive, cruel, accusatory, forensic, condescending, strategic, pitiful – there are countless stratagems humans employ to try to overcome the command of their father, and the law of their mother! The irony is that even if we can get a parent (or any authority figure) to walk back their command, and get on board with our nonsense, we are still bound in the eyes of God! Children bring out a protectiveness in their parents that cause us to quickly see them as the victim, such that we leap to defend them. Victim of circumstance, of misunderstanding, of unfairness, of hypocrisy, of someone’s harsh gaze, etc. 99% of the time, what they need is clear scriptural correction from us, with straight, unyielding paths for their feet; how often do we do them damage in the name of kindness and comfort? How often do we frustrate and distress the souls of our fellow laborers by displaying plainly that we cannot look past our affections and our fears to see that a person is trying to provide spiritual and scriptural help; to provide perspective that we are lacking. Rather than warding off, we ought to be inviting in that kind of perspective with absolute joy that the Lord has given us friends with a heart of faith, and a willingness to watch and provoke. You can’t just say that you want friends like that – you must show that you do.

- One particular strategy that children can employ, especially when they are older: accuse their parents of sin, thereby casting off their authority. For example, how easy would it be for Solomon's son to laugh in his face when Solomon warns about these issues of sexual immorality? In the face of such accusation, how easy is it for a parent to lose confidence, and capitulate the standard of God? Both the accusation and the capitulation are deadly.
  - **Proverbs 30:11-14, 17** *"11 There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. 12 There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. 13 There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. 14 There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men. ... 17 The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."*
- Lastly, I want to identify a danger for parents. The human heart is selfish. Our focus generally starts with how we feel, and how we have been personally impacted by someone. The human heart is myopic, and likes to revise history to favor a view where we are the victim, and someone else is the oppressor. As such, it is easy for us to slip into a mode where we are defining our approach to parenting in these terms: "I will never ...", or "Never again ...". For example: "I will never do xxxxx to my child, like my parents did". I am asking you all to remove that from your vocabulary, and your heart. I'm not talking semantics; I'm talking about basing my approach on how someone made me feel; how they impacted me; how they did "damage" to me, etc. Now we're operating in the land of feelings, not practical godliness.
  - First, it is a supremely proud view, especially when it comes to parents. Just wait until you are in their shoes, and understand their circumstances, stresses, fears, etc. About the time you are in their role, you will come to rue the day that you lightly esteemed them.
  - More importantly: it is the wrong framing; it is creating a standard that is separate from the standard of God. It is a self-willed standard, a self-righteous standard, wherein we are trying to solve the awful flesh, with the devices of that same awful flesh. Often there is a scriptural standard that overlaps with our "I will never" standard, but as time passes and circumstances change, the scriptural standard, and the "I will never" standard will absolutely diverge from each other. Now we are left with a standard that is not founded on God; my friends, that is an idol. If we create those idols – with the very best of intentions – then



God will bring about circumstances that will force us to bow to them. Forget those things which are behind, my friends. Chart your path on the affirmative: I will purpose to follow after the commandments of God, seeking the Holy Spirit to lead me daily in Truth. I will keep assessing and challenging myself on these matters, and when I find my path to be out of line with God's standards, I will return to the plumbline. If we frame from the emotional "I will never" foundation, then we find ourselves ultra focused on avoiding one thing, while we leave ourselves severely vulnerable to other things. For example: if I base my approach toward my children on avoiding hardness, then I leave the door wide open to all of the sins of permissiveness.

**Proverbs 6:24-35** *"24 To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. 25 Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. 26 For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. 27 Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? 28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? 29 So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. 30 Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; 31 But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. 32 But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. 33 A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. 34 For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. 35 He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts."*

- As we well know, adultery is a ruinous sin. Adultery destroys body, soul, family, society, etc. It is violence that hits at the very heart of the human creation, because it assaults marriage, the visible institution that reflects God's relationship with man. (**Malachi 2**) We well know that fact, and preach it continually to our adulterous generation. Given that, I won't say more on physical adultery in this sermon.
- I want to focus on the broader lesson being taught here. Spiritual adultery – idolatry - is every bit as destructive as physical adultery. It will ruin you, body and soul, and will bring the wrath of God upon you. Solomon's physical adultery brought with it a flood of idolatry that washed over all of Israel, and they are still paying the price. Their offended husband has been, and will be, avenged. We have to see that lesson clearly, and strive against the idols that constantly allure our eyes, and seek to take root in our hearts, pulling us away from Christ our beloved and betrothed husband. James 4 teaches us this same lesson:
  - **James 4:4-10** *"4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world*

*is the enemy of God. 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? 6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”*

- We must not be puffed up in self-righteous pride, thinking that this is a sin for someone else. This sin easily besets every one of us; it is a constant threat prowling around in our hearts. Every single thing that exists in this created world can be turned into an idol.
- Rather than multiply words further, I created a diagram that I hope will be instructive.

**1John 5:21** *“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”*

**Matthew 6:19-24** "19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

**1 Corinthians 7:29-31**

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."



**1 John 5:19-21** "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

## Everything Under the Sun

-Vanity and Vexation of Spirit -

