



Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 18:1-9

1 Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.

2 A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.

3 When wickedness comes, contempt comes also, and with dishonor comes disgrace.

4 The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.

5 It is not good to be partial to the wicked or to deprive the righteous of justice.

6 A fool's lips walk into a fight, and his mouth invites a beating.

7 A fool's mouth is his ruin and his lips are a snare to his soul.

8 The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body.

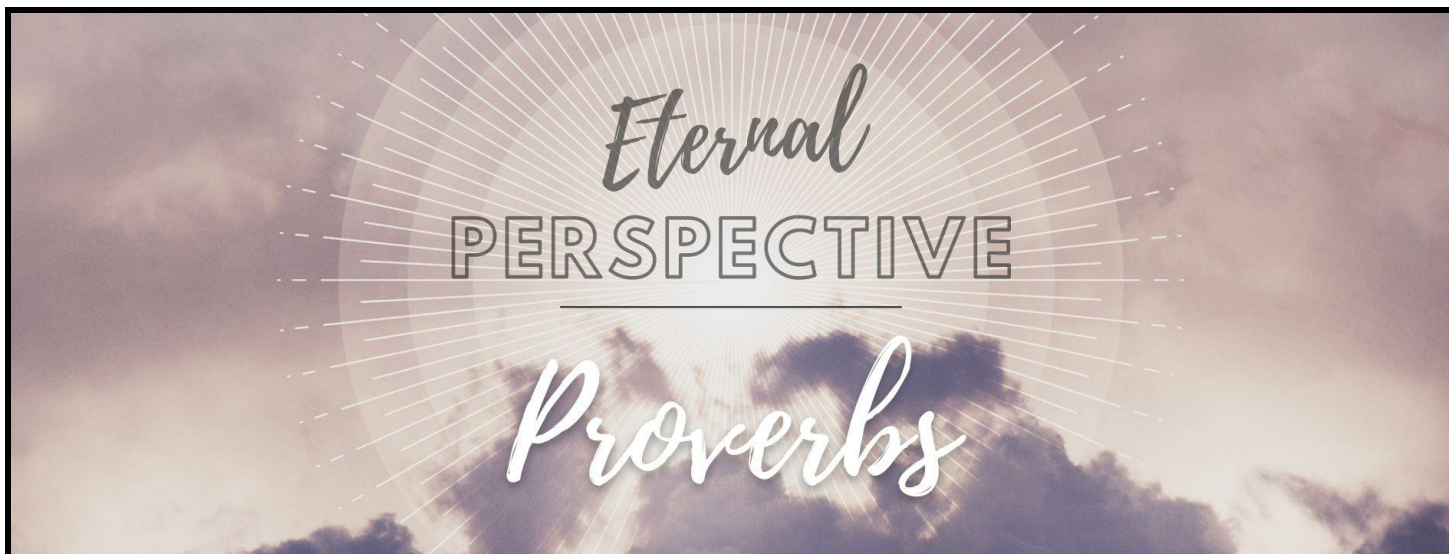
9 Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys.

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 18:1-9

AUTHOR: AMBER HARPER

If you've been around Stonepoint for any length of time, then you have heard, "Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire, he breaks out against all sound judgment" (Proverbs 18:1). This was the story of my life prior to Stonepoint.

I've always been more of an introvert. In the past, I didn't "allow" many people into my life. Thanks to Step 4 of Regen (Make a Searching and Fearless Moral Inventory of Ourselves), I found out that isolating myself came from a desire to self-protect. I was very good at putting up walls, "faking it til I made it" and trying to keep up appearances, not letting people see the real me. It was exhausting. In my late twenties, I had my first child, and postpartum depression hit me



square between the eyes. This was hands down one of the most difficult times of my life. This was supposed to be a joyous time, yet I felt robbed by this mysterious feeling I had never experienced and couldn't seem to shake. Already being an introvert, now I felt I had even more of a reason to live in isolation, because, of course, who would understand a feeling I didn't even understand? I couldn't tell anyone. I mean, what would people think of me?

I'm not the same person I was, praise the Lord!

So, what changed? Being part of a church that makes a big deal about community. And for good reason. It is Biblical! My family got plugged into a Journey Group and began living life with others. I began sharing my struggles and found healing. "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working" (James 5:16). I still have a tendency to isolate, but Scripture commands us to "Walk in the light as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7a). We are then told that, "We will have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7b). What a beautiful promise that can only come from living in community, not isolation.

Why do we isolate ourselves? We do it out of our own desire (verse 1b). Why? Pride. A selfish desire to do what we want to do and not have anyone speak wisdom into our situation gives us a sense of being our own god. I know we don't want to hear that, but let's look at verse 2 from this passage: "A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion." Wow! This is why we need to be in community, so that others will love us enough to tell us the truth about ourselves. In the Lord's wisdom, He created us to live in community with others. When we isolate ourselves, we are going against God's very provision for us: His people. If like me, this is your story, can I encourage you to step out into the light and ask the Lord for trusted individuals with whom you can be open and honest? He is faithful to do abundantly more than we could ever ask or imagine.

Questions:

1. What is one way you can seek to deepen relationships with others today?
2. If you have been living in isolation, would you pray and consider joining our [Regeneration](#) ministry where you can find healing through community? Open enrollment begins August 21st.
3. Ask the Lord to help you step out in faith and to give you courage to be fully known within community at Stonepoint. Not in community? Join us for [Grouplink](#) on September 10th. There is so much freedom and healing in being fully known.