

PROVERBS:
FAMILY MATTERS

Monday, April 20

Reading: Proverbs 19:13-27

Proverbs 19:18 Discipline your children, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to their death.

Family matters! This phrase could mean two different things. One, it could be discussing the matters or issues of family life. Two, it could mean that family is important. It counts for something. Both statements are true when it comes to Proverbs. Chapter 19 will give us more advice for raising a godly family.

ADVICE FOR A HEALTHY MARRIAGE – Solomon has already stated that a good wife is a blessing from the Lord (18:22). Now he gives two examples: one bad and one good. The “quarrelsome wife” is compared to a leaky roof (19:13). The small consistent drip from a roof can drive you crazy. And if it is not dealt with the leak will cause greater damage and eventually destroy the house. So a husband and wife who do not get along can cause permanent damage to the family. In contrast, the “prudent wife” is a gift from God (19:14). She is better than any inheritance a child could receive from their parents. A godly family begins with godly parents; parents who love each other and work together to establish God’s best for their family.

ADVICE FOR RAISING CHILDREN – Solomon mentions a few areas where children need to be trained in the wisdom of God. They need to be taught good work habits (19:15) so they do not become lazy and cannot support themselves. They need to be taught to obey the Lord (19:16) so that their lives do not come to ruin. Teach them not to be selfish but to think of others and help those who are in need (19:17). Children need discipline (19:18, 20). Loving parents will discipline their children to show them the right way and keep them from following the paths that lead to physical and spiritual death. Proverbs 19:19 teaches a hard lesson. It is every parent’s desire to keep their kids out of trouble. When their sinful actions (such as a bad temper) lead to serious consequences, a parent’s natural tendency is to ‘bail them out.’ But children (and adults) sometimes must learn the hard way. They must experience the consequences of their bad choices. To constantly get them off the hook is to stunt their moral growth. And you will have to “do it again” and again as they will not learn their lesson.

The goal of raising children is that they will become wise in the ways of the Lord (19:20). It is to help them travel the path of knowledge (19:27) and not bring shame to the family (19:13, 26). Children raised in “the training and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4) will have their plans aligned with the purposes of God (19:21).

We must remember that these are proverbs and not promises. Sometimes a child raised in a godly home still goes astray. They make their own choices and sometimes they are bad ones. It is the duty of godly parents to point their children to Christ and to pray for them to make the right choices. What influence do you have on your children (grandchildren, etc.)? How can God use you to help shape their lives today?