

A HEALTHY APPETITE

Monday, January 19

Reading: Proverbs 13:1-11; 22-25

Proverbs 13:25 *The righteous eat to their hearts' content, but the stomach of the wicked goes hungry.*

Several times this chapter refers to the desire of the heart. It uses words like “appetite” (13:2,4), “longing” (13:12, 19), and enjoying “good things” (13:2, 21). The desires of our heart should be to follow God’s wisdom and God’s ways. This chapter presents three areas of desire in our lives. We will look at the first and last area today.

APPETITE FOR WORK & WEALTH (13:1-11) –These proverbs tell us we need to humbly listen to and learn from instruction (13:1, 10). We need to make sure what we say and do is right (13:3, 5-6). These two points remind us of James’ words in the New Testament, “Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry” (James 1:19). Just like physical fruit, we must cultivate good things and desire to build others up instead of tearing them down (13:2). The wrong approach is to want results without work, fruit without labor, and success without discipline (13:4). To be a person of integrity we must not pretend to be something we are not. Some may be rich materially but poor spiritually. Others may not have much materially but have a wealth of spiritual riches (13:6-8). The desire to get wealth quickly can easily lead to dishonest methods. But working and saving little by little makes us appreciate what we have been given (13:11). Wealth is not measured by how much we have, but by how we use it! What is the driving force in your work life? What role does money play in your desires? Are you a shining light for others to follow (13:9) or are you a stench in their nostrils (13:5)?

APPETITE FOR HOME (13:22-25) – We all want our homes to please God. Proverbs gives us a lot of sound advice on how to do this.

(1) Build Strong Relationships (12:4): This verse says, “A wife of noble character is her husband’s crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones.” This principle applies to both husband and wife. They should build a strong relationship of honor and love for one another (See also Proverbs 14:1).

(2) Leave a Legacy (13:22): A good person leaves behind something for the next generations. As with many of the proverbs, this seems to be talking about more than just a material inheritance. There is a spiritual legacy that we leave for the generations to come! What legacy do you desire to leave for the generations to come?

(3) Fight Injustice (13:23): This verse reminds us that even though we may be diligent and work hard, injustice can steal away the benefits. Exploitation, selfishness, and hardheartedness are evils that we need to stand up against!

(4) Discipline Your Children (13:24-25): Just as the Lord disciplines those He loves (Proverbs 3:11-12; Hebrews 12:4-13), so good parents discipline their children so they desire to learn the right path – God’s path. We do this through loving correction, instruction, and being a living example before them.

“To give a child right desires is to invest in that child’s future satisfaction with life. To teach or imply that the essence of life is to get all you can, do all you can do, live for only yourself, and look out for number one, sets that child up for a continual attitude of dissatisfaction. Imparting right desires will result in a child ‘eating’ to the satisfying of his soul.” ¹

¹ A. J. Higgins. What the Bible Teaches: Proverbs (Ritchie Old Testament Commentaries), p 153