

HEART CONDITION

Saturday, January 24

Reading: Proverbs 15

Proverbs 15:14 *The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of a fool feeds on folly.*

Two key words in Proverbs 15 are “heart” and the “tongue/lips”. It reminds us that the things we say and do spring from our hearts. Jesus said, “A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of” (Luke 6:45). “It is not merely guarding our tongues, but it is having our hearts in the right condition so that out of their treasure comes only what is good.”¹

HEART FOR KNOWLEDGE – When we seek God’s wisdom our speech will be full of knowledge. It will be able to defuse a potentially volatile situation (15:1). It also is able to communicate wisdom and knowledge to others (15:2, 7). A “discerning heart seeks knowledge” but a fool “feeds on folly” (15:14). To “feed” is a term used for sheep grazing in the field. There is a contrast here between the one who actively seeks for God’s truth and the one who simply ‘eats whatever is around.’ Those who long for God’s wisdom will have a “cheerful heart [that] has a continual feast” (15:15). Feeding our minds the right things is just as important as what we feed our bodies. What we read, watch, and listen to are all part of our mental diet. They all influence our spiritual health. Are you pursuing the knowledge of God or grazing on the things of the world?

HEART FOR HEALING – Words spoken from the heart should bring healing and comfort, not pain and affliction (15:4). Circumstances should not determine how we view things, but the attitude of our heart (15:13). Verse 15 reinforces this truth. “Happiness and depression are issues of the heart. What a person is inwardly has more lasting impact on his emotional state than do his circumstances. Some people hold up under difficult circumstances better than others because of inner strength.”² People with a heart of healing do not need worldly wealth and prosperity but are satisfied with reverence and love for the Lord (15:16-17). They do not overreact to circumstances but patiently handle them as they come (15:18). They do not make excuses that block their path to godly living but instead stay on the smooth “highway” of God’s Word (15:19, 24). They are careful to think before they speak so that their words “say the best thing in the best way, and at the best time” (15:28).³

HEART FOR DISCIPLINE – The importance of learning from godly discipline is a major theme throughout Proverbs. The foolish reject wise council (15:5) and do not even like to be around wise people who may try to correct them (15:12). But a righteous person accepts “life-giving correction” and is “at home among the wise” (15:31). To reject godly wisdom will bring self-destruction and ruin (15:10, 32).

HEART FULL OF JOY – While a fool finds fleeting joy in his folly (15:21), those who follow God’s wisdom find joy in sharing godly words with others (15:22-23). Joy is contagious and good news brings light to both face and body (15:30). “The joy of the Lord is your strength” (Nehemiah 8:10).

¹ A. J. Higgins. What the Bible Teaches: Proverbs (Ritchie Old Testament Commentaries), p 167

² Sid S. Buzzell. The Bible Knowledge Commentary – Proverbs, p. 938

³ Higgins, 175