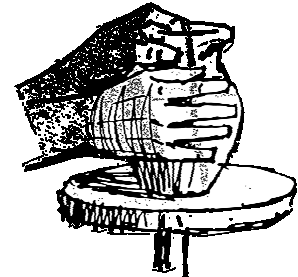


His Workmanship Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

Four Proverbs: Sluggards, Words, Rebuke, Abomination, by Steve Wallace

Two Men and Their Opportunities. *"The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns; but the path of the upright is made a highway,"* Pr 15:19; see also Pr 24:30-34. This proverb shows that "Life is what you make it." It portrays men with opportunity both to prosper and serve God. However, each viewed his opportunities differently. This came from the kind of men they were.

The sluggard is slothful and lazy. He has a preference for doing as little as possible. This has an effect on how he views everything he encounters. Every task is seen to be difficult. He sees every mole-hill as a mountain and every crack a chasm. Hence, he finds every possible excuse to justify inactivity. *"The sluggard will not plow by reason of the winter,"* Pr 20:4. Even the energy needed to leave his house is spared because, *"the sluggard says, 'There is a lion outside; I will be slain in the streets,'"* Pr 22:13. It is pointless to reason with him, because, *"The lazy man is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who can answer sensibly,"* Pr 26:16. The "hedge of thorns" is in the mind of the sluggard and is an obstacle of his own making. However, the hedge eventually becomes a reality. *"Difficulties imagined are apt to arrive. Duty neglected today will have to be*

done some time or other; and the arrears of neglected service are grim debts," Charles Spurgeon. The sluggard is justly contrasted with the "upright." He cannot be a righteous man because his laziness leads him to neglect. A person cannot neglect his responsibilities before God or man and yet be righteous, Jdg 5:23; Neh 3:5; Pr 21:13; Heb 2:3; Jas 4:17. Remember, Jesus spoke of the neglectful, one-talent man as wicked, lazy, and unprofitable, Mt 25:26, 30. Laziness has implications for both our physical and spiritual lives.

The upright man sees things quite differently from the sluggard. Why is this so? We find an answer in the parable of the talents. Having been given talents by the master, two of the servants immediately set to work and doubled the amount of talents their master had given them. The master twice called both of them "faithful," Mt 25:21,23. This is a key to understanding why they acted as they did. They obviously believed their master would reward them and acted loyally to please him—they were faithful stewards, cf. 1 Cor 4:2. As a result, they were diligent instead of lazy. Further, notice the words of Caleb in his disagreement with the ten spies, who con-

tended that Israel could not capture the promised land: *"Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it,"* Num 13:30. Caleb believed God's land promise oft-repeated over the centuries to His people, Gen 12:7; 15:8; 50:24; Ex 6:8; Deut 31:20. *"The path of the upright is made a highway"* because of his faith and trust in God, which causes him to see beyond any obstacles in his path, and because of his desire to be faithful to God. His view of what lies before him shapes his path, making it as easy as a highway. Indeed, *"The way of Jehovah is a stronghold to the upright,"* Pr 10:29. We all have opportunities before us both physically and spiritually. How do you see yours? Just as important, why do you see them that way? Are you upright or sluggish in your world view?

Words to Help the Whole Man.

"Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones," Pr 16:24. God's word is *"Sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb,"* Ps 19:10. Jesus's words to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus made their hearts burn within them, Lk 24:13-22. Philip's inspired words led to the Ethiopian's rejoicing, and Paul's words to his weary ship-

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“Receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity.” —Prov 1:2

mates were sweet and healthy to them, Ax 8:35-39; 27:33-36. The words of God have good effect on whoever will receive them.

What about pleasant words from mere men? Pleasant words are commended. Their blessings are twofold: (1) they are sweet to the soul, as honey is sweet, Jdg 14:14, and health to the bones. Bones here are the inward person, "a synonym for the whole person" (TDOT, XI, 307-308; cf. Pr 3:8; 14:30; 15:30). Health speaks of the "therapeutic effect of wise words" (TDOT, XIII, 599). Thus, pleasant words "revive the drooping spirit, and strengthen the feeble knees," Lawson, Exposition of the Book of Proverbs, 380.

What falls under the heading of "pleasant words"? We must be cautious, because some seemingly pleasant words appeal to the worst sides of men, such as pride and lust. A flattering mouth may lift us up to our own destruction, Pr 26:28. Likewise, "the lips of a strange woman drop honey...but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword," Pr 5:3-4. But usually pleasant words do good. Pleasant words are pure, Pr 15:26; Jas 3:17. Good words seek peace, 1 Pet 3:11; Pr 12:20; cf. 1 Sam 25:23-25. "The tongue of the wise is health," Pr 12:18; "a faithful ambassador is health," Pr 13:17; and "good tidings make the bones fat," Pr 15:30. "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious," Eccl 10:12. "Oil and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend that cometh of hearty counsel," Pr 27:9. Words have power, and pleasant words have a power all their own. Are such words a neglected part of your vocabulary? Remember the words of God that are comforting and soothing. "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the

need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear," Eph 4:29.

Receiving Rebuke. "Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool," Pr 17:10. Rebuke, reproof, and the rod each aid in correction and reformation, cf. 2 Sam 12:7-13; Mk 6:18; 2 Tim 3:16-17; Pr 20:30. Use of the rod will depend on how rebuke/reproof are received. Rebuke is used first. The King James version, "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool," implies that rebuke will not even begin to "enter" into the fool. After all, the aim

"Folly delights him who is destitute of discernment, but a man of understanding walks uprightly."
—Proverbs 15:21

of rebuke is to reform, Pr 1:23-30; to change behavior, but "it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil," Pr 13:19. When someone is so thoroughly in love with his own poor judgment that he can conceive of no one more capable than himself, rebuke is unlikely to help him. By contrast, spanking and punishment (stripes, use of the rod) are not needed by someone who has understanding. A simple rebuke penetrates deeply. The word *understanding* is important in Proverbs, because it appears more than thirty times. Why would a person with understanding be open to rebuke? "The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge...," 15:14. "The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge...," 18:15; 13:1, 18. Knowledge is important to someone who has understanding, cf. 9:8,10; 17:27, and rebuke is a way of receiving it, cf. 15:32; "rebuke one who has understanding, and he will discern knowledge." 19:25. This is because "the prudent man looks well to his going [considers well his steps]," 14:15. He knows there is a

right way and a wrong way and is careful to do what is right, cf. 1:5; 2:2; 3:5, 13; 4:1, 5, 7; 5:1; 6:32; 7:4, 7; 9:6; 10:13, 23; 11:12; 12:11; 13:15; 14:29, 33; 15:21; 16:16, 22; 17:18, 24, 27; 18:2; 19:8; 20:5; 21:16; 23:4, 23; 24:3; 28:2, 11, 16.

We must infer from Pr 17:10 that the wise and the fool demand different degrees of effort. One is easily corrected, while the other is still a fool after 100 stripes. Patience, therefore, is needed when seeking to reform a fool. He is hard headed, so slow progress must be expected. We may glean several lessons: (1) Rebuke and spanking, though not pleasant and often neglected, are necessary tools of reform and correction. (2) It is wise for us to have a tender, truth-seeking heart which is open to rebuke, lest we behave like a fool. (3) While society may not allow the punishment (stripes) that fools need, our proverb certainly implies that we must make a difference according to the dispositions of people and adjust our speech and actions accordingly, Col 4:6; Jude 22-23. (4) Parents should recognize that Pr 17:10 is speaking about a grown, established fool, while Pr 22:15 is speaking about a child with some foolishness in his heart (folly that may be corrected), cf. 29:15. Many stripes have little effect on the established fool, while spanking can help a child grow in wisdom. Our text implies the importance of reformation of character. Are you continually trying to become wiser? Do you pray for wisdom, Jas 1:5-8? Do you receive needed rebuke with thanksgiving and appreciation? Are you behaving like a wise person or a fool?

Alike—Justify and Condemn. "He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to Jehovah," Pr 17:15.

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Psalm 133:1

Let your faith be seen in 2014
 "I rejoice to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."
 —Colossians 2:5

Four Proverbs, from p. 2

This proverb corrects the popular that it is better to set free ten guilty men than to condemn one innocent person. But "both are an abomination to the Lord." When we turn from His ways to the right or to the left, we rebel against God, Deut 5:32; 17:11. Both justifying and condemning go together. Israel practiced both: "Woe unto them ... that justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him," Is 5:22-23. Despite God's warning, they turned God's order upside-down: "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" 5:20. The Lord had warned against both of these sins: "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, and the judges judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked," Deut 25:1. Yet we persist in this twisted thinking. How might such a situation come about? Justifying the wicked can seem to be mercy to those emotionally tied to the wicked, which may be a reason for

Discipleship Here At Home

the Lord warning judges not to show pity to the guilty, Deut 19:18-21; that text gives two stated purposes for punishing the wicked: (1) "so you shall put away the evil from your midst, and" (2) "those who remain shall hear, and fear, and no longer commit any such evil in your midst," vs. 19-20. Justifying the wicked would thwart both purposes. When we tolerate instead of condemning it, defenders of evil may find it necessary to resist or even harm the righteous who protest evil, cf. Jer. 26:20-23; Mat. 23:34; Mk. 6:17-18. Both of these alike are an abomination before God. Not only judges might be guilty of these sins. Witnesses (and today lawyers and juries) often pervert justice, 1 Kg 21:9-13; Mt 26:59. Indeed, Israel was warned against allowing pity to cause them to pervert justice, Deut 13:8-10. Both calling evil good and calling good evil are wrong in all cases and for everyone, not just in courtrooms. Pity is an emotion that might lead us to justify the wicked. Passions and feelings behind falsely justifying or wrongly condemning are anger, Ax 19:23-34; envy, Mt. 27:18; prejudice, Ax 16:20-23; partiality and bias, 1 Tim. 5:21; partisanship, Jn 7:45-49, etc. However, matters of sin and righteousness are not to be decided on the basis of mere human feelings. God loves justice (righteousness) and hates injustice and iniquity, Ps. 45:7; Heb. 1:9. We must accept that both perversions are alike and not let our allegiances or emotions cause us to sin in either direction—neither take the side of wrongdoing nor condemn withstanding error. It isn't who but what is condemned. Bereaved Bemey's mother, Ninfa Charo, passed away Thursday morning. Bemey and Anita drove to El Paso for the funeral. Job concerns Linda Szymanski Travel Corrays and K. Boyds are out of town. The Parsons are in KS; Sarah Hadders and kids in KY; Gintchins visit-ing family in Bulgaria; Lazar will join them in 3 weeks but out of town weekends until then.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Larry Campbell—recovering from concussion
Mark Campbell—at Pat's and Larry's from ER recovering from seizure
Sarah Hadders—broken foot
Ed Fink—prostate cancer; current treatment for brain tumors; **PRAISE:** improved blood count
Nell Free—anemic and dehydrated; some valve leakage in her heart her doc is tracking
Giles Free—seizure last month; confined at home
Sue Witherington, Brett's grandmother—breast cancer has returned
Shirley Barrett, Rod Green's mother—home from hospital for respiratory ailments
Nick Krausert, Szymanskis' friend—hospice; pray for Nick and his wife Linda.
Kory Tope's uncle Kurt Schulz—successful angioplasty last Monday
Amy Vander Kooi's mother, Sherry Graves—hospital in TN with blood clots after broken hip
Rhonda Love, friend of Judy Strand—terminal cancer; young mother studying with Jim & Vicki
Paul Hendrickson, a coworker of Joel Walker and Gregg Geis—quintuple bypass recovery
Gregg Geis's friend Becky in CA—terminal cancer; searching for the truth
Forrest Corray, Jordan's brother—addiction
Randy Reames's mother, Una, in her 80s—cancerous colon tumor removed recently
Sandra Perry's ex brother-in-law, George Rupinen—terminal cancer
Josh McDonald, friend of Kory Tope, and his daughter Casey—unwanted divorce
CHRONIC CONDITIONS
Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Pat Wilkes—asthma
Bill Dennis—heart issues
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease
Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome
Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs quick meals to heat up, like soup
Menards—aging; Lloyd, diabetes, weak; Virginia, macular degeneration; high BP
Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes
Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain
Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; arthritis
Judy and Mike Strand—both beginning treatment for hepatitis
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 23-25
 9:15-11:45 am

God Knows About Water

Monday—Noah and the Flood
 Tuesday—Crossing the Red Sea
 Wednesday—Jonah and the Fish

Register at www.thechurchingolden.com/beliefs/westside-vbs or see Tracy Corray or Kim Howell for information





Exposing current thoughts & trends

(Sex) Change We Can Believe In? by Tony Perkins

Taxpayer-funded sex changes: They aren't just for traitors and illegal immigrants anymore. Last weekend, the Department of Health and Human Services quietly tried to disguise the reversal of a 33-year-old taxpayer-funded coverage ban on gender reassignment surgery. Every week, the competition for "most scandalous Obama-administration decision" gets stiffer, as evidenced by this story of taxpayer-sponsored genital reconstruction—which, if not for a 48-hour news cycle that saw the resignation of the VA chief and the potentially illegal release of five top Taliban terrorists, would be front-page news. It's another sign of an administration wildly out of control—and out of excuses—for its taxpayer-funded extremism.

HHS has ruled that it's "no longer reasonable" to expect older Americans to pay for their own sexual reassignments. Instead, it now recognizes the surgery as a "medically necessary" and "effective" treatment for people who can't come to grips with their own biological sex. Denee Mallon, a 74-year-old Army veteran who was the driving force behind the change, sued HHS—which, according to estimates, could run as much as \$50,000 a procedure. (And we wonder why America is more than \$17 trillion in debt?)

The policy, which private insurers are certain to imitate, gives patients the right to petition Medicare to cover their operations. Despite sky-high costs and an even higher controversy quotient, the Obama administration believes it's the taxpayers' responsibility to cover an elective body enhancement that might only elevate the mental and physical risks for people suffering from gender confusion. If the government will pay for this, why not plastic surgery for people who don't feel as old as their age? As if people couldn't be more disgusted, the double standard remains. The Bible teaches us to learn to be content in whatever state we are, Phil 4:11; "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made," Ps 139:14.

While President Obama is busy forcing taxpayers to finance senior sex changes, wounded veterans are dying for lack of medical care—a snapshot of this administration's priorities. Worse, this paves the way for gender reassignment surgeries to be a routinely covered benefit—like abortion. This is exactly what people warned about when ObamaCare (Patient Affordable Care Act) was passed. In its 2,000-plus pages, there are literally 4,156 issues left to the administration's discretion. (Or indiscretion, as this case suggests.) People are realizing—too late—that those issues include outrages like contraception mandates and politically correct surgeries that no Congress would approve. That's why the health care law is so dangerous. It empowers the government to practice politics—instead of empowering doctors to practice medicine. Americans are free to disfigure their bodies, but they should not be free to ask taxpayers to foot their bill.



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Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning:

- **Adult Bible class, *Inside Out, Growing a Spirit of Service*, Lesson 8,**
"An Encouraging Spirit," DeWayne Howell

- **Sermon, "What Is Worship?"**

Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon:

- **Meeting with elders**
Deacons' meeting after assembly

Wednesday adult class for June:

Jeremiah and Lamentations: Warnings

This week: Jeremiah 45-52