

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 168 – Eating With A Ruler Through Applying The Heart (Proverbs 23:1-12)

1. Do we need to be cautious when sitting at a meal with a person in authority?

Yes: *“(1) When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: (2) And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. (3) Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat” (Proverbs 23:1-3).*

- We cannot be given to appetite (**Proverbs 23:21** and **Proverbs 25:16**) or any thing else carnal (**Matthew 8:8-9**, **Romans 8:13**, **II Corinthians 7:1**, **Galatians 5:16-17**, and **I Peter 2:11**), but must practice self-control (**Proverbs 16:32**, **I Corinthians 9:27**, **Galatians 5:22-23**, and **II Peter 1:3-11**).
- Dainties [delicacy; savory meats] should not be our focus in life to even allow them to become a temptation (**John 6:26-27**; cf. **Matthew 4:4**).
- We’re supposed to put off the old man with deceitful lusts (**Ephesians 4:22**).
- We’ll discuss more about desiring his dainties because they’re deceitful in question 5.

2. Should we work hard to be rich?

No: *“Labour not to be rich...” (Proverbs 23:4).*

- Working, just to be rich, provides many possible temptations (cf. **Proverbs 28:20**).
- Once wealth becomes our goal, and we do things wrong to obtain it, it will be diminished (**Proverbs 13:11**).
- Quick riches are good riches either (**Proverbs 20:21**).
- We need contentment (**Philippians 4:10-13**).
- Our labor should be to provide for our needs (**II Thessalonians 3:10**), the needs of our family (**I Timothy 5:8**), and the work of the Lord (**Matthew 6:19-21**).
- Having said that, we certainly can enjoy the fruit of our labor in lawful things that we may want (**Ecclesiastes 2:24** and **I Timothy 6:17**), but those things should not be our motivation (**I Timothy 6:6-10**).

3. Should we trust in our own wisdom?

No: *“...cease from thine own wisdom” (Proverbs 23:4).*

- **Proverbs 3:5-7**, **Isaiah 5:21**, **Romans 12:16**, and **I Corinthians 3:18-20**.

4. Is earthly wealth permanent?

No: *“Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven” (Proverbs 23:5).*

- Don’t set your eyes on earthly wealth (**Psalms 119:36-37**).
- Riches are temporary (**Psalms 49:10**, **Proverbs 27:24**, **Ecclesiastes 5:13-14**, and **Luke 12:13-21**).

5. Are there people who will act kindly toward us, but their hearts may be against us?

Yes: *"(6) Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: (7) For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. (8) The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words"* (**Proverbs 23:6-8**).

- What people are saying and showing us, can very easily differ from their real motives (**Psalms 5:8-9, Proverbs 10:18, Proverbs 20:19, Proverbs 26:17-28, Matthew 23:27-28,** and **Mark 7:6**).
- *"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going"* (**Proverbs 14:15**).

6. Can we expect a fool to learn wisdom if we share it with him or her?

No: *"Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words"* (**Proverbs 23:9**).

- **Proverbs 9:7-8, Matthew 7:6, Galatians 4:16, II Timothy 2:23, and Titus 3:9-11.**

7. Is God concerned about rightful ownership of land?

Yes: *"(10) Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: (11) For their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee"* (**Proverbs 23:10-11**).

- We discussed the landmarks in **Proverbs 22:28**. They were not to be moved (**Deuteronomy 19:14; 27:17**).
- The fatherless have been targets of the wicked (**Psalms 94:6**).
- God has long instructed man not to wrong the fatherless (**Zechariah 7:10**).
- God will plead the cause of the weak who are wronged (**Exodus 22:22-24**).

8. What should we apply our hearts and ears to?

Instruction and knowledge: *"Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge"* (**Proverbs 23:12**).

- Apply your heart to instruction [be willing to be taught] (**Proverbs 4:13, Proverbs 5:23, Proverbs 6:23, Proverbs 8:33, Proverbs 10:17, Proverbs 15:32-33, Proverbs 23:23,** and **II Timothy 3:15-17**).
- Give your ears to the words of knowledge (**Proverbs 18:15, Proverbs 22:17, Colossians 3:10,** and **I Timothy 2:4**).