

Proverbs with a Purpose

Parenting

What does 22:6 say our responsibilities are in parenting?

Read this again and place emphasis on the word *he*. What would this suggest about knowing our child(ren)?

Now read 22:6 and place emphasis on the word *should*. What does this suggest about knowing what is behind our instruction?

What does 22:15 imply our children would be like without discipline? What is the function of discipline? Do parents have discretion on the means of discipline? Is the rod always spanking?

Read 13:24; 19:18. Note 13:24 says careful to discipline him. While we may not perfectly discipline our children, we are told to diligently discipline them. In other words, don't be lazy in parenting! Is there any behavior you allow your children to engage in that should be disciplined?

Communication

Read 15:1, 23. Our response has either a negative or positive impact on others. In the matrix of relationships you are involved in (family, friends, coworkers, clerks, etc. . .), which is easiest to compromise your reactions? Why is this relationship easy to compromise in?

Read 15:2, 14; James 1:19, 26. In your interaction with others, when are you most likely to speak before you think? Just how much folly does gush from your mouth?

Read 17:14, 28; Ecc 3:1, 7b. How often have you played teacher or counselor to your wife or children and they didn't seem to listen? Has your anger ever prompted you to continue arguing about a matter when your mind says "turn it off?" Have you kept silent at work or at home when you should have spoken? Who does God say should control us at all times in Eph 5:18? Are you listening to Him when He speaks?

Read 18:2, 13. When your wife is talking to you do you listen with understanding? Ask your wife if she feels you are understanding of her.

Read 1 Pt 3:7. Regardless of what the weaker partner means, Peter says the effectiveness of your prayer life is directly related to how well you understand your wife and honor her.

So concerned is God that Christian husbands live in an understanding and loving way with their wives, that he "interrupts" his relationship with them when they are not doing so. No Christian husband should presume to think that any spiritual good will be accomplished by his life without an effective ministry of prayer. And no husband may expect an effective prayer life unless he lives with his wife "in an understanding way, bestowing honor" on her. To take the time to develop and maintain a good marriage is God's will; it is serving God; it is a spiritual activity pleasing in his sight (Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter*).

Career Plans

Where do you plan to be in your career 5 or 10 years from now?

Read Pr 16:3, 9. These Proverbs tell us that God is at the helm of our lives? How does your life reflect the fact that God is behind your career? Do coworkers see your dependence on God's control in your life? How can you improve in this area?

Read Pr 27:1; Jam 4:13-16. James tells us that these businessmen know where they will go; when they will go; that they should go; how long they will be there; and even their certainty of profit. Is James criticizing the desire to make a profit? What does James criticize? Has this been difficult for you?

Read Ps 39:4-6. Describe the psalmist's heart before God in relation to the significance of his own endeavors. What is your understanding regarding the significance of your career endeavors?

Read Pr 20:24; Lk 12:13-21. What is Jesus warning against? In what tangible ways are you seeking to be rich toward God at your job?

Read Pr 16:16. Much time and energy goes into our careers so we can be fulfilled in our work and be relatively comfortable when we're old. How much time do you spend getting wisdom & understanding?

Read Pr 22:1. Is the relationship you have with your coworkers important? What kind of description would your coworkers have of you? How have you consciously worked on promoting a good name for yourself in the workplace? Does your work ethic promote the gospel life as being attractive? How can you improve on this?

How does your career affect the relationships in your home? Do your children see you enjoying your job or do they see Daddy's job as an inconvenience?