

Read: Proverbs 12**Key Verse:** Proverbs 12:26**Reflect:**

People are always watching how we carry ourselves, speak, handle situations, and how we love others. It's vital that we walk in a manner worthy of the calling that Christ has placed on our lives (Ephesians 4:1).

Often, the Bible describes Christ-followers as being righteous. Upon salvation, we receive the righteousness of God; this is not something that we earn. This form of righteousness is granted to us as a part of the justification process upon salvation. However, there is another form of righteousness for which we must continuously strive. The righteousness in Proverbs 12:26 is referring to our moral conduct. The Bible describes the righteous person as just or right, holding to God and trusting in Him (Psalm 33:18–22). A righteous life is a life that emulates and imitates Jesus.

As followers of Jesus, we need a heightened awareness that our testimony is more than just words; it encompasses all that we do! Additionally, and most importantly, this includes our actions behind closed doors. Again, people are always watching. Proverbs 12:26 says, “The righteous are a guide to their neighbor,” which includes friends, family, co-workers, and acquaintances. Therefore, we must be intentional to steer others in a direction that leads to Christ, which ultimately leads them to new life. We can do this by emulating and following Jesus in all that we do. There is too much at stake for us to be foolish in the way that we carry ourselves. Be Intentional. Be a guide. Be like Jesus.

Prayer:

“God, please help me to be like your Son Jesus in all that I do. I realize that I desperately need a Savior. I am broken and sinful, but at the foot of the cross I am healed and restored. Help me to point others to you in all things. Thank you that I am not dirty and distant but that you have declared me clean and close. I love you. Amen.”

Read: Proverbs 13**Key Verses: Proverbs 13:7–11****Reflect:**

In today's culture, appearances are everything. Keeping up with the latest trends is often seen as a key indicator of wealth and status. This constant pressure drives many families and individuals to live beyond what they can afford — all in an effort to emulate their neighbor's newest purchases. But, as the Proverbs (and our experiences) point out, things are not always as they seem. In these verses, the writer focuses us on money and possessions and its fading attractiveness.

In verses 7–8 and 11, “wealth” is specifically mentioned. The writer mentions that some pretend to appear rich - yet knows he or she has nothing. Another person is rich yet lives life as a miser. Clearly, as seen in verse 8, there are real-life complications of having great wealth! One is reminded of the rich young ruler in Luke 18 who chose his wealth over following Jesus and walked away discouraged. Ironically, by keeping his appearance of wealth, he walked away with nothing of real value. In the end, wealth will fade (v. 11) - especially the kind of hurried accumulation we are so prone to in our culture. God has designed the world so that diligence and patience give way to contentment.

So, how are we then to live? These proverbs show us that true wealth is found when we walk in the way of righteousness, balancing our lives with wisdom abounding from God Himself. When we focus on being content in Jesus, we cease to feel the pressure to keep up with the ever-changing consumerism around us. Instead of keeping up with appearances, we are now free to live authentic and balanced lives by the blessings God has provided.

Prayer:

“God, help me to walk in the way of righteousness and help me to be content in You. Free me from the pressures of materialism and consumerism. Thank You for all the blessings you have provided. Amen.”

Read: Proverbs 14

Key Verse: Proverbs 14:2

Reflect:

To walk in uprightness means that our actions, conversations, and thoughts, should be sincerely Godly, Holy, and righteous. Most people assume that this is an impossible standard. However, Jesus proved to us that this is possible throughout His life here on earth. When we choose to live in a devious or deceptive way to further our own personal agendas, we are living in a way that's displeasing to God.

As you walk throughout your day, take some time to ask yourself what parts of your life are righteous and pleasing to God and what parts are not.

Prayer:

“Lord thank you that You are a Holy and righteous God. Thank You that You sent us Your son to be an example of what our lives should look like. Show me the places in my life that are not like You and help me to change them to be like You. In Jesus Name, Amen.”

Read: Proverbs 15

Key Verse: Proverbs 15:12

Reflect:

Have you ever made a decision only to find out that it was the wrong one? Then maybe you made that same decision again weeks, months, or even years later? If only someone could have helped you through the decision the first time, you might not have done it. Right?

To be reproofed means to come under examination. Who's going to be looking? What will they see? What will they find? We're often scared of people seeing us up close because we're afraid of what they might find. Our fear is driven by an unhealthy desire for perfection and a lie that says, "if you're not perfect, God won't want you."

We've all been there. We have all failed to lay our decisions and heart on the table of reproof. We struggle to allow those close to us to speak the truth in love. Too often, pride gets in the way and we forget the grace that was ours in our weakness. Proverbs continues in chapter 15 to tell us that without counsel, plans fail, but with many advisors, they succeed.

No one likes to be told that they're wrong. It hurts and it's not fun, but it can change us. Reproof is a beautiful piece of our sanctification and an amazing tool for making us more like Jesus. Learn to appreciate the reproof of those who love you, and seek out the wise to examine what you aren't able to see yourself.

Application Questions:

1. What are some areas of your life you need help with?
2. Where could the wisdom of godly council be used in your life today?

Read: Proverbs 16**Key Verses: Proverbs 16:1–3****Reflect:**

We often tend to spend our lives flying by the seat of our pants and occasionally praying. But there is a better way. This passage shows us how to live with God at the center of our lives. We are called to do everything to the glory of God (Romans 10:31), which is what the author means when he says “Commit your work to the Lord.”

Our first step is to prepare. We cannot say we have committed our work to God if we have not prepared ourselves for the task at hand. In life, we must be diligent with our time, always preparing for what lies ahead. Scripture tells us that in whatever we do, we should work as if we were working for God. When we plan our day, get ready for that task at work, plan for our area of ministry at church, or seek to lead our family, we must prepare for them in such a way that it shows our desire to honor God.

The second step is to pray and ask God to guide us and help us. God can give us the ability to do anything He wants. Obey God by preparing and ask him to use these efforts to give Him glory.

When we commit our work to God, we can be at peace with any outcome. If we did our best in preparing and trusted God with our work, any outcome is okay because the result we get will be a result of God’s work in our life.

Prayer:

*“God, I want to commit my life and my work to You. I want to honor You in every aspect of my life. Help me find peace in every outcome and give You the glory.
In your name, I pray, Amen.”*