

MONDAY, August 31, 2009:

“Service is just a day-in, day-out, ongoing, never-ending, unremitting, persevering, compassionate type of activity.”

_Leon Gorman of L.L. Bean

Proverbs 2:7 “He stores up wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; 8 He guards the paths of justice, And preserves the way of His saints.”

This proverb shows God at work in our future. He is storing up sound wisdom for those that live upright lives and he is going before us like a shield to guard our path and preserve our way.

What this teaches us is that we are to focus on today. Worrying about getting answers for tomorrow’s problems is unproductive. Fretting about what may be up the road saps the joy and strength for our lives today. Remember, God is storing up wisdom for you. He is guarding the paths of your tomorrow. The answer is waiting on you when you get there. The protection and resources you will need will be there when you get there.

So instead of worrying about what could happen tomorrow, seek God for the wisdom that you need for today. As you do, you will discover that God is setting you up day by day for victory. He is directing your path to prepare you for the challenges of tomorrow and building in you the character to handle the many blessings that he has waiting for you.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 2:9, Psalm 84:11

TUESDAY, September 1, 2009: *“An optimist? The woman who slips her feet back into her shoes when the preacher says, ‘And finally...’”*

Proverbs 23:17 “Do not let your heart envy sinners, but *be zealous* for the fear of the LORD all the day; 18 For surely there is a hereafter, and your hope will not be cut off.”

Boy, we all need to be reminded of the truth of this proverb. Almost certainly I am writing to people who are wondering why the wicked seem to be winning and the godly suffer. But this proverb reminds us (catch this!) TO THINK LONG-TERM (“Surely there is a hereafter...”).

I think of my father-in-law, a dear and godly man. But because of Alzheimer’s his memory is cut off – but not his hope. Why? Because he chose to live a life of fearing (honoring, revering) the Lord instead of trying to be like sinners. Short term, he is going through a very tough time; but long-term, the joys of the Lord await him – for there is a hereafter!

You may be going through a very tough time right now – but there is a hereafter on the other side of your trial. Your heart may be breaking today – keep focused on the Lord – for there is a hereafter beyond this low point in your life.

Bottom line, don’t get overwhelmed with the day to day – think big picture and long-term – put your hope in God.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 31:19, Luke 1:50, Hebrews 10:35-36

WEDNESDAY, September 2, 2009:

“Leadership is inherently about effecting change in order to obtain some desired future condition that would not otherwise happen. Most people want progress as long as they do not have to change very much to get it.” _Richard Kriegabaum, Leadership Prayers

Proverbs 13:3 “He who guards his mouth preserves his life, But he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.”

The book of proverbs has a lot to say about talking, probably because we do far too much of it! Today’s proverb provides two promises. First the good news, if we will think before we speak it will save our life! Now the bad news, if we speak freely and continually, it will eventually destroy us. This is just a fact of life.

The key principle taught here, as with so much of life, is that the person that is intentional will always come out ahead of those that live for the moment.

The vital key is to understand that your life (your actions and words) makes a difference. If you allow your emotions or the immediate circumstances to cause you to say and do things without thinking it affects people. We can “blow up” – and maybe there is some justification – but the result will be that the shrapnel will wound innocent people.

But much more often than “blowing – up” is the daily barbs and cutting remarks we make. It is the little snide remarks that slowly but surely kill a person and a relationship.

I don’t know about you, but I don’t want their blood on my hands. Remember, we can spend our life preparing or repairing; the first requires guarding our mouth the second requires nothing but opening our mouth.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 39:1, Proverbs 21:23, James 3:2

THURSDAY, September 3, 2009:

“You can be right but dead right.” _Harry R. Kemp

Proverbs 20:3 “It is honorable for a man to stop striving, since any fool can start a quarrel.”

In chapter 20 Solomon has been listing things that must be handled with extreme care. First in verse one he reminded us of the dangers attached to drinking alcoholic beverages. Solomon says that the person lead astray by it is not wise. Then in verse two he mentions people in authority (kings in his day). He reminds us that to provoke them is like sinning against our own life.

Now in verse three Solomon reminds us to beware of pride. Many times our pride can cause us to get involved in things that only lead to contention and strife and even to the breakup of family and friendship. We must remember that most things are not worth striving over. Letting our pride get in the way of wise thinking can be disastrous.

Solomon reminds us that it is usually more honorable to swallow our pride and take the servant’s route and the peace-makers role. Bottom line, any fool can start a quarrel but it takes a man or woman of high character to put their personal issues aside for the betterment of all.

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 17:14, 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12