

# *Preacher's Column*

## The "Man" of Proverbs #9

As noted in our study last week, there are nine instances in which an adjective is used only once in conjunction with the word "man" in Proverbs. We looked at four of those in our previous study. This week we shall examine the other five.

Proverbs 26:21 tells us of the "contentious man". It states, "As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife." It is a companion to Verse 20 which states: "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth." These verses teach the same truth using opposite perspectives. Verse 20 teaches that, just as a fire will die without fuel, so gossip will cease when busybodies keep their mouths shut. Verse 21 shows that when fuel is added to a blaze it keeps burning. Even so, when a "contentious man" is pr

Proverbs 28:11 speaks of the "rich man" in this fashion: "The rich man is wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out." It is a general and not an absolute principle (as is true with many of the Proverbs). In the main, one who possesses great wealth likewise has a sense of superiority. He feigns himself the keeper of wisdom. Though inferior to him financially, the poor man often sees through this haughty veneer.

Proverbs 29:13 refers to the "deceitful man". It reads, "The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes." The phrase "meet together" has reference to a meeting for the purpose of unfinished business (the same thought expressed of Jacob and Esau's meeting in Genesis 32:17). The "deceitful man" in this instance is the oppressor and the poor man, the oppressed. There will be a day of reckoning in which both their eyes will be opened to the deeds done. Of course, such may not occur until the ultimate Day of reckoning; but, it will happen nonetheless.

Proverbs 29:22 introduces us to the "furious man". "An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression." Anger, wrath and fury have a way of increasing in their intensity. The "furious man" has allowed rage to replace reason and, thus, no longer has the ability to deal with a situation in a proper fashion. His sin abounds.

Proverbs 29:27 speaks of the "unjust man" thus: "An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked." There has always been antipathy between good and evil. The two are in contrast, opposition. The child of God must abide in a world bent on doing evil; but he does not have to approve of it and certainly should never become complacent to it. To those who seek to live righteous lives, evil will always be an abomination.

Eddy

## The "Man" of Proverbs #8

Our study of the book of Proverbs concerning its descriptions of the "man" takes us now to some adjectival phrases used only one time. There are nine such occurrences.

Proverbs 16:27 introduces us to the "ungodly man". It states, "*An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire.*" Here is an apt description of a talebearer, or gossip. He seeks out "dirt" on someone, and then it is as if his mouth is on fire to tell it. Here, too, is a very vivid picture of one who would blackmail another. Interestingly, this is the only occurrence of the phrase "ungodly man" in the Bible.

In close connection with this "ungodly man" is the "froward man" of Proverbs 16:28. Of him the Word states: "*A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.*" The word "froward" carries the idea of perverse, deceitful, fraudulent. According to this verse, such an individual is a sower of strife, a farmer of falsehood, a gardener of grief. He works hard at his self-appointed task and brings about much evil.

Proverbs 25:19 gives us some insight into the "unfaithful man". It reads: "*Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*" Just as one cannot depend on a broken tooth for aid in chewing, he cannot depend on the assistance of an unfaithful man in troublesome times. Just as a foot out of joint would cause him to limp, make travel cumbersome and delay his journey, so an "unfaithful man" will make a bad situation worse.

Solomon next speaks of the "mad man" but only in a descriptive fashion of one who deceives his neighbor. He states, "*As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?*" (Proverbs 26:18, 19). He describes one who would deceive his fellow, but when caught would claim it was all in jest, just a joke. Solomon states that such a one is as dangerous as a man who would randomly toss firebrands, shoot arrows and toy with death.

Lord willing, we shall continue our study of these single descriptive terms next week.

Eddy

## The "Man" of Proverbs #7

We continue our study of the "man" of Proverbs by looking at another of the adjectives used by Solomon to describe him. As we have seen, there are several such phrases in the book of Proverbs, each of which serves us well in learning more about what God would have us be.

One of the more prominent phrases used in this regard by Solomon is "slothful man". It is found five times in Proverbs, two of which are repetitious. Of the fifteen times the word "slothful" is found in the Bible (KJV), eleven of these are found in Proverbs. Since the book deals with very practical matters, it is evident that a lazy individual is held in great contempt.

Of the "slothful man" Solomon says he *roasteth not that which he took in hunting*" (Proverbs 12:27). As a hunter, I can appreciate this thought. There are those who enjoy the thrill of the hunt, but who find reasons not to engage in the work of preparing that which they have harvested. The Bible reveals that a man who is too lazy to work should not be allowed to eat (II Thessalonians 3:10). It also states that our labors should provide our necessities (Ephesians 4:28). The segment of our own society bent on "giveaway programs" and the promotion of those who refuse to help themselves would do well to heed the words of Solomon.

He continues by saying of this man, *"The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns"* (Proverbs 15:19). He encounters troubles everywhere he goes (mostly of his own doing). He can never gain any ground because he doesn't really want to accomplish anything. There seems to be obstacles everywhere he turns--many of which are actually there only in his mind.

*"A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again"* (Proverbs 19:24). Perhaps it is from this statement that we have obtained the thought for our modern proverb that states of a lazy person, "he won't lift a finger to help himself". Such laziness ought to be ridiculed and not rewarded. Perhaps it is an over-exaggeration of the matter to state that one is too lazy even to feed himself. But, sadly, it just might be that, in some instances, such is not an overstatement of the case at all.

The final two occurrences of this phrase say basically the same thing. Proverbs 22:13 states: *"The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets."* Proverbs 26:13 reads, *"The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets."* Revealed in these passages is the idea that "one excuse is as good as another". One who wants to excuse himself from an activity will find an excuse to do so. Someone has defined an excuse as "the skin of truth stretched over a lie." How true!

Let us be diligent, especially in the Lord's work, that we not be seen as "slothful" in His service. How about you? Are you faithful in His service, or have you been languishing in laziness and looking for yet another excuse?

Eddy

## We're Halfway There!

As of last week, we are over half way in our challenge of the "First 100 Days" of 2004. It hardly seems possible that over 50 days have passed since this year began. How have you done with the challenge? Have you worked at memorizing the verses? Have you dedicated time each day to reading God's Word? Have you taken time out to pray in a meaningful manner each day? Have you invited someone to West Side each week? Have you increased your contribution by \$1.00 each Sunday?

Glenna has done all the work in printing and cutting the cards for our reading and memory verses and in stuffing each envelope with the appropriate cards. We owe her our gratitude for doing so. But, she has also kept a record of how well we are doing. Here are the averages for each week so far:

Verses memorized each week.....252  
Chapters read each week.....547  
Prayers each week.....699  
Members inviting each week..... 39

When you think about it, that's a lot of memorized verses, chapters read, prayers offered and members inviting others (and those are just the averages per week!). However, it could be better. Why not recommit to doing more during the last half of our challenge. If you have not been participating, it's not too late to start. If you have, but you've gotten away from keeping your commitment as you were doing at the beginning, now is the time to recharge for the last 50 days. In a few weeks, when our challenge has ended, you'll be glad you did. Thanks to each of you who is plodding on each day.

Eddy

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## The "Man" of Proverbs #6

We have been studying the use of the word "man" in the book of Proverbs. Of particular note have been the adjectives describing the "man" in this book. Several such adjectival phrases are present in Proverbs. Today we look further into the list of these descriptive terms and find out more of what the Bible says about them.

On three occasions the sagacious writer of Proverbs mentions "the good man". Of him he states: *"A good man obtaineth the favour of the LORD"* (Proverbs 12:2). The word "good" is found 655 times in the King James Version. "Good" is the way God described that which He had created after each day (Genesis 1). One who strives to be good obtains God's favor. Such an one will seek to do God's Will. In contrast to this "good man", the writer states: *"but a man of wicked devices will he condemn"* (12:2).

Solomon also states that the *"good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children"* (Proverbs 13:22). One who is wise in the use of his possessions thinks of much more than just himself. He pays his debts, takes care of his family, give to his Lord's great cause, assists those who are in need and prepares for the future. He even looks past the time when he departs this world and makes preparations for those whom he will leave behind. Especially in our society is

this advice crucial and commendable.

Finally, Solomon states that *"a good man shall be satisfied from himself"* (Proverbs 14:14). In conjunction with the contrasting statement which precedes this, the truthfulness of this statement can be fully seen. In its entirety the statement reads: *"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself"* (Proverbs 14:14). The one who turns his back on God must depend upon himself for his well-being. He who depends upon God and knows that he depends upon Him can be satisfied from within,

realizing the strengths of God. He is satisfied in his conscience as he does the Will of God and seeks His kingdom first (Matthew 6:33). His conscience is clean, his motives are pure and his attempts at service are admirable. He is not conceited, but is confident in his obedience and in his Lord's promises.

The "good man" obtains God's favor, prepares for his future and the future of his loved ones and rests in the assurances given by the Lord. Oh, that we might all strive to be "good men".  
Eddy

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## The "Man" of Proverbs #5

We continue in our study of the usage of the word "man" in the book of Proverbs. A number of adjectives are used in conjunction with "man" in this book, revealing a great deal about humanity.

*"The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh"* (Proverbs 11:17). The Bible mentions a number of things that one does to himself (another study for another time). Here it is stated that one who is merciful does himself a favor. Perhaps the words of Jesus further explain how one does himself good by being merciful. He said, *"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy"* (Matthew 5:7).

*"A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife"* (Proverbs 15:18). Anger, vengeance, jealousy, animosity, hatred and other such emotions breed contempt and wrath. "Wrathful" is defined as "full of wrath; extremely angry". There have been many prominent personalities throughout history who personified this trait. Their trails of destruction, killing, greed and confusion testify to the truthfulness of this proverb. Just as this passage would reveal, however, it doesn't take being famous or infamous for one to possess this malicious trait.

*"A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good"* (Proverbs 16:29). Oh, the number of individuals who have fallen prey to a "violent man"! Such a thought brings to mind many young people who have been led down the wrong paths by those who cared not for their well-being, but who made pretense of understanding them. Drug pushers, especially, prey on their insecurities and their vulnerability. The violence attributed to drug use in this country is staggering. Alcohol, immorality and indecency all fall into the same category. They are promoted and encouraged by the would-be friend who is, in actuality, a "violent" neighbor. Beware the enticements into *"the way that is not good."* Eddy

## The "Man" of Proverbs #4

In the continuation of our study of the uses of the word "man" in the book of Proverbs, we

look at a few more of the 141 times it occurs in this book. We learn much about the behavior of man by studying these phrases.

Of the "righteous man," Solomon states that his mouth is "a well of life" (Prov. 10:11). He also states that the righteous man "hateth lying" (Prov. 13:5). The righteous man "wisely considereth the house of the wicked" (Prov. 21:12). From Proverbs 25:26 we get this thought: "A righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring." A righteous man who will not assert himself before evil is as useless to society as a troubled fountain or a corrupt spring. In contrast, one who does assert himself in defense of right is as "a well of life" (Prov. 10:11).

A good deal is said about "the prudent man" in Proverbs. In contrast to the foolish man who allows his wrath to be demonstrated openly, the prudent man "covereth shame" (Prov. 12:16). That is, he does not allow a situation to cause him shame because he loses his temper and becomes wrathful and vengeful. Also, the prudent man "concealeth knowledge" (Prov. 12:23). It is not always best to tell everything one knows. Neither is it wise to tell what one knows to everyone. The prudent man knows the difference. He "dealeth with knowledge" (Prov. 13:16). He takes care of matters in a profitable fashion. Instead of "swallowing" everything he hears. He considers carefully that which he is told (Prov. 14:15). In doing so he avoids much that would cause the ordinary man problems (Prov. 22:3; 27:12).

We should seek to be both righteous and prudent in our lives.

-Eddy-

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### The "Man" of Proverbs #3

We continue in our study of the uses of the word "man" in the book of Proverbs. The word is found 141 times in this book. Many different aspects of mankind are described by the adjectives accompanying this word. We learn much about the character of man from these phrases. There are a number of terms associated with sinful men in the book of Proverbs. Various warnings are given regarding such individuals. Let us notice a few of these in our study.

The wise man speaks of the "evil" man on four occasions in this book. Of him he states that wisdom will deliver one from him (Prov. 2:12), that he constantly seeks rebellion (Prov. 17:11), that he will receive no reward (Prov. 24:20) and that his ways involve a snare (Prov. 29:6). The "evil" man is to be avoided by all

The sage of Proverbs also speaks of the "wicked" man. Of such he states that he walks with a froward mouth (Prov. 6:12). The word "froward" means "perverse, foolish, deceitful." The wicked man in his wickedness is without hope (Prov. 11:7). He is described as a loathsome individual whose end is shame (Prov. 13:5). He is pictured as one who takes bribes and perverts justice in the process (Prov. 17:23). His face is sullen, hardened by his years of evil (Prov. 21:29). He is warned about attempting to entrap the righteous (Prov. 24:15).

In contrast to the "evil man" and the "wicked man" is the "just man". He has the desire to learn from instruction (Prov. 9:9). He walks in integrity, benefiting even his children by his life (Prov. 20:7). The "just man" knows the importance of resiliency, of rising when he falls (Prov. 24:16).

Like the "just man", let us learn from the instruction given regarding the "evil" and "wicked" man. Of the just it is written, "the just shall live by faith" (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11;

Heb. 10:38).

Eddy

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## The "Man" of Proverbs #2

Of the 2330 occurrences of the word "man" in the King James Version, 141 are found in the book of Proverbs. This book of wisdom tells us much about mankind. In our previous lesson we listed the various adjectival phrases containing "man" that are found in Proverbs. Let us examine some of the thoughts regarding the "man" of Proverbs.

One of the expressed purposes of the book of Proverbs is given early in the first chapter. The writer states, *"To give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion"* (Proverbs 1:4). The only other instance in which "young man" is found in this book is Proverbs 7:7 and refers to one *"void of understanding"*. Obviously, here is one who had not learned the valuable lessons

found in this book. Unlike many of the adjectival phrases regarding "man" found in this book, there is no opposite mentioned for "young". However, a great deal is said about wisdom and the "wise man," and many times such wisdom is associated with age. Every "young man" would do well to heed the admonitions found in these writings.

Solomon also refers to both the "wise" and the "foolish man". Characteristics of the wise man include the fact that he will *"hear, and will increase in learning"* (Proverbs 1:5); become wiser when instructed (9:9); depart from evil (14:16); heed reproof (17:10); refrain from speaking without discretion (29:11). On the other hand, the "foolish man" should be avoided (14:7), is a burden to those who reared him (15:20) and is frivolous with his possessions (21:20). We should give diligence to insure that we are accounted as wise by God. Eddy

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## The "Man" of Proverbs

The word "man" is found 2330 times in the King James Version. Of these occurrences, 141 are found in the book of Proverbs. This book tells us a great deal about humanity. It is a book dealing with very common matters in a very uncommon way. Thus, we can learn much about mankind, much about men and much about ourselves in a study of such material. Let's notice some of the many descriptions of the "man" of Proverbs.

Among the adjectives used in describing the "man" of Proverbs we find these (in order of occurrence):

"young" (1:4; 7:7)  
"wise" (1:5; 9:9; 14:16; 16:14; 17:10; 21:22; 29:11)  
"evil" (2:12; 17:11; 24:20; 29:6)  
"armed" (6:11; 24:34)  
"wicked" (6:12; 11:7; 13:5; 17:23; 21:29; 24:15)

Remember to fill out your attendance cards. On Sunday morning, note whether you were here for Bible study. Be sure to note your "100 Days Challenge" results. On Sunday evening and

on Wednesday evening fill out a card for each family, listing the members who are in attendance.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us to "watch for your souls" (Hebrews 13:17).

the Elders

"just" (9:9; 20:7; 24:16)  
"righteous" (10:11; 12:10; 13:5; 21:12;25:26)  
"merciful" (11:17)  
"good" (12:2; 13:22; 14:14)  
"prudent" (12:16, 23; 13:16; 14:15; 22:3;27:12)  
"slothful" (12:27; 15:19; 19:24; 22:13;26:13)  
"foolish" (14:7; 15:20; 21:20)  
"wrathful" (15:18)  
"ungodly" (16:27)  
"froward" (16:28)  
"violent" (16:29)  
"poor" (19:22; 21:17; 28:3)  
"faithful" (20:6; 28:20)  
"angry" (22:24; 29:22)  
"unfaithful" (25:19)  
"mad" (26:18)  
"contentious" (26:21)  
"rich" (28:11)  
"deceitful" (29:13)  
"furious" (29:22)  
"unjust" (29:27)

In our next article we will study these descriptive terms and note some things regarding the different men presented in the book of Proverbs. Eddy

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## "Some Version of the Truth"

In a current advertisement for the movie, "Something's Gotta Give," a clip from that film shows two of the stars (Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton) engaged in conversation. In obvious defense of himself Nicholson makes the statement, "I have always told you some version of the truth." Keaton replies, "The truth has no versions."

The idea expressed by Nicholson in this scene is, sadly, all too often the thought many have in the realm of religion. Their particular brand of religion expresses some "version" of the truth. Others express other "versions," and no one's "version" is any better than any other's (at least, that is what is expressed outwardly). Even though one "version" might be in total contradiction to another "version," both "versions" are to be accepted and approved by all in this politically correct-charged environment we call America. No one should dare speak out against another's "version" of truth.

The thought expressed by Keaton in this clip hits home with the point that, in a relationship, there is only one "version" of truth. To claim (as Nicholson's statement reveals he has obviously done) that he has shaded the truth in his direction on occasion is ultimately to say that he has not spoken the truth at all. This is true in every area in which truth is involved--especially in the realm of religion. There are no varying "versions" of truth. Something is either truth, or it is not. As has often been said in this regard, rat poison is 99% good ingredients and only 1% harmful; but the 1% is enough to be fatal. Truth plus error (in any amount or combination) equals error. Truth cannot be combined with falsehood and be pronounced as

a "version" of truth. If combined with that which is false, it is error and not truth in any sense of the word.

The Bible states that there is one body/church (Ephesians 4:4; 1:22, 23). To say there are more is not a "version" of truth, but rather a perversion of it; thus, falsehood. The Bible states that baptism is essential to salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21). To say that it is not is not a "version" of the truth, it is merely false. The Bible reveals that only those who actively do the Will of God will be saved (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:9; James 1:22; 2:17, 24). To say that one is saved by "grace alone" or by "faith alone" without any action of obedience on his part is not, and never can be, a "version" of truth. It is simply false doctrine. The truth has no versions. Either it is the truth, or it is not. Eddy

## The First 100 Days

Last Sunday morning we issued a challenge for the first 100 days of 2004. Because of the holidays and other reasons, some of you were away. For your benefit (and as an encouragement to us all as we begin this challenge), I will outline the proposal here. The challenges are actually six in number.

1) Memorize one verse of Scripture every day during this 100-day period. Verses will be distributed on individual cards in packets each Sunday morning. If you did not receive your cards from last week, they are still available.

2) Read one chapter from the Bible each day. Each week your packet will contain a card with seven chapters listed corresponding to the days for that next week.

3) Pray each day. Keep a list of the sick and others in need of prayer. Pray personally for at least one person who needs to obey the gospel or be restore

4) Increase your contribution by at least \$1 each week during this 100-day period. (If it is not possible for you to do so, do as much as you can.)

5) Invite at least one person each week to Bible study, worship or some special event at West Side. A number of opportunities will present themselves during this period.

6) Individually mark your attendance card each Sunday to indicate that you have completed the weekly assignments.

Think of the effect these will have on us as individuals and as a congregation if we all participate. If you were not here last week, it is not too late for you to begin. Cards and packets are available. If you were here, have you accepted these challenges? Let me encourage you to stick with it and grow as a Christian in 2004 (perhaps as never before). May God bless our efforts as we strive toward these goals in "the first 100 days of 2004".

Eddy