

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a lush green forest. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a bright, hazy atmosphere. The path is covered in fallen leaves and small plants. The text 'PROVERBS' is written in large, white, serif capital letters across the middle of the image. Below it, a thin white horizontal line separates the word 'PROVERBS' from the phrase 'LIVING WISDOM', which is written in smaller, white, serif capital letters.

PROVERBS

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LIVING WISDOM

## Proverbs 1:8-19

Hear, my son, your father's instruction,  
and forsake not your mother's teaching,

<sup>9</sup> for they are a graceful garland for your head  
and pendants for your neck.

<sup>10</sup> My son, if sinners entice you,  
do not consent.

<sup>11</sup> If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood;  
let us ambush the innocent without reason;

<sup>12</sup> like Sheol let us swallow them alive,  
and whole, like those who go down to the pit;

<sup>13</sup> we shall find all precious goods,  
we shall fill our houses with plunder;

14 throw in your lot among us;  
we will all have one purse” —

15 my son, do not walk in the way with them;  
hold back your foot from their paths,

16 for their feet run to evil,  
and they make haste to shed blood.

17 For in vain is a net spread  
in the sight of any bird,

18 but these men lie in wait for their own blood;  
they set an ambush for their own lives.

19 Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain;  
it takes away the life of its possessors.

# The Cast of Characters

## Father/Mother

Proverbs is set up as parental “drive to college” life-advice on how the world works, how to live well and how to stay on the “right path”

## Son/Daughter

We are the wide-eyed, more-naïve-than-we-realize vulnerable kids of our Father as we engage in a treacherous and volatile world.

## Fools / Sinners

Those who are self-serving at the expense of others.

## Wise / Innocent

The vulnerable victims who are trying to stay on the “right path”

## The Path

Our life’s journey;  
goals, direction, companions, dangers, pit-stops, and choices.

# Community Matters

Being made in God's image means that we are designed to be in community, but community can cut two ways:

- 1) It can build us more into life
- 2) Or more into death.

Proverbs 13:20

Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise,  
but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

# Enticing Community



- <sup>10</sup> My son, if sinners **entice** you, do not consent.
- <sup>11</sup> If they say, “Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason;
- <sup>12</sup> like Sheol let us **swallow them alive**, and whole, like those who go down to the pit;

“Your Life for Mine”  
Consume others to bloat ourselves

# The Promise of Unjust Gain

<sup>13</sup> we shall find all **precious goods**, we shall **fill** our houses with plunder;

<sup>14</sup> throw in your lot among us; we will all have one purse”

<sup>19</sup> Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain...

## Work

When I use others to advance or make more.

## Social

When I put “them” down to gain other’s approval (virtual).

## Spiritual

When I belittle other’s as being worse than me so I look more righteous.

Sin offers “real” (short term) benefits or it wouldn’t be enticing.

For a little while you really do feel good, free, powerful, loved.

But....

## The Product of Unjust Gain

<sup>18</sup> but these men lie in wait for **their own blood**;  
they set an ambush for their own lives.

<sup>19</sup> Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain;  
it takes away **the life of its possessors**.

In our self-centered effort of unjust gain,  
we are actually **destroying** and **dehumanizing** ourselves.



# Gospel Community

<sup>8</sup> Hear, my son, your father's instruction,  
and forsake not your mother's teaching,

<sup>9</sup> for they are a *graceful garland* for your head  
and *pendants* for your neck.

That thing we've been trying to achieve at the expense of others  
(fulfillment, love, satisfaction, completeness) is actually only and  
fully offered in the person of Jesus.

Proverbs 18:24

A man of many companions may come to ruin,  
but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

## Matthew 27:27-29

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. <sup>28</sup> And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, <sup>29</sup> and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand.

## Galatians 4:6

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

## John 14:6

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."