

“Proverbs Quoted in the New Testament”

In a world bombarded by inane cliches, trivial catchwords, and godless sound bites, the expression of true wisdom is in short supply today. The church stands alone as the receptacle and repository of the inspired traditions that carry a mandate for a holy life from ancient sages, the greatest of whom was Solomon, and from the greater than Solomon, Jesus Christ. As the course and bulk of biblical wisdom, the book of Proverbs remains the model of curriculum for humanity to learn how to live under God and before humankind. As a result, it beckons the church to diligent study and application. To uncommitted youth it serves as a stumbling stone, and to committed youth a foundation stone.

But, tragically, the church has practically discarded the book of Proverbs, which was written for young people as a compass by which to steer their ship of life (see 1:2–6). **Proverbs 1:2-6** ²To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, ³to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; ⁴to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth- ⁵Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, ⁶to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. Of its 930 ancient sayings many Christians know three—to fear the LORD (1:7) **Proverbs 1:7** ⁷The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction., to trust him (3:5–6) **Proverbs 3:5-6** ⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Also possibly something about the “virtuous wife” (31:10–31) **Proverbs 31:10** ¹⁰An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.

For some honest readers, as one student confessed, “Proverbs seems banal or wrong.” Obviously “a truthful witness gives honest

testimony” (12:17) **Proverbs 12:17** ¹⁷ Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit., “does not deceive” (14:5) **Proverbs 14:5** ⁵ A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies., and gives the LORD delight (12:22) **Proverbs 12:22** ²² Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who act faithfully are his delight..

For the modern mind, the book’s cultural setting seems far removed from the twenty-first century. Proverbs puts a high priority on tradition and age, while the modern mind prizes change and youth. Proverbs admonishes parents not to spare the rod, but the state’s welfare workers want to jail those who obey it. Its psychology is psychosomatic; modern psychology uses more scientific terms.

For Christians, Proverbs seems irrelevant. If Jesus is greater than Solomon, why bother studying and memorizing this ancient book? Besides, “If Solomon was so smart, how come he died such a fool?”

For the translator, Proverbs defies translation. A proverb depends on sound and sense. “A stitch in time saves nine” works because of its alliteration as well as its uncommonly obvious good sense. But the sounds and puns of the biblical proverbs cannot be caught in translation, and so, unlike an English proverb, they are not usually memorable. Moreover, the meaning of what the book calls a proverb is not the commonly accepted English one. In English a proverb expresses a universally accepted truism, but “trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean upon your own understanding” is not a truism that many Americans accept. Americans may claim to trust in God on their coinage, but in fact they teach and preach, “Believe in yourself.”

Bruce K. Waltke, [*The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1–15*](#), The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004)

Bruce K. Waltke, [*The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 15–31*](#), The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2005)

1. The writers of the Bible, both in the OT and NT, wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit; there is a human and divine author for each passage of Scripture.
2. For each passage in the Bible, including those in the OT, there is one, and only one, meaning. I affirm Article VII of the “Chicago Statement on Hermeneutics” which says: “We affirm that the meaning expressed in each biblical text is single, definite and fixed. We deny that the recognition of this single meaning eliminates the variety of its application.”
3. Meaning is linked with authorial intent; thus, meaning is located in what an author meant.
4. A text with its symbols is the vehicle for the transmission of authorial intent; a text does not mean anything apart from the intent of its author.
5. Under inspiration, the meaning of an OT passage from the human author is God’s meaning—there are no hidden or additional divine meanings in a text beyond what the human author intended (i.e. no *sensus plenior*).
6. The confluence of human and divine authorship does not necessitate double and hidden meanings; instead, what the human author intended is what God intended at that point in a text.
7. Progress of revelation makes the theory of fuller or hidden meaning or *sensus plenior* unnecessary; when God desired to add additional revelation, He did so through inspiring later authors of Scripture to write that revelation.

8. In addition to meaning, a Bible passage can have implications which include significances and applications that stem from the meaning an author intended in a text.
9. The fact that God understands all implications and applications of an OT passage that the OT author did not foresee does not mean there are hidden meanings in an OT text.
10. When the NT writers quote or allude to the OT writings, they are not just concerned with meaning; at times they also are drawing upon implications and applications; context will determine whether a NT writer is emphasizing OT meaning or significance.
11. When there is implication or significance drawn from an OT passage in the NT, this is consistent with the meaning of the OT author and follows the trajectory of an OT author's meaning.
12. The NT quotations and allusions of the OT are overwhelmingly done in a contextual manner.
13. The case for contextual use of the OT by the NT writers is not dependent on proving that every single quotation and allusion is contextual. The overwhelming contextual use of the OT by the NT writers establishes that the contextual view is accurate.

Michael J. Vlach, [*The Old in the New: Understanding How the New Testament Authors Quoted the Old Testament*](#) (Woodlands, TX; Sun Valley, CA: Kress Biblical Resources; Master's Seminary Press, 2021)

5 Quotations

Proverbs 3:11-12 ¹¹ My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof, ¹² for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

Proverbs 3:11-12 LXE ¹¹ My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: ¹² for whom the Lord loves, he rebukes, and scourges every son whom he receives.

Hebrews 12:5-6 ⁵ And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."

Hebrews 12:5–6 describes God’s discipline upon those who belong to Him. In doing so, the writer quotes Proverbs 3:11–12 to show the theological principle that God disciplines those whom He loves.

Although the reproof may be harsh, it is actually a sign of the LORD’s love, not of his wrath, for it concerns those *whom the LORD loves*

C. S. Lewis says, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our pains.”

Proverbs 3:34 ³⁴ Toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.

Proverbs 3:34 LXE ³⁴ The Lord resists the proud; but he gives grace to the humble.

James 4:6 ⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

1 Peter 5:5 ⁵ Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

They will get from God exactly what they give others: as they tear everything down with their mouths, so the LORD will tear them down with his curse (see v. 34); as they cover others with reproach, so the LORD will cover them with shame (cf. 1:24–33; Ps. 18:25–26[26, 27])

The humble and oppressed is a hendiadys for the Hebrew word ‘*anîyim*/‘*nāwîm*, which could be glossed “the poor and oppressed,” meaning those “in a circumstance of diminished capacity, power and worth.” ‘*ānî* denotes the exploited (cf. Job 24:4; Isa. 32:7, 37:14) and is never used for deserved poverty. The LORD refers to such as “my people” (Exod. 22:24[25]); he is their special protector

Proverbs 11:31³¹ If the righteous is repaid on earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner!

Proverbs 11:31 LXE³¹ If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

1 Peter 4:18¹⁸ And "If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

First Peter 4:18 is a literal word-for-word translation of the LXX of Proverbs 11:31. Appealing to the principle of Proverbs 11:31, Peter’s point is this: if God’s judgment is not relaxed for His people, how much more so do those who disobey God have no chance to escape God’s judgment. Peter’s readers can know they are trusting their lives to a Creator God who does what is right (see 1 Pet. 4:19).

Proverbs 25:21-22 ²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink, ²² for you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.

Proverbs 25:21-22 LXE ²¹ If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; ²² for so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee *with* good.

Romans 12:20 ²⁰ To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

25:21 The proverb presupposes that one has a neighbor who hates him (cf. 25:16–17). The context of the admonitions represent the enemy in urgent need, concretized as being hungry (verset Aa) and as thirsty (verset Ba), two sides of the same situation.

25:22 The Apostle uses this Septuagint text to reprove taking revenge, and, abstracts from it the principle to overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:17–21).

Proverbs 26:11 ¹¹ Like a dog that returns to his vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.

2 Peter 2:22 ²² What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."

Proverbs 26 is about the way of fools and how they will eventually return to their unwise ways. As Proverbs 26:11 states, "Like a dog that returns to its vomit is a fool who repeats his folly."

Peter notes that false prophets may have "escaped the defilements of the world" for a time (2 Pet. 2:20), but because they are not truly saved, they will become "entangled" and "overcome" by such

defilements again. In the end, they will be in a worse state than before (2:21). Peter then quotes Proverbs 26:11a, "It has happened to them according to the true proverb, 'A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT' " (2 Pet. 2:22). Drawing upon the principle of Proverbs 26:11, Peter shows that false prophets are fools who return to their sinful ways. For a while they might seem appealing, but eventually they will go back to their own sin like a dog returns to its vomit. Thus, Peter quotes Proverbs 26:11 to apply a timeless principle to false prophets.

44 Verbal Illusions

Proverbs 1:16 ¹⁶ for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.

Romans 3:15-17 ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery, ¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known."

Proverbs 2:3-4 ³ yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, ⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,

Colossians 2:3 ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Proverbs 2:3-6 ³ yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, ⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, ⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. ⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

James 1:5 ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

Proverbs 2:4 ⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,

Matthew 13:44 ⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Proverbs 3:3 ³ Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

2 Corinthians 3:3 ³ And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

Proverbs 3:4 ⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

Luke 2:52 ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Proverbs 3:4 ⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

Proverbs 3:4 LXE ⁴ so shalt thou find favour: and do thou provide things honest in the sight of the Lord, and of men.

Romans 12:17 ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.

2 Corinthians 8:21 ²¹ for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of man.

Proverbs 3:7 ⁷ Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

Romans 12:16 ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be conceited.

Proverbs 3:12 ¹² for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

Revelation 3:19 ¹⁹ Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.

Proverbs 3:27-28 ²⁷ Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. ²⁸ Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it"- when you have it with you.

2 Corinthians 8:12 ¹² For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have.

Proverbs 4:26 ²⁶ Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure.

Proverbs 4:26 LXE ²⁶ Make straight paths for thy feet, and order thy ways aright.

Hebrews 12:13 ¹³ and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

Proverbs 7:3 ³ bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.

2 Corinthians 3:3 ³ And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

Proverbs 8:15 ¹⁵ By me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just;

Romans 13:1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.

Proverbs 8:22 ²² "The LORD possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old.

Revelation 3:14 ¹⁴ "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

Proverbs 10:9 ⁹ Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.

Acts 13:10 ¹⁰ and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?"

Proverbs 10:12 ¹² Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.

1 Corinthians 13:7 ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

James 5:20 ²⁰ let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8 ⁸ Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

Proverbs 11:24 ²⁴ One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want.

2 Corinthians 9:6 ⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Proverbs 15:29 ²⁹ The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

John 9:31 ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.

Proverbs 16:33 ³³ The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

Acts 1:26 ²⁶ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Proverbs 17:3 ³ The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for gold, and the LORD tests hearts.

1 Peter 1:7 ⁷ so that the tested genuineness of your faith- more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire- may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 18:4 ⁴ The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.

John 7:38 ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

Proverbs 19:17 ¹⁷ Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.

Matthew 25:40 ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

Proverbs 19:18 ¹⁸ Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death.

Ephesians 6:4 ⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Proverbs 20:22 ²² Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you.

1 Thessalonians 5:15 ¹⁵ See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

Proverbs 20:27 ²⁷ The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all his innermost parts.

1 Corinthians 2:11 ¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

Proverbs 22:6 ⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Ephesians 6:4 ⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Proverbs 22:8 ⁸ Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity, and the rod of his fury will fail.

Proverbs 22:8 LXE ⁸ He that sows wickedness shall reap troubles; and shall fully receive the punishment of his deeds. God loves a cheerful and liberal man; but *a man* shall fully prove the folly of his works.

2 Corinthians 9:7 ⁷ Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Proverbs 22:9 ⁹ Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.

2 Corinthians 9:6 ⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Proverbs 23:4 ⁴ Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist.

1 Timothy 6:9 ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

Proverbs 23:31 ³¹ Do not look at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly.

Proverbs 23:30-31 LXE ³⁰ Are not those of them that stay long at wine? *are not those* of them that haunt *the places* where banquets are? Be not drunk with wine; but converse with just men, and converse *with them* openly. ³¹ For if thou shouldst set thine eyes on bowls and cups, thou shalt afterwards go more naked than a pestle.

Ephesians 5:18 ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

Proverbs 24:12 ¹² If you say, "Behold, we did not know this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?

Matthew 16:27 ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Romans 2:6 ⁶ He will render to each one according to his works:

2 Timothy 4:14 ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.

1 Peter 1:17 ¹⁷ And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile,

Revelation 2:23 ²³ and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve.

Revelation 20:12-13 ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

Revelation 22:12 ¹² "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done.

Proverbs 24:12 ¹² If you say, "Behold, we did not know this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?

Proverbs 24:12 LXE ¹² But if thou shouldst say, I know not this man; know that the Lord knows the hearts of all; and he that formed breath for all, he knows all things, who renders to every man according to his works.

Luke 16:15 ¹⁵ And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

Proverbs 24:21 ²¹ My son, fear the LORD and the king, and do not join with those who do otherwise,

1 Peter 2:17 ¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

Proverbs 25:6-7 ⁶ Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great, ⁷ for it is better to be told, "Come up here," than to be put lower in the presence of a noble. What your eyes have seen

Luke 14:8-10 ⁸ "When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, ⁹ and he who invited you both will come and say to you, 'Give your place to this person,' and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you.

Proverbs 25:21 ²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,

Matthew 5:44 ⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Proverbs 27:1 Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.

James 4:13-14 ¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"- ¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

Proverbs 27:20 ²⁰ Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, and never satisfied are the eyes of man.

1 John 2:16 ¹⁶ For all that is in the world- the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions- is not from the Father but is from the world.

Proverbs 28:13 ¹³ Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

1 John 1:9 ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Proverbs 28:22 ²² A stingy man hastens after wealth and does not know that poverty will come upon him.

1 Timothy 6:9 ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

Proverbs 29:3 ³ He who loves wisdom makes his father glad, but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth.

Luke 15:13 ¹³ Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living.

Proverbs 29:23 ²³ One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.

Matthew 23:12 ¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Proverbs 30:4 ⁴ Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name? Surely you know!

John 3:13 ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

Proverbs 30:8 ⁸ Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me,

1 Timothy 6:8 ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

Proverbs 31:17 ¹⁷ She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong.

Luke 12:35 ³⁵ "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning,
