

**Two Ways, Two Outcomes**  
**Proverbs 12      Louie**

Proverbs teaches outcome-based education, as does all of Scripture. Jesus, the wisest man who ever lived, taught us that there are two roads, with two different outcomes (Matthew 7:13,14). He said the broad road leads to destruction and the narrow road leads to life. He then added this editorial comment about the narrow road: “only a few find it”. Proverbs helps us to find and to stay on this narrow road of wisdom.

Proverbs 12:1 - Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid.

Winston Churchill said, “Courage is going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm.” The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure.

It is “stupid” to resist criticism because it means that a person will perpetuate wrong behavior.

Stupid means senseless. A stupid, senseless person does not have the quality of teachability. As believers, we love to keep learning and growing. We make a lot of mistakes in the process, but if we persevere, it eventually leads to success.

The sages felt that mistakes provided opportunities for learning. They also apparently assumed that everyone would make mistakes along the way. What they could not tolerate, however, was an attitude of defensiveness that refuses to admit mistakes. -Tremper Longman

True learners are those who desire to know what they are doing wrong so that they can change their behavior. It’s a good thing to ask for honest feedback.

Proverbs 12:2 - A good man obtains favor from the LORD, but the LORD condemns a crafty man.

A crafty, schemer is a person with no fear of God and no wisdom. He is selfish and hurts the community around him instead of helping. In comparison, those who are wise help the community. A good example would be Barnabas:

Acts 11:24 - Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Barnabas was nicknamed “son of encouragement”. He was known for being Spirit-filled and for being a “good” man.

Proverbs 12:4 - A wife of noble character is her husband’s crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones.

A disgraceful wife robs her husband of his social standing. She saps his strength and deconstructs him from within. A noble wife strengthens his very being by giving him respect.

Marriage is no light matter. The wife either makes or breaks a man in his home and in the community. The mosaic law allowed a man to divorce a wife who corrupted the holiness of the home. (Deuteronomy 24:1-4; Matthew 19:3-12)

All daughters of Eve have a natural bent to shame men. But this can be turned around through the Holy Spirit's help.

Proverbs 12:5-7 - The plans of the righteous are just, but the advice of the wicked is deceitful. The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, but the speech of the upright rescues them. Wicked men are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous stands firm.

The personal histories of David and Saul illustrate this proverb. Saul was wicked, tried to kill David for 14 years, and ended up committing suicide. David was righteous, trusted God for His timing, and ended up being king. Two ways, two outcomes.

Proverbs 12:8 - A man is praised according to his wisdom, but men with warped minds are despised.

See example of King Rehoboam in I Kings 12 – We know what road we're on by the way we treat people.

Proverbs 12:11 - He who works his land will have abundant food, but he who chases fantasies lacks judgment.

The greatest cause of famine and disease in the world is not poor agricultural practice, a bad economy, or political policy. The first cause is spiritual. Example – Hinduism in India:

To the Hindu, all animals are considered to be incarnations either of men or deities. Cows are held especially sacred because they are incarnated deities – of which Hinduism has some 330 million. Cows not only are not to be eaten but add to the food problem consuming 20 percent of India's total food supply. Even rats and mice, which eat 15 percent of the food supply, are not killed because they might be one's reincarnated relatives.

Research conducted by the Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C. found that those who work, graduate from high school, get married before having children, and stay married have a 98% chance of staying out of poverty.

Proverbs 12:16 - A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.

Shimei is a good example of a fool (I Kings 2), and it cost him his life.

Proverbs 12:18 - Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Example: Fireproof dvd clips illustrate how our words can pierce like a sword or bring healing.

Proverbs 12:22 - The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful.

In 1513 Machi Avelli wrote *The Prince*. He was the first avowed proponent of the dogma that force and fraud are proper means for leaders to use for the purpose of manipulating and controlling people. His words inspired many, including Napoleon, Hitler and Stalin.

Words are the expressions of the divine image within us. Honest speech is an essential part of our commitment to be what the Creator made us to be, reflections of God's truthfulness and protectors of the life and reputation of others.

Lying assaults this reality. Just look at how we are lied to politically, economically, commercially, legally, and personally. There are two ways, and two outcomes.

Proverbs 12:28 - In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality.

Colossians 4:6 - Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

