

A Wise Person Avoids. . .
Proverbs 6 Louie

As we go through life, we learn about more and more things to avoid. As Solomon talks to his son, he tells him that the following 5 things must be avoided at all cost:

A Wise Person:

1. Avoids giving loans/securing debt 1-5
2. Avoids lazy behavior 6-11
3. Avoids troublemakers 12-15
4. Avoids what God hates 16-19
5. Avoids a life of lust 20-35

1. Avoid giving loans/securing debts – v. 1-5

Proverbs 6:1-5 - My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, if you have struck hands in pledge for another, if you have been trapped by what you said, ensnared by the words of your mouth, then do this, my son, to free yourself, since you have fallen into your neighbor's hands: Go and humble yourself; press your plea with your neighbor! Allow no sleep to your eyes, no slumber to your eyelids. Free yourself, like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, like a bird from the snare of the fowler.

If you are in this situation, get out. If you are thinking about loaning to others, don't do it. If you wish to help someone in need, it's better to just give the money as a gift. The wisdom of Proverbs takes a dim view on loans and pledges.

Proverbs 11:15 - He who puts up security for another will surely suffer, but whoever refuses to strike hands in pledge is safe.

Proverbs 17:18 - A man lacking in judgment strikes hands in pledge and puts up security for his neighbor.

Proverbs 22:26 - Do not be a man who strikes hands in pledge or puts up security for debts;

2. Avoid lazy behavior – v. 6-11

Proverbs 6:6-11 - Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.

Laziness is the epitome of foolishness because it affects so many. We all have a lazy bone, and if we don't keep it in check it will cause us to "sleep". It's crucial to teach our kids a good work ethic.

Developing a social conscience is important. We should be very concerned about poverty. But too often we ask the wrong question. The question is not, "What causes poverty?", but "What

causes wealth?" The answer is found in the lifestyle of a creature. Ants have no rules. They are self-governed and they take initiative to work hard and store up for their needs.

Laziness is, at the root, a failure to love. While others work to provide for self and family, caring for others, the loafers want to be carried. To be clear, when the need is legitimate, it is our responsibility to help. The Bible talks often of helping those in need. Many of us will go through times of legitimate need, but don't be poor out of laziness. We all have an inexhaustible potential to be lazy. But the Bible directs us to learn from our teachers, the ants.

A person with gifts of speech, with a brain the size of a whole anthill, is told to bend over, peer down, and learn from a lowly ant. The irony is powerful. -David Hubbard

The ant needs no leader. The ant plans for the future. A lazy person has the tendency to deny his laziness. Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 3:10, "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary. Our culture teaches us to envy. In generations past, if you saw someone who had more than you, you would ask, "What can I learn from them? How did they get to be where they are?" But our current culture has a growing sense of entitlement to take from others if we don't have what we want.

Proverbs 26:14-16 - As a door turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed. The sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth. The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who answer discreetly.

It has well been said that the most expensive thing in the world is sin, in more ways than one. This is the high cost of disobeying God.

Colossians 3:23 - Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.

God is glorified through work. He created us to work six days and rest one. No man is happy if he doesn't work. Idle people are miserable and they make others miserable.

3. Avoid troublemakers – v. 12-15

Proverbs 6:12-15 - A scoundrel and villain, who goes about with a corrupt mouth, who winks with his eye, signals with his feet and motions with his fingers, who plots evil with deceit in his heart— he always stirs up dissension. Therefore disaster will overtake him in an instant; he will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy.

Troublemakers abound. Those who go around with a corrupt mouth, lying and gossiping, do not care about being correct. They only care about being cruel. If they come your way, avoid them. They ruin community. If they talk about others, they will talk about you. The Lord will deal with them – we don't have to.

4. Avoid what God hates – v. 16-19

Proverbs 6:16-19 - There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.

The wise person hates what God hates. These 7 things are all characteristic of fallen Lucifer.

5. Avoid a life of lust – v. 10-35

Proverbs 6:20-23 - My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you. For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life...

Once again Solomon is going to lead into the issue of sexual immorality. It is a big issue and the value of repetition is key in learning.

Proverbs 6:24-26 - ...keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife. Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life.

We will always face temptation, that's why we must have a plan. Spurgeon said, "You can't keep a bird from flying over your head, but you can keep it from building a nest in your hair." We must catch temptation immediately - within the first second – before it takes hold. Use the "bouncing technique": immediately bounce your eyes and your thoughts off the temptation and on to things that are true, noble, right, pure (Phil 4:8).

Genesis 39:10 - And though Potiphar's wife spoke to Joseph **day after day**, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

We are to be like Joseph: refuse and run! Execute your escape plan immediately! Why? Covetous desires are never satisfied; there is no brim to the cup, no lid to the bottle. The covetous person doesn't know what it means to wait. He demands what he wants, no matter what. His desires are the standard, not God and His laws.

Contentment is the virtue that knows what it means to be satisfied, to say "enough." God, and whatever He chooses to give me at any moment, is enough. He is my source of joy. My contentment comes from being committed to God and trusting in His provision for me.

Proverbs 6:27-29 - Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished.

Sexual passion is either a fire that rages or a fire that is contained. Fire is a good thing if it is controlled and confined. But when it rages out of control, as when adultery enters marriage, it consumes everything in its path and everyone suffers.

Marriage is God's idea. He instituted it, set up its rules, decreed its boundaries, and declared its sanctity. A man's relationship with his wife is to be loving and loyal. It is to mirror Christ's relationship with His church.

The home is the cradle of society. God's plan is for children to be born and raised in an atmosphere of love, trust and discipline. As the home goes, so goes civilization.

Proverbs 6:32-35 - But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself. Blows and disgrace are his lot, and his shame will never be wiped away; for jealousy arouses a husband's fury, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge. He will not accept any compensation; he will refuse the bribe, however great it is.

Nothing feeds adultery like fantasy. We imagine the grass is really greener, but it is a trap. Yes, there is pleasure in sin for a season, but it is short-lived, and look at the result: shame, disgrace, destruction. The real world is our thought world, so we must control our thoughts and fight the battle on this higher level.

In review:

1. Avoid giving loans or securing a debt
 you are not a bank
2. Avoid lazy behavior
 live like an ant
3. Avoid troublemakers
 be a peacemaker
4. Avoid what God hates
 love what God loves
5. Avoid a life of lust
 be committed so you can be happy

Choose an area where you need help, and share this with your small group, or friends, or family so you can pray about this together and begin to move forward.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, You alone are the source of all that I need. With the wisdom and strength I find in You, I can avoid the snares You caution me to avoid. Humble dependence on You protects us from yielding to temptation, preserves our peace, and prepares us for Your blessings. Thank you for Your provision. Amen.

Benediction:

All You need in Christ, you will find in Christ.
If You want little of Him, you will find little of Him.
If you want much of Him, you will find much.
If in utter helplessness, you cast your all on Christ, He will be to you the whole treasury of God.