



***BIBLE GATEWAY Proverbs 24 :: NASB.***

Verses 3 and 4 state,

*“Through wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.”*

While the image is the building and furnishing of a house, the real message points to a person’s life. Once an individual approaches adulthood, decisions begin to take on greater importance.

Will I go to college?

What kind of career do I want?

What kind of job can I get that will help me become more independent?



All these questions, and more, have to be answered sooner or later.

But the message of verses 3-4 go much deeper than that. The concern here is the spiritual and moral decisions that must be made by that maturing person. The spiritual quality of life is not dependent upon the realization of physical goals.

A local handyman can live a rich life. He can have a reputation as a good, honest, caring person. His integrity is unquestioned, and he has a strong faith and love for his Lord and Savior.

Whether a man or woman is the CEO of a large business, or a laborer or a housewife is not the issue.

What kind of personal “house” is being built?

Is the foundation built based on the Word of God?

Are decisions made with a focus on what God wants?

Are all people treated with respect and care?

If the answer is “Yes” then the life will be full of precious people, memories and riches. And when that person passes from this life, people will say, “I have been blessed because he/she touched my life!”

[Proverbs 24:10](#) states,

*“If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.”*

Like Peter, it is easy to claim that a person will remain strong and courageous. Then, when the “theory” becomes reality, the strength becomes weak and the courage becomes cowardice. Jesus spoke of this in His parable of the sower in [Matthew 13:3-8](#),

*“Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: ‘Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on good*



*ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

Jesus then said in verses 20-21,

*"But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup> yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles."*

Becoming a Christian is NOT like joining a club or association. The decision to obey the Gospel involves a stated commitment, an acknowledgement, a covenant, that **[Jesus Christ is the Son of God](#)**, and through His sacrifice, the sin of the person is forgiven, and the way is opened to be joined to the Father for eternity.

That is commitment that is made. No one can enter that casually. One of the people that followed Paul was a man named Demas. At first, he must have been faithful, but he eventually fell back into the world.



During the American Revolution, some people would come out in support of the colonies when things were going well, and then tend to hide when things were going poorly. That kind of person was called “A Summer Soldier and a Sunshine Patriot.”

The New Testament makes it very clear that Christians will face trials in this life. If a Christian does not recognize that fact, then he/she will very likely falter and fall.

There is one point that can be learned from the account of Peter’s boast and his failure where he denied the Lord three times. Peter repented, and his faith and bravery never wavered again. There may be times when a Christian is faced with a difficult decision or with a real physical threat.

At that moment, that person may stumble and not stand firm. But God does forgive, and God does know if a person’s faith is strong in the face of adversity.

Verses 11-12 state,

*“Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say,*



*'Surely we did not know this,' Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?"*

The teaching in the New Testament clearly states that a righteous person is one that shows an active concern and care for others.

[Luke 10:25](#) tells of a Jewish lawyer who tested Jesus with a question saying,

*"Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus then asked the lawyer, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" The lawyer then replied, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." Jesus then replied, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." The lawyer was not happy that his test of Jesus had failed, and "wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'"*

Jesus replied with the parable of the Good Samaritan found in [Luke 10:30-37](#). His parable goes to the heart of Proverbs 24:11-12. James



addressed this same thing in [\*James 2:14-17\*](#)

*"What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus, also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead."*

Helping and caring for others, especially other Christians, is not an option. It is expected.

The world is full of people in need, and a Christian may despair because of the inability to help everyone in the world. In most cases, one Christian does not have the means to physically or financially help everyone. But one Christian CAN help one person at a time on a personal one-on-one level. Individual Christians can make a difference in their communities.

Of course, there is no question that Christians are to help other Christians within their congregations. But such care should go beyond the congregation. Loving, personal attention to others will often cause them to seek out the truth. One man wrote, "When people see that you care, then they will listen to what you say."



Verse 11 states,

*"Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter."*

Helping others does not necessarily mean money. People who are spiritually hurting often feel isolated – alone. Being a friend who listens with love and compassion can mean so much to a person. How often has a life been saved both physically and spiritually because someone cared?

Most people can look back on their lives and remember one person that touched their lives in a special way that made a real difference for them. If every Christian in the world practiced the love and compassion seen in the parable of the Good Samaritan, think of how many lives can be changed!

Verse 12 finishes the thought with a clear warning.

*"If you say, 'Surely we did not know this,' Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who*





*keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?"*

Sometimes, the statement, "If I had only known" is a valid statement. Many people are very good at hiding the trouble or trials that they are facing, and the truth does not come out until something bad happens. The point is that the unknowing person was cared and was more than willing to help.

But then there are people that say, "Surely we did not know this" when not action was taken to reach out to another. Possibly a person or family has been faithful and active within the congregation, but their participation has fallen off. Yet, no action was taken to reach out and really find out how they are doing.

Verse 12 clearly warns that God KNOWS the motive behind every action, or inaction, that a person does. Nothing is hidden from God. Unfortunately, there may be times where reaching out to another comes too late.

But the caring, the love in the attempt was real and God knows that. On the other hand, being too busy at work, having too many activities with the children, hectic schedules, day-to-day problems, appointments and other excuses do not eliminate the expectation that each person care for and help another when possible.



This is even more important for Christians, because Christians are family - brothers and sisters in Christ. Family takes care of family, and if that is neglected, then God will render according to that person's deeds.

Verse 17-18 state,

*"Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; lest the Lord see it, and it displease Him, and He turn away His wrath from him."*

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said in Matthew 5:43-44,

*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you...."*

This attitude is the opposite of what the worldly man follows. Enemies will rejoice when one falls upon bad times. In some areas, feuds



between families, countries and regions have lasted for generations, and seems to be no end to the hostility and violence.

Holding to pain, a wrong suffered, or some other hurtful action will only fester and become worse. That is the way of the world, because the “prince of this world” seeks ways to cause pain and suffering. Hate, jealousy, and contempt will become a prison with will enslave one generation after another, because there is little room for love and forgiveness.

Saul of Tarsus was a real enemy of Christianity and the early Church. Probably many, whose family members suffered imprisonment or death at his hands, would have been happy to receive news that Saul of Tarsus had died.

But the Lord God had other plans. On the road to Damascus, Jesus Christ appeared before him. That event changed Saul and as the Apostle Paul, he played a major role in spreading the Gospel to the Gentile world.

All people, especially Christians, would do well to remember that God is in control. Today’s enemy may become tomorrow’s champion for the Lord. A Christian’s duty is to focus on the Father and Jesus Christ. A Christian’s duty is to love and serve. A Christian’s duty is to grow and mature in spirit. God will take care of the rest.