

Proverbs 22-12-14b

Let's pick up our study here in Proverbs chapter 3. We're about to finish the chapter. We're at verse 31 Do not envy the oppressor and choose none of his ways for the perverse person is an abomination to the Lord But his secret counsel is with the upright Do not envy the oppressor and choose none of his ways at first you would say Why would I want to? Envy an oppressor but Scripture mentions this principle time and again as a genuine potential as a genuine problem and Danger for virtuous people Psalm 37 verse 1 Which is a psalm of David, you know said in that that first book of 50 Do not fret because of evildoers remember the King James fret not thyself because of evildoers Do not fret because of evildoers nor be envious of the workers of iniquity fretting and envy What form would this take it's not hard to Find examples in the current day there are people that have control in our society control in social media control in the news delivery cycles People that have control in the workplace control in the classroom control at the doctor's office control if you want to go into a building and there's a sign on the door that says you better have a certain thing on Your face or you can't come in There are still people who are losing their jobs over vaccination mandates and such and The it's not so much envy as I wish I was in their place or I wish I had what they had as the frustration at the difference in those who are controlling and those of us who are being controlled in some fashion and Being forced into positions that we don't like having to conform when we don't want to You could imagine Jewish people in the days of the Romans in Jesus day where Rome allowed a certain amount of religious freedom But only up to a point and you weren't truly free you kept bumping up against Roman restrictions and Roman control Roman oversight Roman overruling of Jewish culture Jewish traditions and so on So you find the same thing again in Psalm 73 verse 3 I was envious of the boastful when I saw the prosperity of the wicked It seems like people who go along to get along are prospering there. They've got friends.

They've got jobs they've got popularity they go with the flow and they don't seem to be hitting the resistance and suffering the angst and the hardship and the inconvenience that I'm suffering I Don't believe what they are doing is right, but they seem to have no scruples. They're willing to go along and and benefit from harmonizing with what I consider to be wrong if not outright evil and Wouldn't it be great if I was on that side of the fence in some cases parents can say I wish my children didn't have to Suffer the slings and arrows that have been Hurlled by current society current policy current culture and my kids are suffering we've tried to raise them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and It's like it has made them ill-suited to to advance and to get along in the world it's made them ostracized and outcast and oddballs and That that's it's difficult and it raises our hackles. It makes us Not so much envy is really not the best way to put it but the Dissatisfaction with that status quo is what is in view so It is a hazard and Virtuous people are warned against letting that Reaction Get the upper hand in our soul You can see it.

You can recognize it. You can sort of Silently shake your mental fist at it, but then you've got to let it go Commit it to the Lord God is in his heaven. It's gonna be okay.

He is not surprised He saw this coming my fate is in his hands. I don't have to please people My kids don't have to please people to get ahead God Knows our needs God knows our situation to the extent that we're encountering this Opposition and this hardship it is woven into the fabric of his plan. He's gonna work it together for good.

Let it go Let the hot air out of that pressure balloon don't Let a root of bitterness spring up and poison What is actually good and virtuous and worthy in life? Because we have given away our peace to people who are all too willing to take it So The word here in verse 31 is Violent the oppressor is a violent man Interestingly, the word is Hamas It's got a hard ch ch amas Hamas So do not envy the Hamas Choose None of his ways we don't fight fire with fire if they're going to color outside the lines well, then so will we will sink to their level and let them beat us with experience is what usually happens, but Choose none of his ways There was a study years ago by a pastor that some of us listened to in years gone by Talking about how People who engage in power politics use strategies and tactics to overcome others by force and We should not succumb to going and doing likewise our strength is not flesh and blood If we're wrestling truly against principalities and powers and rulers of darkness in this age then We need spiritual ammunition spiritual resistance God's power to oppose to resist and Ultimately to overcome we can't overcome this kind of evil with human stratagem human strength and It is so tempting to Try to play on a chessboard with people who are using certain means they use a whisper campaign they spread gossip they twist truth they Back bite and back stab and you think well two can play that game. I've got some dirt I could spread about you I know some things that would make you look bad, and I'll pull you down the way you're trying to pull me down That is not God's way God has a far better Way for us to be So do not Choose the ways of the violent the oppressors the Hamas The perverse is an abomination to the Lord. This is a fascinating topic What is an abomination? This doesn't start with an O. It's not the Obama nation.

It's the ab-bomb in a tion What is an abomination? This is such an interesting topic there were a couple of guys Named Ezekiel and No, let's see R.E. Clements is the man's name R.E. Clements wrote an article that was published in a book It's called abomination in the book of Proverbs. It's got a whole article and nothing, but how abomination is is used and treated in our book of study here the book of Proverbs and He says this the nuances of the phrase in the wisdom tradition Are this what is wrong is? Intrinsically wrong it's wrong in and of itself When something is called an abomination in Proverbs in other words it is labeling something It isn't something that has been misused or subverted or co-opted it is Intrinsically wrong it is inherently wrong You can take a good thing and use it in a bad way that is not this an abomination It's a bad thing used in a bad way. There's a way to make it good.

There's no way to recover it There's no way to Sanctify it it is an abomination is wrong in itself and You can recognize it by the feeling of outrage that it engenders And think about that. Do you hear the news? Do you see things in your social media feed or whatever? You are talking to somebody you overhear a conversation and you hear about a situation a circumstance a happening something going on in the world around us and Outrage just begins to boil up within you that is just so wrong so evil that's an abomination Specifically in Proverbs. It doesn't say it's an abomination to me or it's an abomination to the people of God It is an abomination to the Lord his reaction to it is outrage and This is helpful for this reason When we start having this feeling of outrage we like to say well, it's my righteous indignation.

I Am righteously indignant at this horrific Malfeasance this breach of justice and righteousness this heinous disregard for everything that is worthy and moral and clean and fair and You know drag queens running amok amongst children and you know, just heinously. There's no way to make that, right? There is no way to make that right and there's a whole category of things like this This is a coping Requirement for us. It's not just a strategy.

It is a requirement that when we encounter these things and Recognize that they are an abomination to the Lord What does that enable us to do Vengeance is mine. I will repay I can I don't have to see then and simmer and boil and Get thrown completely out of fellowship by such things when I recognize an abomination to the Lord I Begin to see how much distance I can put between myself and that thing as a matter of self-preservation Because if it is an outrage and an anger inducing circumstance to the Lord How long do you think it's going to last before it is judged? What do you think his ultimate and final? Response to that is going to be I want to be careful that I am NOT Judged with the judgment wherewith I am trying to judge that thing. I don't want any contact with it I don't want to give it too much thought I don't want to Unless it's something in my periphery and I am personally involved and I need to make personal decisions about how to react or respond But things that are in the news things that are at a distance can't do anything about it anyway, what I have to do is disinvest and Distance and separate and get that out of my mind and say that right there.

That's an abomination to the Lord What are these things in Proverbs? Well In addition to this, what does it tell us here? the perverse And it says person is and that's all in italics the perverse one is An abomination to the Lord. What is perversity This is willful departure from the norm willful rebellion against what is proper and right and Traditionally understood to be Valuable and ethical and beneficial to others. It is a conscious Trampling of the good this is going to your neighbor's garden and just trampling the tulips into the dirt Because you can and it makes you feel good and it's self-affirming I am king of the flowers and I can stomp on whichever ones I want so to speak perverse this Sinning of the high hand this willful rebellion and conscious rubbing out of Restraint border limits is An abomination to the Lord and when his judgment

eventually falls on it We want to be well away You know, how many miles away can I get from that ground zero? Recognize when the scripture tells us something is an abomination.

It is a warning to us Steer clear Light fuse get away. Don't even light the fuse just get away So this also is going to occur in Proverbs 11 verse 1 dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord a Just weight is his delight Consciously with malice of forethought cheating other people and Stealing what rightfully belongs to them by subterfuge and by deception is an abomination and This is why outside the gates of the New Jerusalem in the kingdom of the Father Read the description of those even in the eternal future who are Prevented from entering the New Jerusalem Outside are read the description Those who love and practice a lie That is an abomination to the Lord and he's having none of it in his presence now or in any age to come They will never have access it's it is it is second only to the lake of fire itself in terms of of Danger warning caution Stay well clear This relieves us of the need to vent it relieves us of the need to strut and fret and shake our fist at the Injustices in the world and the you know How can people do these things and you've got this and that and the other going on and we start to work up ahead of? steam stop and think about the abomination to the Lord and what that's going to entail from the Creator God of the universe and the infinite power of judgment that he possesses Suddenly all my steam is out of the kettle I am no longer thinking that I need to do something or write a letter or call somebody and give them a piece of my mind I Become objective. I become calm.

I become respectful of God's timing God's judgment God's ordering of the world. He is letting these things out for a season and It is not up to me to second-guess and say, you know, God should have stopped that before it started. God has allowed it God has put me in a place where I can see it and I am accountable for my response My response should be Wow.

That's an abomination to the Lord Unimaginable judgment is going to fall on that I have to be sure that I am not guilty in any way shape or form of anything even remotely resembling that I don't want contact with it. I don't want to touch it I don't even want to look at it too long get that off my screen I would rather concentrate on that which is true and honest and right and noble and lovely and a good report If there be any virtue if there be any praise I am going to consciously focus my mind on those things or that part of a thing and The abominations I'm gonna let God deal with those that's serious So dishonest scales are an abomination to the Lord in Proverbs 11 1 Proverbs 11 20 those who are of a perverse heart. We're back to the same Description we have here those who are of a perverse heart.

It isn't just that they are perverse their heart is perverse They choose this they cultivate it. They pursue it. They define themselves by it They go after it and they live in its midst and they congregate with others who share that view Those who are of a perverse heart

are an abomination to the Lord notice the person himself is an abomination It doesn't say a perverse heart is an abomination.

It says those who are of a perverse heart Because it's a choice Nobody has to have a perverse heart. It's it's chosen But the blameless in their ways are his delight same contrast abomination versus delight Proverbs chapter 15 verse 8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord They're so proud of it. You go all the way back to Cain with his Salad offering Well, it's a sacrifice I'm not eating these leaves and this produce of the field I'm giving it to God I Stick in my thumb and pull out a plum and say what a good boy.

Am I? The sacrifice of the wicked You why are you doing it? If you're wicked you're not doing it out of love for God out of respect for his commandments out of an understanding of what it means and what it connotes and what it signifies You've got a wicked Self-righteous motive in bringing it. I want to impress other people. I want to fool myself into thinking that I'm a wonderful person Look at me and what I've done the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord But The prayer of the upright is his delight bring as much material goods make as big a show as you want come down to the temple and wave the bag of gold before You drop it into the coffer at the temple as they did in the days of Jesus And he said that widow that dropped two pennies in she's given more than all the rest of them put together It's the heart not the seeming Value of the action or the the estimate of what it is is worth in human terms The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord I don't want to fool myself into thinking that I'm righteous because well look at my sacrifices I Go to Bible class.

I I take notes. I I give a Bible class I I Support this I'm a part of that. I there are charities There's good works that I do so I look at my sacrifices and say see I'm righteous It's the heart the next verse Proverbs 15 9 the way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord So you start out with The perverse person the perverse heart and Now the perverse pattern of life the way the the traveling path The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but he loves him who follows righteousness The way of the wicked he's walking his own path The one who is following righteousness righteousness may lead down some very strange roads You may cross an open field you may have to go through some dark woods You may go down into the valley of the shadow you may have to climb a mountain.

I have never ceased to be Impressed at the times that Jesus was with his disciples Then he left he climbed a mountain and then he called them to climb the mountain. He was just with him Why the journey why the climb? Why does this have to happen at the top of a mountain? Well, are you willing to follow righteousness wherever it goes if it means a steep climb I'm there I'll keep climbing until I I get there head for the high ground But Jesus didn't always make it easy Sometimes he intentionally made it difficult He saw all of those crowds in Matthew chapter 5 verse 1 crowds are father thousands of people are

coming bringing the sick and afflicted and the demon-possessed and the blind and the lame and and the Leprous and so on Jesus left them all climbed a mountain His disciples came to him then he delivered the teaching on the hill Didn't give it to the crowd the chosen notwithstanding. He didn't have them build a big stage and come out and give his big homily on ethics It was teaching for his disciples and only his disciples only those who would climb the hill to be where he is So Proverbs 15 8 and 9 9 says the way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord and that means there is going to be horrific Permanent eternal judgment on that way, but he loves him who follows righteousness Follow it Verse 26 of that same chapter Proverbs 15 26 the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord It just doesn't pay to be wicked Your person is an abomination.

Your heart is an abomination. Your way is an abomination Your thoughts the thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord but those of the pure are pleasing God can take pleasure in our thoughts when we are endeavoring to think his thoughts Reflecting in that law doth he meditate day and night Psalm 1 God delights in it. He takes pleasure in it He appreciates it It pleases him So these References to abomination are going to find their fullest expression and I'm not going to talk about it now But when we get just a few chapters forward into proper Proverbs chapter 6, we'll have a proper Display of abomination and you remember this These six things doth the Lord hate yea seven are an abomination to him You can probably say these with me a proud look a lying tongue Hands that shed innocent blood a heart that devises wicked imaginings feet that are swift in running to evil a false witness who speaks lies and one who sows discord among brethren When you realize how serious it is for something to be Abominable in the sight of the Lord and then run through that Proverbs chapter 6 list We'll we'll have some fruitful insights when we when we reach that point But we don't get there if we don't keep moving forward here in Proverbs.

So that is Proverbs chapter 3 verse 32 His secret counsel his hidden manna one might say is With the upright Why don't you want to be upright? Don't you want to be the righteous? Don't you want to be the humble? So that God is not resisting us, but he's giving us grace. He is sharing with us Secret counsel you can't get this at your local five-and-dime. You don't get it in philosophy class you don't get it from a YouTube video a how-to book a self-help session a Support group or a good friend full of advice and well, let me tell you what happened to me God's Secret counsel is shared with the upright We are not always upright we trip we fall and we're horizontal not vertical we are crooked and not straight So how can we possibly qualify for this? Two words psalm 51 When we acknowledge our sins first John 1 9 God forgives us and Cleanses us from all unrighteousness and we return to status upright status Righteous.

This has to be our pattern. It can't be mechanical. It can't be superficial.

It can't be Self-gratifying inconvenient. Well, let me go commit this sin and then I'll confess it here in just a minute God knows the heart he knows if we're Serious or not His

secret counsel is with the upright. Oh, I want this so badly God who knows the end from the beginning God who knows the outcome of Every cause condition succession relation every permutation of circumstance What if this person chooses this and this person chooses that what if this happens? What if that happens? What if the temperature is this what if the snow is that? What if genetics are this what if environment is that God knows every single part and if he will share with me his wisdom his Secret counsel it's not available to just anyone he shares it with those to whom he can reveal his heart The one who has my words and keeps him and loves me Jesus says my father and I will come and make our home with him and We're going to have table talk.

I will sup with him and he with me when he opens the door and That conversation at the table, can you imagine having the Lord Jesus Christ at your dinner table every day? Well Lord. I was out there today. I heard this and I saw that I failed here And I think I did pretty well here and to converse and commune with the Lord Jesus himself That is not a far-off possibility that is absolutely possible now It is a matter of choice, it's a matter of priority It's a matter of how serious do I want to take my relationship with God? How much do I want to be in his inner circle in? his confidence to partake of the hidden manna to sit with the Lord Jesus on his throne in the future kingdom and Be an intimate a member of the cabinet be in those meetings that don't get published and don't get recorded and aren't photographed but you are of use and of service and are entrusted with opportunities and responsibilities to serve and to be useful to the one who gave everything for us What an opportunity Secret counsel is with the upright Verse 33 the curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked This is another facet of things that are abominable the curse of the Lord abides remains on The house of the wicked notice there is a periphery here You can't just be in isolation and God's going to carefully Dissect and find just the wicked and that's going to be the place of the curse.

The whole house is cursed There's no room you can go to there's nobody else in the house. That doesn't feel the effect It spreads it is gangrenous. It is cancerous.

It is malignant and The judgment of God will go everywhere the malignancy goes But he blesses the home of the just this is one of your biblical expressions of blessing by association as With ten righteous in Sodom the whole city would have been spared One righteous person in a home God will bless that entire home Just for the sake of the one Because he's not just blessing the person. He is blessing the environment that surrounds the person It would be grievous to have some sort of personal interior blessing, but everything around you is Rancid and falling apart and going to seed and rotten God creates a bubble of blessing around the upright around the righteous and People within that bubble get blessing by association Hopefully it is a clue Hopefully it will draw them to the God who is blessing and they will figure out why that blessing is coming Why cursing is outside the house and not within? Why is it that we are not touched by this and then you have verse 34? Surely he scorns the scornful but gives grace to the humble You remember this quoted in James 4 6 you also find it in 1st Peter chapter 5 verse 5

Peter says likewise you young people submit yourselves to your elders This whole section. Did you notice my son my son? When we get to chapter 4, we're going to see grandpa talking chapter 4 of Proverbs Grandpa is going to be quoted Grandpa talked to my father.

My father talks to me my son my son The father is going to rehearse what his father told him Respect your elders So Peter says in 5 5 of 1st Peter you younger people submit yourselves to elders Your isn't in the original submit yourselves to the older and wiser Yes, all of you be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility What is it about clothing? Any Man who lives with women and daughters in particular has to always think about clothing if you leave the privacy of your Master bedroom you better be aware of clothing and of the location of various ladies in the house Because you can't emerge unclothed, right That's the idea if you are clothed with humility, you don't go anywhere without it If I haven't got my humility on I'm naked Be clothed with humility. Don't go anywhere without it It is the very definition of modesty to be clothed Be clothed with humility why and then Peter quotes our verse God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble Many times you see this reflexive idea in Scripture often in Proverbs It's it's couched in a little bit harsher terms here in our verse God scorns the scorers Those who snap their fingers at God he who sits in the heavens will laugh they laugh at him You know science and new atheists and and other self indulgent self-important You know quote-unquote brights and intelligent people laugh at the idea of God Scripture says you laugh at God as harsh and mean as it sounds there's a day coming when God is going to laugh at you and That laugh is probably going to sound exactly like a recording of your own laughter. I Think of this in terms of God having a little reel-to-reel recorder there because I think about reel-to-reels and the laughter of Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris and these others who militantly arrogantly Super silly and bitterly mock and impugn God give him all kinds of derisive Descriptions Can you imagine one of these guys reading their own book and a recording of that at the final judgment? They're standing there and God just gives a nod to an angel.

He hits play and Here's this description. You've heard him. I'm not going to repeat it again, but you know what I'm talking about God will scorn the scorers He who sits in the heavens is going to play back that laughter and it will not be funny But he gives grace to the humble This is why we don't want to go anywhere without our humility on that way.

God's grace will always be following us There are many manifestations of Arrogance sometimes it is an inferiority complex It's arrogant to have an inferiority complex To be so worried about how I come across and so sure that people aren't going to be impressed as I think they should be It's arrogance we need to relax if we are too worried about what people think and We think oh, I've got this flaw and this shortcoming and people are gonna I can't go there. They're gonna think badly of me It's arrogance Drop that stuff be clothed with humility. I Don't need approval because I belong to God I'm blood-bought the Lord Jesus Christ purchased me I am an eternal member of the royal

family of God and I can go anywhere and It doesn't matter what anybody thinks because I'm not relying on their opinion for my self-worth My worth comes from God in heaven and nobody can shake that and nobody can change it because it's based on Christ.

Not me Soon as I start thinking that the things depend on me I'm dropping my humility garment and displaying my nakedness now. I really do deserve scorn and contempt Be clothed with humility because God gives grace to the humble The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the legacy of fools This word legacy is so interesting. It is the word that means to raise up and this is the hit field, which is the causative so shame is the cause of elevation For fools So the wise inherit glory remember glory is kavod it means heavy this is something that anchors you something that stabilizes you and gives you substance and genuine weight right shame Floats fools away.

It is the opposite of kavod heavy It is it is floating away on a bubble of shame You're gonna be so light and so insignificant Because of your foolishness so Hands up everybody that wants to be a fool. I don't think so. I don't want to float away on a bubble of shame Hot air balloon of shame I Want to inherit notice the glory belongs to God and he Grants it to us transfers it to us makes us its custodians and its stewards Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom Recognizing the opportunity to be a steward of his glory to reflect it to be its its Benefactor that's what counts that concludes chapter 3. We'll pick up in Proverbs chapter 4 next time proverb Father we thank you for this book of Proverbs We thank you for the wonderful truth that it contains and how clearly it is presented may God the Holy Spirit find our hearts willing Soil that can be plowed and the seeds planted deeply so that they will bear 100-fold fruit that reflects your glory and redounds to the praise of the Lord Jesus Christ in whose name we pray amen