

## Proverbs 23-11-29b

Let's resume our study now in Proverbs chapter 12. We're at the conclusion of this chapter and it impresses me again, and I've said this for the last many weeks, but these are so practical in terms of pointing to where the power is to live the kind of life that we are to live and it's in the Old Testament you would think well my My good stuff for living the Christian life is all going to be out of Paul and the New Testament epistles but the exhortation to pay attention to what comes out of our mouths to cultivate self-control to monitor the door of our lips and you remember the Prayer in the Psalms that says that very thing Set a watch over my mouth. Oh Lord keep the door of my lips Even when we realize that we have a problem in this area.

We have a history track record of failure in this area This is a legitimate Subject for prayer and we know this because the psalmist prays it set a watch on my mouth keep the door of my lips and we Everything that we need to do is Enabled and empowered by God. It is a matter of choosing it and prioritizing it and valuing it because We love our Father in heaven We love the Lord Jesus Christ, and we know that life isn't worth living It has no meaning or purpose or definition apart from what we? Take from God's Word and what we build into eternity The grass withers and the flower fades so many people have done as Shakespeare says and Strutted and fretted their hour on the stage sound and fury ultimately signifying nothing Anything we invest in this earth, however Grandiose however self-satisfying it may be if it doesn't count on eternity. What's it worth? who will Care when we're gone and when those people who might have cared are gone you think about the Untold millions of people that have come and gone on this earth and all of their highs and lows their angst their Achievements their worry their their struggles It is all perished in the dust What will be the outcome of those lives? I? Keep there's a picture On the back wall of the sanctuary here.

That is my great great grandfather Bouchard Narcisse Bouchard I See his face. He died well before my father was born but he lived he was French and came with his brothers through Canada and Came down to Wisconsin and moved his family and raised his kids and there are no end of ups and downs and highs and lows and conflicts and he No doubt lived every minute of his life as intensely as we live ours now But where is it and what is it what part of it? Matters at this point other than you know sheer genealogical descendancy Outside of a few letters and a few Second and third hand reminiscences. We really know nothing now.

I can look at my other great-great grandfather That's on another wall, and he was a primitive Baptist preacher, and he's sitting in a chair with a Bible on his lap I know Three or four details about his life But the days that he spent the hours the hours in prayer the hours in sermon preparation the hours of preaching He was an itinerant circuit writing preacher But what did he preach? I don't know How well did he do what what went on in his family? What were the daily struggles? He was married and widowed and then

married again. And what was the nature of those relationships? It's all gone with the wind and Our lives if the Lord Terry's will be similarly unremarked unarchived unheralded unknown The things that we push so hard to accomplish perish in the using what counts is What is aimed at eternity when we operate in faith? God is not unrighteous to forget that work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope it is Stored in heaven and there are consequences there are outcomes it is memorialized It is never forgotten. It never fades away It is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away according to Scripture Isn't it amazing we can take this time and? invest it and convert it Redeeming the time because the days are evil We redeem the time now It has taken an imperishable and incorruptible form by faith by God's grace God does it all all we are is making the decision to let God's power work to follow God's exhortations and God's pleading with us Why will you die? Oh house of Israel all day long.

I hold out my hands to you. God says Well, that's not just in days of failure that's also in days of distraction or days of apathy and so on so these these principles and Proverbs are so full of traction and meaning for us because when we follow them when we with malice aforethought with Intentionality as they like to say now We fully intend to do this. I'm gonna make this happen these situations I regularly get into I'm at work.

I'm at home. I'm doing this. I'm doing that.

I'm gonna convert that time I'm gonna do the very same thing, but I'm going to do it better because I'm going to do it in faith I'm gonna do it as unto the Lord and not unto men. I don't care if it's appreciated. I don't care if I'm criticized I don't care I am doing this to the very best of my ability because I am doing it as unto the Lord when we do that that task that accomplishment that time spent the energy expended Gets eternalized.

It's just the most amazing thing if we can just remember it and not fritter away our time and These are the ways we do it. I'll concentrate on myself control I want to be prudent and wise not foolish and deceitful. I want to speak the truth When I am tempted to leave out a detail because it makes me look bad But somebody needs to know this detail to be sure that we parse this correctly and don't have this episode repeat itself Somebody needs to know well The reason that broke is I forgot to turn this off or I forgot to turn this on or I failed to change the oil or whatever might be I would rather be a person of truth because that admission of my Culpability May make me look bad now, but I have just built a an eternal brick into my future God sees it God appreciates it and God will bless it and God will reward it and God's gifts and calling are irrevocable once you get them you've got them not like the fading glory of this world, so Again as we conclude chapter 12 here, we've seen this importance of Lying lips versus dealing truthfully and notice dealing truthfully It's more than just I'll be sure that what I say can't be Brought back on me as a lie People I gave the example of a saying of mr. Trump that is apocryphal that he Manifestly never said and so they've gone back to the event and the alleged night

where he was to have said this at some Gathering and so they asked people who were at the gathering they said Did did Donald Trump say? You know that that military service members are losers and you know to be looked down on and so on and The the guys came back and said I never heard him say any such thing I never and so people come back and say well It doesn't mean that he didn't say it.

They're just saying that they didn't hear it They're not acknowledging that they heard anything that doesn't mean that he didn't say well If nobody heard him say it then how can you say he said somebody had to have heard it to repeat it They can't find anybody who says yes. I was standing there. Yes.

I was sitting at the table. Yes. These are his words I am the source of this quote.

There is no such person There are people who say I never heard him say anything remotely like it look at his policies Nobody was better for veterans Nobody did more to restore the VA hospitals and the VA Healthcare systems and the rest of it that during his administration than mr. Trump if he if he looks down on veterans so much It certainly isn't Coming out in his actions quite the opposite And you know look at the film of him You know pinning medals and awards and and promotions on people in various aspects that are in the military Standing on the deck of the carriers and talking about the the service of people and so on so this one apocryphal quote seems to outweigh all of that and Dealing truthfully Being truthful in our actions and in our steadfastness as well as you know It isn't just parsing our words so that somebody well I never said he he didn't say it I said I didn't hear him say it and you know finding these little outs and these little CYA means of of saying well, I didn't tell him untruth. I just sort of I Arranged the truth that I did say in such a way that I can cover for my actual deceit Dealing truthfully it's because beyond speaking it is living a truthful life Transparent life what you see is what you get. I'm not a hypocrite I'm not working from behind a smiling mask and and I'm full of bitterness and as soon as you're not in the room I'm gonna tell people what a horrible person you are dealing truthfully they are God's delight and He in whom the Lord delights is in a good place So verse 23 prudent man conceals knowledge the heart of fools proclaims foolishness we talked about that verse 24 And you will notice now that after the the introduction there in verse 22 Talking about God's involvement each of these Little sections now.

This is the section heading in verse 23 a prudent man has this Self-control to conceal shame to conceal foolishness To conceal knowledge of that which is unhelpful. It isn't going to help anybody to Talk about this to noise it abroad The heart of fools They there's foolishness in there and it's like that song about music I got the music in me and it's got to come out Well, I've got the foolishness in me and it's got to come out the heart of a fool can't contain its foolishness now we're going to have a pattern here of Positive negative in verse 24 and negative positive in verse 25 Positive negative in verse 26 negative positive in verse 27 So there is again this structural symmetry that ties this

together and tells us it is a unit so verse 24 Starts out with a positive the hand of the diligent will rule And we talked about this. This is guaranteed by the Lord Faithful in that which is least you will be faithful in that which is much So you've been faithful in a few things.

I will make you ruler over many things you will have opportunity and responsibility for service and Glorious function in the future kingdoms that are to come the hand of the diligent will rule the lazy Will be put to forced labor. This is not a command that people in society run around and look for the lazy and grab them up and and Put them on a chain gang. This isn't proscriptive.

This is descriptive This will be fulfilled by God himself. This is going to be the outcome by divine Mandate by divine plan and purpose. I don't have any business saying well, you're lazy Come here, I'm gonna hold a gun on you and make you work That's the positive and negative in verse 24 you come to verse 25 anxiety in the heart of a man causes depression That's the negative.

These are like magnets that have a positive and negative pull and when you get them next to each other what happens? like things Repel and opposite things attract there's a relationship between the negative and the positive Earlier in this chapter we had the sections Stuck together in that fashion. But here we have the Positive and then the negative now in verse 25 negative and then positive so it makes a nice little taco a little sandwich with contents inside Anxiety in the heart of a man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad and You notice that there is action in the first one. There is thought in the second one so Are you? Laboring and working.

Are you diligent in your actions then in verse 25? What are you thinking about if you're worrying if you're overthinking if you're obsessing if you're Getting all wrapped around the axle on a thing and you can't let it go You can't get your faith going in there to stuff that thing back into its box and lock the lid How do you fix that? God has not given us a spirit of fear but a power and love and a sound mind. How do I get that power? Where do I get that sound mind? Where does that love come from? It comes from God. So, how do I get it? I can't generate it So what am I going to use to to bolster my faith which will solve this worry which will remove the depression It is the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

I know how to do these I know when the Holy Spirit is active and functional in my soul. It's when I have confessed my sins when I have Endeavored to walk in the light. What is the light? It is the light of God's Word So I'm going to start running promises through my mind The They who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength.

They will mount up with wings as Eagles They will run and not be weary. They will walk and not faint I'm just gonna you want a mantra run those kind of verses through your mind Casting all your cares upon him for he cares for you God is never going to suffer

the righteous to be moved. I just need to be sure I'm qualified as righteous and Not by works of righteousness, which I have done it's according to his mercy that I've got the righteousness of Christ So all I've got to do is make sure my sins are confessed that I'm not in the midst of perpetrating new sins Faster than they can be confessed that I'm walking in the light and the blood of Jesus Christ keeps on cleansing my heart Now I'm qualified for the presence of the Holy Spirit.

That's half of it. What is the Holy Spirit speak and use? In my heart to generate power and and and give a foundation for my faith It's the Word of God what time I'm afraid I will trust in thee I Will both lay me down in peace and sleep for thou Lord only make us me dwell in safety This is where the memorization get that list of verses it's still on our website if you don't have your your ring of verses that the Debbie made for us then Get the list and print it out print one page Tape it to the dashboard fold it and stick it in your pocket fold it in your purse or people don't carry purses anymore I don't know Take a picture of it on your phone and and pull it up and read Run those verses through let the Holy Spirit speak. Let the Holy Spirit generate the power of That we aim our faith at the merit of faith is in the object that will banish worry care and anxiety That will lift depression and that will put us in a place of service and function that we are designed to be here What a privilege we are the body of Christ.

We are his representatives. We are his ambassadors We are to shine his lights in the midst of a dark generation. I don't want to be the darkness I want to be the light in the darkness and it's God's light.

It's God's power. It's God's grace It's God's glory that is on the line. I just need to line myself up like louvers in a blind Line up those those louvers and the light will shine right through Louvers don't generate light.

Just don't walk the light be a conduit and not a plug That's what this is talking about Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad. This is that wise counsel This is the word fitly spoken This is a good path a good way forward a good strategy a good approach Here's where self-control says I need to just remain silent Here's where there's an opportunity. Somebody is asking they are seeking they are knocking I know what the answer is if I'm careful if I limit myself if I don't act like the Fire station responding to a request for a drink You know pour a little water in the outstretched glass.

I don't fire hose them clear down to the end of the block Answer the question that was asked see if that satiates the thirst if it generates another question be loving be cautious be kind and And Now we are looking beyond ourselves now We can be a blessing to others because we ourselves are already dwelling in the area of blessing I've got to get the boards and beams out of my stuff before I can be used by God for moat removal So a good word Can make our heart glad and our heart has to be glad before we can speak a

good word that will make somebody else Enter into comfort and encouragement and direct them back toward the Lord and We are not an intermediary. We are not a mediator We are not an essential link All we do is remind that person that they have got a direct link to God through Christ Through his word and through his spirit Believers need to connect directly to God. I don't have power to give somebody I can comfort I can weep with those who weep I can rejoice with those who rejoice But as soon as somebody starts looking to me as a mentor or as a facilitator or as an essential part of their mental puzzle I am wrong.

I need to get out from between Because we do we're like a resistor in the circuit. All we're going to do is generate heat and dissipate power We're not going to help if we get in that in that connection We can encourage one another toward love and good works by direct connection through the Lord Jesus Christ There is one mediator between God and men in our Timothy passage the man Christ Jesus point people to Christ We are priests. He's our high priest.

There is no other level priest to high priest to God himself Connect to the Lord Jesus. So that's that is the good word that makes a heart glad Now verse 26 The righteous should choose his friends carefully. What does that mean in the modern day? What happens when you have a friend? What what is the nature of contact with a friend? You have a lot of conversation, right? You have you have input and viewpoint from a friend You can get assistance and help from a friend You can also be dragged down and gotten into trouble by a friend a friend who You know you get in their car and now they're driving too fast and they're running lights and they're endangering Pedestrians and you're trapped in the car because well I rode with my friend My friend wants to do this activity and I hate for them to go by themselves So I'll don't go and try to keep him out of trouble Choose your friends carefully.

What does it mean in the modern day? What do you allow in past the firewall the filters the Necessary doors and walls. What do you allow in you let a friend in? Well, what kind of social media? Do we allow ourselves? to soak in what kind of news outlets do we regularly listen to that are pressing a single point of view and and just Beating it into your skull with a sledgehammer and omitting other important details to try to stimulate your willingness to sit and then watch the commercials and You know avail yourself of their sponsors and so on all Opinionated news at this point is largely money driven sponsor driven viewership driven I read a statistic that the the managers and the heads at Fox News For example, we do you see a lot of Fox News in our area? Those guys are checking the applause meter as it were the equivalent of the Nielsen ratings every five minutes Anytime a new guest comes on one of these shows that they have they watch to see if viewership Increases or drops if they've got people with with I approve, you know thumbs up and thumbs down So guests that get a lot of thumbs up, they'll invite that guest back Some other guests might have really important viewpoint, but it's not popular that guest you'll never see him again And it's it is ratings driven. It is it is Viewership

driven it is money driven because they take these numbers to sponsors and say look Mike if you put your my pillow commercial on here, you're gonna get this many viewers And so on, you know balance of nature and I can tell you all of the sponsors on Fox because they just you can When I'm battling incoherently in the nursing home someday, it'll it's all gonna be Mike Lindell and the the beauties of his slippers and his pillows and his blankets and his Towels that soak up more than the others and you know Is you just it just I wish I wish somebody would repeat scripture to me as often as I hear these commercials and Wouldn't that be great? Just just put our memory verses on a loop get the Auto Bible and just paste our memory verses in just let that run on a loop I wish I could rig up a thing where every time I hit mute on the TV my Bible verses would loop in as the audio while These commercials are passing by The mute button triggers my memory verses Anyway, that's what this is talking about The righteous should choose his friends carefully choose what you have abiding contact with what you rely on What you turn to for comfort for encouragement choose it carefully Anything that a friend can supply you can find in multiple forms today people rely on Entertainment things.

Oh, I'm just gonna relax and I'm gonna veg with this. I'm gonna veg out with that I'm gonna this is my friend My friend is my my Facebook feed or my Twitter Collection or my music collection or whatever it may be if I am turning to that well, what's in it? And you know that the music in the past was so often was fairly innocuous But have you seen and read some of the lyrics in what young people are? Putting on a loop in their hearts and minds today. Oh my gosh you Stalin has to be dancing inside his coffin with the socialist subversive criminally insane messaging that comes out with some of this music and even some of these that sound like a girl that smoked one too many marijuana cigarettes and she's strumming a guitar and and Sounding like she's half-asleep Listen to the lyrics it will shock you what what they're saying about their bodies and about what they're doing with their significant others and and They're significant.

Other is the same gender and this stuff is just passing by Old fuddy-duddies don't have the patience to try to listen and figure out what's going on But if you stop pull up the lyrics on a lyric site somewhere it's facepalm time and We this is a friend that people choose. I just put on you know, my favorite artist and They're gonna you know, sing me to To rest or somnambulism or whatever Choose friends carefully if you're righteous you monitor what you allow across the threshold into your intimate fellowship at your table what you Admit as a valid opinion what you listen to as profitable discourse and good information By the way, if you've got a good vocabulary and the patience to wade through a very densely worded essay I will give you a quick Recommendation now you may want to write this down. The man's name is I believe it's RT a RT.

I and his last name is Moini mo e I n I I'm pretty sure in the first name. I'm positive on the last name Mo e I n I and it's a RT. I I believe is his first name He is he's got a position in a in a think-tank type of thing But he wrote an article recently you can find it online and the key words in the title are Gaza Ukraine and catharsis Those three words are in the

title.

So put in Moini Gaza Ukraine catharsis. You will find it That article will explain things that you know, but you've not been able to articulate The problem is he's so articulate. You really have to read it about three times to absorb everything.

He's saying unlike me It is extremely concise. It is very dense You're gonna have to look up words like ontological and and so on to to figure out exactly What he's saying but it is worth the time it is worth the effort It will explain a lot of what you're seeing in the modern day, so RT Moini Gaza Ukraine something something catharsis Strongly encourage you to read that it's it's not political so much as observational So what friends do we allow across the threshold choose them carefully for the way of the wicked leads them astray If there is wickedness that is a part of or intrinsic to the friend that you spend time with whatever that may be You're gonna be astray and The land of astray is a miserable place. There's no power.

There's no comfort. There will be depression There will be failure. There will be pain.

There will be suffering there will be Ought against you from others because we will hurt and bite and devour one another when we are in the land of astray We do not want to go astray. We want to watch and pray that we enter not into being astray and One of the quickest ways to get led astray is to be led by somebody that we have allowed past the proper gates and filters Verse 27 the lazy does not roast what he took in hunting Diligence is man's precious possession the practical application of this for us and and I say this carefully advisedly and and slightly tongue-in-cheek But we have all come together and we do this regularly to study the Word of God we look at it Old Testament and new and there is Food there. There is game that we have hunted down.

We have found and We've taken it. We've got it on board. Here's the pheasant.

Here's the dove. Here's the deer Here's the rabbit or whatever. Is it somebody went out to hunt this This that we hunted down.

It's not easy to find good Bible teaching to find Insight that that has traction and will actually make a difference in our lives So we look for that and wherever we find it here or elsewhere. We take that With us we put it in the bag. We've got it in the game bag.

It's fish hanging on the Whatever you call that thing you hang fish on that you bring them home The trot line there, whatever it is You you bring it home. Well, if you don't cook it and eat it It doesn't ultimately do you any good what was the was it just the joy of the hunt and once you've got it You're not actually going to him take imbibe have it imparted digest it have it become Something useful and beneficial and nutritional to our soul. Are we hunting but not roasting? Are we capturing and taking but not? Eating and digesting The word is bread for our souls But if we just bake the bread and set it on the

shelf as it were it doesn't ultimately do us any good We the process fools us into thinking that and and there's been a huge you think about the what they used to call the ice movement and clones of Baraka church and guys that were trying to emulate Bob theme and so on and there was a lot of form without content and People would come and leave their Bible in their notebook on the folding chair at the church because it's all about Attending it's all about listening.

It's all about isn't this guy a wonderful teacher They were hunting and catching but not intaking and so many of those churches Fragmented split. I know of three that I know well that I had close personal observation of that all fell by that means form of godliness denying the power hunting finding this good game bringing it home and not roasting it and That is the opposite of diligent lazy is the opposite of diligent You don't really care or you'd complete the process You're just going through the motions for some superficial reason. I just like the hunting.

I don't like the eating well The whole point we can't live the life God calls us to if we don't partake This is my body, which is broken for you take eat Right diligence is man's precious possession Diligence versus laziness if we're diligent we won't do what the lazy do we won't go through the motions and have the superficial Attendance without an actual result an actual difference. I have said this before I will say it again if you come to grace and truth Bible Church and We go into the Word of God together and we come back out and if we are unchanged if it doesn't make a difference if we don't find power and Progress and the fruit of the Spirit Go find a place where there is better teaching where there where you get what you need so that you'll roast it and eat it Nobody is everybody's right pastor. Nobody is everybody's best teacher Everybody that cares about the Word of God will keep asking and seeking and knocking and praying for a source that fits their needs that Goes at the right pace that unearths the right truths.

Nobody can do it all nobody does it the same way twice Everybody is different and there are plenty plenty plenty of sources if one doesn't work try another and God will bless the search You go hunting God will put the game right in front of you. Shoot it. Take it home and eat it roast it that's the idea if you don't care enough to find the source of the Word of God that the Holy Spirit can bless to your heart and soul bless to the nourishment of your spiritual life and enable and empower you to bear the fruit to exercise your spiritual gift to have a fruitful and Enjoyable prayer life to improve your relationships with others to give you strength in the horizontal and in the vertical if you're not getting those things Go where you can Bring it home roast it Because diligence is a precious possession It's the most important thing be diligent to show yourself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed Rightly dividing the word of truth.

That's your meal if you're not getting it here, please I Will think nothing but better of you if you find something that is more suitable if you do Find what you need here. I feed myself Well, it's up to me to now not just find it and say wow ain't that great. Look at this

14-point buck I just shot Got a skin it dress it Cook it and eat it The finding is not the goal eating is the goal.

That's what it says. Finally verse 28 in The way of righteousness is life This is transcendent life abundant life Eternal life life that builds into the future when the Lord Jesus comes we go to the to the judgment seat of Christ There's gold. There's silver.

There's precious stones and It persists that stuff is eternal the overcomer promises in Revelation chapter 2 and 3 the white stone the new name Pillar in the temple of my God name written on there that nobody knows The the opportunity to walk with Christ in white to sit with him on his throne Who in their right mind wouldn't want those things they are attainable we have to remember that we want them we have to live like we want them and That way of righteousness is life these attributes of watching what we say watching how we think Assessing what we do Measuring against the objective standard of God's Word. That's what makes this life count and last We won't be a black and white photo on somebody's wall 80 to 100 years from now There will be a House with furnishings with accouterments with wonderful blessings and rewards from God the privilege and opportunity of spending time with the resurrected and glorified Lord Jesus Christ himself Being a part of his ruling system Entering into new projects that that we haven't even thought of that are going to happen in the eternal future We will be kicking ourselves Eternally if we don't recognize the opportunity and avail ourselves of it now, it's amazing the common Mundane things of life can be converted into an eternal weight of glory This is a momentary light affliction It's a brief challenge It's it's a quick story problem test If we concentrate if we focus if we avail ourselves of what God has given us in grace through the Lord Jesus Christ His words his works his example his ongoing intercession and representation in the throne room All of that is ours that menorah of blessings in Ephesians chapter 1 read Ephesians chapter 1 in him we have all of these wonderful things and Paul says I pray that you will come to know the Surpassing greatness and he uses five different words for power in the closing section of Ephesians chapter 1. This is ours and Proverbs of all places is telling us the Rubber on the road of how to leverage those things into eternal opportunity blessing reward and Reflection of the glory of God through Christ. It doesn't get any better than this and this is exactly how to do it It's not hard.

It's not unattainable. It's not higher than I can jump It's not deeper than I can dig We just have to want it and we have to be diligent to show ourselves approved the diligent get the reward Those who say this is not just any old day It's not just the job and making the bed and washing my clothes and finding something to eat This is the day the Lord hath made I need to rejoice that I've got a day that I can invest in the things that count a Glory that fadeth not away reserved eternal in the heavens No one believer has has a shot at that it is As near as our heart and our lips it's as near it's in our hearts. It's in our mouths God says so that's the challenge the way of righteousness.

That's the way of life in Its pathway there is no death the one who lives and believes in me Jesus said will never die if you live a life of faith in Christ You live and believe in me. Jesus said you'll never die. There is no death in that way What people call death is barely an inconvenience It's just it's not a factor Isn't that something well, we'll close here in a word of prayer we'll pick up at Proverbs chapter 13 next time Father we are so grateful for your grace Your loving-kindness your faithfulness toward us expressed most fully in the Lord Jesus Christ himself the very embodiment of your love and your willingness to Come more than halfway To rescue us from a lost and hopeless condition to give us the option of being united with you through him We pray that as we reflect on these truths from your word that God the Holy Spirit will make them flame and live and breathe May they be hammers that will break up the rocks in our souls Make us a plant and a field where the seed of the word can be planted deeply and produce 100-fold fruit we ask it in Jesus name.

Amen