

**MAKE ME A BLESSING**  
**PROVERBS 10:1-32**

By Pastor John Carlini, D.Mn

**M.I. WHEN WE HEAR AND OBEY GOD, WE BECOME A BLESSING TO OURSELVES,  
OUR FAMILIES, AND THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH.**

I. A BLESSING TO MY FAMILY (Vs. 1-5)

**GODLY CHILDREN BRING JOY AND HAPPINESS TO GODLY PARENTS.**

- A. THE FATHER OF WISDOM LITERATURE (Vs. 1a)
- B. THE JOYS OF PARENTING (V. 1b)
- C. FINDING THE THINGS OF VALUE (Vs. 2-3)
- D. PURSUING THE THINGS OF VALUE (Vs. 4-5)

II. A BLESSING TO THE COMMUNITY (Vs. 6-21)

**MATURE BELIEVERS BRING HEALING AND WHOLENESS TO THE CHURCH  
FAMILY.**

- A. A LASTING IMPACT (Vs. 6-7)
- B. AN ABUNDANT LIFE THAT BRINGS HEALING (Vs. 8-14)
- C. A SECURE FUTURE (Vs. 15-17)
- D. A WHOLENESS TO THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY (Vs. 18-21)

III. A BLESSING TO SELF (Vs. 22-32)

**FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO FIND LASTING JOY AND  
FULFILLMENT IN LIFE.**

- A. THE BLESSING OF GOD (Vs. 22-24)
- B. THE FEAR OF GOD (Vs. 25-28)
- C. THE WAY OF GOD (Vs. 29-32)

## **MAKE ME A BLESSING PROVERBS 10:1-32**

By Pastor John Carlini, D.Mn

This morning, we are starting a new section of Proverbs. From this chapter on, we will see an anthology of Proverbs written by several different writers, the section we are starting this morning, will carry us through the middle of chapter 22, King Solomon wrote this section.

You will remember King Solomon was the author of chapters 1-9 and in these chapters, he wrote an extensive description of wisdom and the benefits for obtaining it, and he also laid out the disastrous consequences for ignoring it.

This next section is much different. He will apply wisdom to practical, everyday situations, in short, pithy sayings. Remember, Hebrew poetry does not consist of rhyme and meter Hebrew poetry is built on parallelism. For example, for the most part, chapters 10-15 will follow the pattern of antithetical parallelism; the second line of the verse will usually be the opposite of the first line. An example of this is, "Wise children bring joy to their parents, and foolish children bring sadness to their parents."

Chapters 16-22 will be characterized by synonymous parallelism, where the second line will echo the thought of the first line. For example, "Wise children bring joy to their parents. Good children make their parents happy."

That is important in helping us understand what the proverb and the collection of proverbs mean. I know that we often think that these proverbs were randomly collected together but I hope that as we study through these you will see some themes emerge. We get the connection by looking at words and thoughts that repeat themselves.

This morning we will see that the connecting theme is "blessing." If we live wisely, we will be a blessing to ourselves, to our family, and to our community. Something we have lost in the United States is the connection of family, everybody is off doing their own thing, and there is not

much interaction between generations in the family, but those of us who come from immigrant families, know how much our reputations are staked on the behavior of one another. For better or for worse, our kids' behavior reflect directly on us parents and this goes double for pastors' families.

For example, one day we invited some people in the church over for a luncheon after church. It was one of those blistering hot, humid, Chicago afternoons, when we got ready to eat, we asked Joe, who was about 4-years-old to say the blessing. He was acting up and said, "I don't know what to say." Luig said, "Just say what you've heard dad and me say." Obediently, Joe bowed his head and said, "Oh Lord, why did we invite those people here on a hot day like today?" What kids say and do, really do reflect on their parents.

For the most part, I am extremely happy with the contributions the United States has made to Western Civilization however, one of the qualities that we have extolled as uniquely American, rugged individualism, has done a lot of harm to the church and society. This attitude of rugged individualism helped win the West, but it ultimately breaks down relationships in the church, family, and in society. After Cain killed his brother Abel, God confronted Cain and asked him where his brother was. Cain answered, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The answer to that question is, "Yes, you are!"

-----

We have got to recapture a biblical anthropology if we are to understand the Bible and especially if we want to understand the wisdom literature. The main idea of this morning's text is: **WHEN WE HEAR AND OBEY GOD, WE BECOME A BLESSING TO OURSELVES, OUR FAMILIES, AND THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH.** I often hear people say something like, "It's nobody's business what I do with my life. I'll do what I want and deal with the consequences myself." You see that streak of rugged individualism? We can say that stuff all we

want, but it just isn't true. When a husband and wife divorce, it doesn't just affect them, it affects their children it affects their parents and their in-laws and it affects their family and friends.

If Pastors or leaders in the church are sexually immoral or dishonest, they themselves don't suffer the consequences alone. They, as God's representatives, project a devastating message of what Christianity is all about. I have seen immoral pastors and leaders destroy churches.

I think the greatest example of this was when Jacob's daughter was raped. The king's son came to apologize and to make things right by marrying her. Two of Jacob's sons said that in order for things to be made right, the king, his son, and all the men of the area had to be circumcised in order that they may be committed to Israel's God. They all agreed, but while all the men were weak and recovering from the circumcisions, Jacob's two sons went down to the village and killed the men, since they couldn't fight back. They plundered the city and carried off the women, children, and valuables. When Jacob found out he said to them, "You have made my name to stink in the land."

Listen, we are Christians and we wear the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus. I don't know about you, but I don't ever want to make the name of Jesus stink by my attitudes, thoughts, words, or behavior. I don't think that I can say this strongly enough, we have a tremendous potential to either be a blessing or a curse to those around us. Remember our actions have consequences for those around us.

I. **A BLESSING TO MY FAMILY (Vs. 1-5)**

**GODLY CHILDREN BRING JOY AND HAPPINESS TO GODLY PARENTS.**

In verses 1-5 we find out if we act wisely, we will be a blessing to our families, **GODLY CHILDREN BRING JOY AND HAPPINESS TO GODLY PARENTS.**

A. **THE FATHER OF WISDOM LITERATURE (Vs. 1a)**

In the first half of verse 1, we are again introduced to the father of wisdom, literature. Keep in mind, the book is divided into two major sections chapters 1-9 were King Solomon's discourse on the nature, value, and source of wisdom and chapters 10-31 are a collection of proverbs, an anthology of different authors. It is fitting that this section starts with the proverbs of Solomon whose proverbs start here in chapter 10 and go through chapter 22, verse 16. Next, chapter 22, verse 17 through 24:22 are a collection of 30 wise sayings. Then chapter 25, through 29:27 is Hezekiah's collection of more of Solomon's proverbs. Chapter 30:1-9 is attributed to Agur and the rest of chapter 30 consists of more anonymous wise sayings. Chapter 31 is divided into two parts, the first are the wise sayings of King Lemuel and the second half is a description of a wise woman. So we could say that King Solomon was the father of the Hebrew proverb in the sense that the gathering together of the proverbs start with him.

#### B. THE JOYS OF PARENTING (V. 1b)

The second half of verse 1 describes the joy of parenting, but, before we get to that, let me show you how this passage is put together and how these individual proverbs form a whole. Verse 1 talks about the son bringing joy to his parents and verse 6 starts out with the word blessing. This section will talk about how wise children are a blessing to the community. Verse 22 also starts out with the word blessing and demonstrates how God blesses godly children.

Now look at verses 1 and 5, this section starts and ends with the contrast of a wise and foolish child. Now in verse 1 one commentator pointed out that each of these proverbs has 4 possibilities and you should examine all of them to get a full understanding of what is being said. Bear with me for one moment; look at this statement, "A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son grief to his mother." Another option would be a foolish son brings joy to his father, but a wise son, grief to his mother. Yet another option would be a foolish son brings grief to his father, a wise son brings joy to his mother. You get the idea. Now the reason I did that was to show the

underlying assumption of this verse. Solomon assumes that the parents are godly, righteous, and wise, that's why children who act wisely bring joy to their parents. You see, if the parents are foolish, then wise behavior on the part of their children will not bring them joy. So, as we look at this section, we must remember we are talking about wise, mature, godly, and righteous parents.

So what the poet is saying here is this; when children grow up to love and serve God, when their children mature in the Lord and live pure and upright lives, their parents will be blessed. All of us who have raised children know the sigh of relief we breathe when we are sure that we know they have given their lives to Christ and settled down to a stable lifestyle.

### C. FINDING THE THINGS OF VALUE (Vs. 2-3)

The reason we as parents find joy in this is because we know that our children have found the things of real value as described in verses 2-3. If you look at these two verses, you will see that the people of Solomon's day faced the same temptations we do. Our society values money, power, acquiring material things, and sex, unfortunately, we Christians do not go unaffected by these messages. When we talk about being blessed, we also talk in terms of God giving us money, houses, cars, great vacations, nice clothes, etc. Look at verse 3. Literally the Hebrew says that the LORD will not let the soul of the righteous go hungry and He thwarts the craving of the wicked. The point is that God writes and enforces the rules of the universe. One of those rules is that money cannot buy happiness or lasting peace. It is righteousness that satisfies our deepest longings. We have talked about how we get our values from the Hollywood jet set, yet if we were to examine their lives, they haven't found peace and happiness they are always buying one more thing, trying one more sexual partner, and trying to achieve one more goal.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon made it clear that in order to enjoy any material blessing God must add the gift of enjoyment to it, and further, there are many people who have all the material blessings of life, but God has withheld the ability to enjoy them.

There are no moral shortcuts to finding lasting peace and happiness. If we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we will never go hungry or thirsty but if we hunger and thirst for the things of this world, we will starve to death. These verses are not saying that Christians will have tons of money and never face difficulties, what it is saying is that Christians will never be afraid to be generous.

#### D. PURSUING THE THINGS OF VALUE (Vs. 4-5)

Godly parents find joy in wise children because they see their children pursuing godly values in verses 4-5. I can't begin to tell you of how proud Luing and I were of our children when they decided to leave the business world and go into teaching. Their values changed totally, life was not all about making money and buying toys any more, it became finding what God gifted them in and these gifts to make the world a better place. God's job is to provide us with the level of material blessings that He has determined; our job is to do our best at what God gives us. Let me put these two verses in perspective. Children usually inherited the family business and when their parents got old, the children were the ones who took care of them since there were no welfare nursing homes. So if the children were diligent and made a good living at the family business, the parents could live well also. All of us as children need to think about this. First, if we live in godly homes, then we can assume that our parents really do want to pass down all of their wealth and possessions to us. How hard we work, and how well we take care of them will preserve that inheritance. We are responsible for them. In his letter to the Ephesians the Apostle Paul said that honoring our parents was the first commandment that carried a promise with it, he said that if we honor our parents we will enjoy a long life on earth and that things would go well with us.

Second, the Apostle Paul said in another letter, "If you don't work, you don't eat." Lazy young people are a disgrace to themselves and their parents. Some young people will try to make money in shortcut ways, but the point is not money, it is character. You know immigrants have a

fantastic work ethic and I'm glad I was raised by immigrants. I was taught at a very young age that work is valuable no job was looked on as menial or undesirable. If it was honest work, it was good work. When I was 13, I had a full-time job and like all immigrant families, I brought home every check and gave it to my parents. I gave them every check up until the time I entered the military. As good parents, they didn't waste the money on themselves they bought a house with the money and when I got married, I had a house, all paid for to live in. My aunt and uncle along with my parents took our kid's money and invested it and when they graduated college, they were presented with a nice check. I watched my parents care for my grandparents, and I now feel privileged and honored to be able to care for them. These types of relationships in life are what are valuable. Listen, I know there are a lot of young people trying to find themselves. Let me give you a little friendly advice. Quit trying to find yourself. Find a job! As I worked my way through school, I worked as a bag boy, a construction worker, a janitor, and other jobs, even when I had a master's degree. Like it or not, our diligence and righteousness affects those around us. Life is not about us and our pursuit of happiness life is about God and pursuing His holiness. We need to learn what is valuable and pursue those things: **GODLY CHILDREN BRING JOY AND HAPPINESS TO GODLY PARENTS.**

## II. A BLESSING TO THE COMMUNITY (Vs. 6-21)

### **MATURE BELIEVERS BRING HEALING AND WHOLENESS TO THE CHURCH FAMILY.**

This next section begins with the word blessings and as this section goes on, we will see two things happen here. First, we will see that wisdom is tied directly to righteousness, and someone who is godly is considered to be wise. Someone who is immoral is considered to be foolish. Second, because of the righteous behavior of one individual, the whole community will be blessed. Verses 6-21 portray the righteous as being a blessing to the community, for our situation, we could say that **MATURE BELIEVERS BRING HEALING AND WHOLENESS TO THE**

**CHURCH FAMILY.** Righteous leaders and pastors are a real blessing to the church and immature, immoral leaders bring division and disaster.

A. A LASTING IMPACT (Vs. 6-7)

Verses 6-7 describe a lasting impact made by wise people. If you scan quickly through this section, you will recognize that verses 6-22 are connected by the theme of speech, words like mouth, tongue, lips, lying, slander, and chattering are peppered throughout, Now back to verses 6-7 and how they describe a legacy of righteousness. Here is where our knowledge of poetry will help us, the first line in verse 6 seems to have nothing to do with the second line but before we compare these two lines, let's compare verse 6 with verse 7. The blessing crown of the righteous is that they will be remembered they will have a lasting impact on the community, but on the other hand, the wicked will be forgotten. Most people in our country would want to be identified in some way with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but most of us would want to distance ourselves from the famous racists in the 60's and 70's so the basic thought in these two verses is that righteous people leave a lasting legacy of faith behind.

Now we are ready to look at verse 6. How are the wicked, wicked? The word overwhelms in the second half of the verse means to fill up; the mouth of the wicked is filled up with violence these are the people who talk tough, act tough, and bully people. They are the type of people we saw earlier on in the proverbs who join street gangs. They contribute absolutely nothing to society, when they die, nobody cares and our attitude is good riddance, whereas good words, healing words, helping words come out of the mouths of the righteous. We will see how healing and wholeness come as a result of righteous words and righteous behavior.

B. AN ABUNDANT LIFE THAT BRINGS HEALING (Vs. 8-14)

Verses 8-14 describe an abundant life that brings healing. Here is the principle here; Jesus said, "From the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks." Someone who has the love of Jesus

filling her heart will naturally speak words that demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit. Those words will contain love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control. But, someone who is self-centered will have words that tear others down coming out of his mouth. Those words will be characterized by gossip, slander, division, and vulgarity. Look at the description of the wise and foolish in verses 8 and 9. The wise in heart are humble they accept the commands of God and live by them. They are pure in thought and behavior, but, the foolish are proud, arrogant, and rebellious they do things their own way, and they are quick to tell others what to do and how to live.

Remember what comes out of our mouths is demonstrative of what is filling our hearts. The self-centered heart overflows and fills its mouth with stupidity. They cause others grief, ruin themselves and others, stir up dissension and go around talking smack, but someone filled with God's Holy Spirit is overflowing with love; their words bring a fountain of life, forgiveness, discerning knowledge, and fill the community with wisdom.

Look in the middle of these 5 verses; verse 12 gives us the theme, if you are careful and know religious words, you will catch this, "Hatred stirs up dissension," which is a simple concept to understand. Self-centered people are always interested in getting what they want; they will use anyone to achieve their goals.

On the other hand, "Love covers over all wrongs," is a loaded sentence, the word for covers is the same word for atonement. The Hebrews celebrated the Day of Atonement each year and on that day, the high priest would lay his hands on a goat, symbolically transferring the sins of the people of Israel onto the goat, the goat was then taken out to the wilderness to die. The priest would take blood from another goat that had been sacrificed, go into the Holy of Holies, and sprinkle the blood in front of the Ark of the Covenant which was covered by the Atonement seat where the angels' wings met. If the priest came out alive, then Israel celebrated because her sins

were forgiven and she was in a right relationship with her God. Love has the power to cover wrongs. If I asked you to name some mistakes I have made over the past 14 years here, you probably couldn't name any now that's not because I haven't made any, it's because you love me and have overlooked all my stupidity. If you think about it, Jesus told us to ask for forgiveness this way, "Forgive us our sins, in the same way we forgive those who sin against us." Humble, Spirit-filled Christians are humbled at how much forgiveness they need. That humility and that gratitude, motivate righteous people to speak abundant words of healing.

### C. A SECURE FUTURE (Vs. 15-17)

Verses 15-17 remind us that wise people bring a secure future to the community. If we read verse 15 alone, we may be confused since it seems to talk about people finding security in money. Let me show you how these verses are connected; the wealth of the rich in verse 15 parallels the wages of the righteous in verse 16. 'Bring them life,' in verse 16 is connected to way to life in verse 17 and 'ruin' in verse 15 relates to ruin back in verse 14. Here is the message; verse 15 takes this principle from the world, rich people are able to build fortified cities and hire an army to protect them but, poor people have no money to even build a fence and they are easy targets for thieves.

But the point is this; Righteousness is the quality that brings an abundant, confident life to the wise. Mature Christians know that nothing in this world or the next can ever separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. We all know that, "The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

We as believers don't know what tomorrow holds, but like someone said, "We know who holds tomorrow." Verse 17 clearly states who is entitled to this confidence; those who humble themselves before God will find life. Those who ignore correction not only live miserable lives,

they will lead others astray as well. Mature believers bring the confidence of a secure future to the community, their words give others hope.

D. A WHOLENESS TO THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY (Vs. 18-21)

Mature believers bring ‘wholeness’ to the life of the community as described in verses 15-21. Godly people are good listeners, they’re good thinkers, and when they speak, they are a blessing to the community. The fools in these verses are ones who talk a lot of nonsense, they hide their true feelings and they flatter and run their mouths constantly. If you are a person who talks a lot, beware of this; if you keep your mouth shut, people may think you are wise, but if you open it, they will know you are a fool. Fools and their stupid talk and ideas bring death to themselves and to the community. On the other hand, wise, godly people bring God’s wisdom to the community and that brings wholeness, godly talk that brings healing, forgiveness, love, and unity is more precious than silver or gold. It is true: **MATURE BELIEVERS BRING HEALING AND WHOLENESS TO THE CHURCH FAMILY.**

III. A BLESSING TO SELF (Vs. 22-32)

**FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO FIND LASTING JOY AND FULFILLMENT IN LIFE.**

So we have seen that if we act wisely we will be a blessing to our parents and to our church family but it doesn’t end there; if we are righteous, we will be a blessing to ourselves as described in verses 22-32. It really doesn’t matter what movies, television, magazines or our friends tell us: **FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO FIND LASTING JOY AND FULFILLMENT IN LIFE.** In this section, we are reminded who is the source and giver of all these blessings. It is God. His name is found in verse 3, verse 22, verse 27, and verse 29, and again, this is LORD in all capital letters it is God’s personal, covenant, relational name. This is Jehovah, YA<I>H</I>W<I>EH</I>, the God of Israel, the God we worship. When we pursue holiness, God will bring us happiness.

#### A. THE BLESSING OF GOD (Vs. 22-24)

In verses 22-24, the blessing of God is described. In these three verses, we are informed that if we delight in God's wisdom, we will be content, we will get whatever we desire, and we will be secure. In other words, we will have everything in life we need to make us happy. In the second line of verse 22, it says, "And He adds no trouble to it." That word for trouble is the same word God used in the curse. Eve would have "pain" in childbearing. Pain is the word used here for trouble, it is the same word used when God told Adam that he would only get food from the ground with "toil." That word toil is the same for trouble. God will minimize sorrow in the life of a mature believer, good things will happen to us and bad things will happen to us, but if we are mature believers, we will be able to put life in proper perspective.

Further, Jesus said, "If you remain in Me, and My words remain in you, ask what you want and I will give it to you." That's what verse 24 is all about. Verse 23 reminds us how these two verses are tied together. Jesus will give us what we ask for if we ask for the right things. People who are self-centered and worldly ask for things they think will bring them pleasure, but God is not in the business of pimping. Look at verse 24 again, only from the fool's perspective. Their worst nightmares will come true. Those of us who are disobeying God's word in an area of our lives, be assured, what you ultimately fear will happen, whether it be concerning sexual immorality, drugs, alcohol, addictions of any kind. True security and happiness are found in following God's commands. God minimizes sorrow and gives us the desires of our hearts if we follow Him.

#### B. THE FEAR OF GOD (Vs. 25-28)

Which now brings us to the common theme of the book, fear of God in verses 25-28; in the strongest possible terms, the poet reminds us that the God we worship is an almighty, all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present God. He created us with a word, and He can take us out of this world with a blink. Let me summarize this section in general terms first; fools have been

characterized by being lazy, people who are always looking for shortcuts, and who are proud, arrogant and rebellious. Now look at verse 26. It says that lazy people are irritating to their bosses. Wicked people get on God's last nerve and there will come a time when we cross a line that God will say, "Enough is enough." Fools are irritating to their parents, to the community, and to God. They are a drain.

But the righteous, those who fear God are rewarded, they find joy in life and they live full, abundant lives. Now, pay attention to verse 25; Even in the most difficult and trying times, those that fear God are able to stand firm they are able to give and receive encouragement during even the most stressful times. Righteous people can find peace and joy and can become a source of peace and joy because they are firmly anchored in Jesus, the Rock.

#### C. THE WAY OF GOD (Vs. 29-32)

Verses 29-32 describe the righteous life in terms of walking in the way of God. The blessing of walking in God's way is a stable and confident life. Again, the Bible is very clear as to what things God likes and what He doesn't, so if we are making up rules for our lives, we better be careful. When we humbly submit to God, we better be ready to receive all the blessings He is going to pour out on us. But again, for some reason, walking in God's ways is summarized by the way we use our mouths. Look at verses 31-32 and keep in mind the principle we discussed earlier. It is out of the abundance of our hearts that our mouths speak. If we are filled with the love of God, we have incredible power to speak words of healing and blessing, and we should speak them.

If our hearts are filled with self, then we have incredible power to destroy others with our words, so in this case, we better shut up. God promises us full, abundant, peaceful lives, filled with happiness but He requires us to pursue holiness. God has so many wonderful blessings to pour out on us but here's the catch: **FOLLOWING JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY TO FIND LASTING JOY AND FULFILLMENT IN LIFE.**

Please don't be confused by this American notion that we are rugged individualists, we are interconnected with those around us. If you are a believer, you belong to the Body of Christ. We are all brothers and sisters, we are our brothers' keepers, and we are our sisters' keepers. **WHEN WE HEAR AND OBEY GOD, WE BECOME A BLESSING TO OURSELVES, OUR FAMILIES, AND THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH.**

Here is a good test to see how we are doing. Take some time to examine your speech. What is it characterized by? I like the way Paul Koptak summarizes this section. Our words and behavior really do have the potential to do great good or great harm to others. Listen what he says in his commentary on Proverbs.

**“To zoom in on one aspect of sluggardly behavior, we see that laziness in speech is especially dangerous when we realize that we can say things that we shouldn't or fail to speak when we should. I keep a Sumerian proverb posted by my desk that says, ‘The one who knows but does not speak is a fool.’ While it is true that the one who speaks and does not know is also a fool. I find I am more challenged by the need to speak out when the needs and rights of others are at stake. In that way, my speech can begin to nourish others. Our speech either helps or nourishes others, or it leads to our own downfall!”**

Paul just talked about speech in this summary -- that truth is equally applicable to our thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. We have incredible potential to do either great good or great harm to others. Let us make up our minds to have God make us a blessing.