

Proverbs 14 - How Wise People Live; Biblical Worldview

III. Solomon's Proverbs (Prov 10:1—22:16)

- (1) Contrast between the wise righteous and the wicked foolish (Prov 10:1— 15:33)
- (D) Contrast between the wise and the wicked (Prov 13:1— 15:33)
 - (g) Domestic life (Prov 13:24—14:4)
 - (iii) Wise wives (14:1)
 - (iv) General conduct (14:2)
 - (v) Punishment (14:3)
 - (vi) Agrarian revenue (14:4)
 - (h) Lying (14:5)
 - (i) Wisdom (14:6-9)
 - (j) Bitterness (14:10)
 - (k) End results (14:11-14)
 - (l) Wise and naïve (14:15-19)
 - (m) Poverty and labor (14:20-24)
 - (n) Security and life (14:25-28)
 - (o) Anger and inner tranquility (14:29-30)
 - (p) Political issues (14:31-35)

Proverbs 14

- (iii) Wise wives (14:1)
 - 1 The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.
 - 1 The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.
 - 1 Every wise woman builds up her household, but the foolish one tears it down with her own hands.
 - 1 Every wise woman builds her house: but the foolish plucks it down with her hands.
- (iv) General conduct (14:2)
 - 2 One who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But one who is devious in his ways despises Him.
 - 2 He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But he who is devious in his ways despises Him.

2 Someone whose conduct is upright fears the LORD, but whoever is devious in his ways despises him.

2 He that walks in his uprightness fears the LORD: but he that is perverse in his ways despises him.

(v) Punishment (14:3)

3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for *his* back, But the lips of the wise will protect them.

3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for *his* back, But the lips of the wise will protect them.

3 What a fool says brings a rod to his back, but the words of the wise protect them.

3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

(vi) Agrarian revenue (14:4)

4 Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean; But much revenue *comes* by the strength of the ox.

4 Where no oxen are, the manger is clean, But much revenue *comes* by the strength of the ox.

4 Where there are no oxen, the feeding trough is clean, but profits come through the strength of the ox.

4 Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.

- The meaning of this verse is that if there is order and everything is straight, nothing is being produced. But if things are a mess, productivity is happening.

(h) Lying (14:5)

5 A trustworthy witness will not lie, But a false witness declares lies.

5 A trustworthy witness will not lie, But a false witness utters lies.

5 A trustworthy witness does not deceive, but a false witness spews lies.

5 A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.

(i) Wisdom (14:6-9)

6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and *finds* none, But knowledge is easy for one who has understanding.

6 A scoffer seeks wisdom and *finds* none, But knowledge is easy to one who has understanding.

6 A mocker seeks wisdom and finds none, but learning comes easily to someone who understands.

6 A scorner seeks wisdom, and finds it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understands.

- 7 Leave the presence of a fool, Or you will not discern words of knowledge.
- 7 Leave the presence of a fool, Or you will not discern words of knowledge.
- 7 Stay away from a foolish man, for you will not find competent advice.
- 7 Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceive not in him the lips of knowledge.

- 8 The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way, But the foolishness of fools is deceit.
- 8 The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way, But the foolishness of fools is deceit.
- 8 The wisdom of the prudent helps him know how to live, but a fool's stupidity deceives him.
- 8 The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.

- 9 Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is goodwill.
- 9 Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is good will.
- 9 Fools make fun of guilt, but among the upright there are good intentions.
- 9 Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.

(j) Bitterness (14:10)

- 10 The heart knows its own bitterness, And a stranger does not share its joy.
- 10 The heart knows its own bitterness, And a stranger does not share its joy.
- 10 The heart knows its own bitterness— an outsider cannot share in its joy.
- 10 The heart knows his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

(k) End results (14:11-14)

- 11 The house of the wicked will be destroyed, But the tent of the upright will flourish.
- 11 The house of the wicked will be destroyed, But the tent of the upright will flourish.
- 11 The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish.
- 11 The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

- 12 There is a way *which seems* right to a person, But its end is the way of death.
- 12 There is a way *which seems* right to a man, But its end is the way of death.
- 12 There is a pathway that seems right to a man, but in the end it's a road to death.
- 12 There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

- This verse is repeated a few times in Proverbs (Cf. 16:25); the concept is also repeated (Cf. 3:5-6)
- The Bible often warns us about "unaided reason"...human logic without any input or counsel from God or His Word
 - Scripture tells us to not depend on human logic or "unaided reason" (Prov 3:5-6; 14:12; Rom 3:5), beginning all the way back with Adam & Eve. God made this clear with Adam & Eve. In the Garden of Eden, there were two consequential trees: the Tree of Life, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil. Looking at them, you likely couldn't tell the difference between them. There was no sign hanging on either tree identifying them. They were just two trees.
 - In order to distinguish them, man needed God to come in with His Word to explain the difference between the two trees. This one is the good tree, it will give you life. This tree is the bad tree, it will kill you. And unless God, with His Word, came alongside and aided their reason, they would know no difference between the two trees. Keep in mind that at that time, Adam & Eve were "unfallen" yet they still needed the Word of God to explain the general revelation of God all around them.
 - If this was true for Adam & Eve, how much more is it true for us today. You can't understand life or reality without God's Word. Someone may sound very logical, very intelligent, but the Bible warns us about unaided reason.

Worldview

There are only two ways of looking at things: God's way we will call Biblical worldview, or man's way which we will call human worldview. From beginning to end, the Bible expresses one consistent view of life and addresses every issue of life from that viewpoint—God's worldview on life. Understanding and applying God's worldview leads to life, love, and happiness, but living according to human worldview leads to death.

Human Worldview

Within the realm of human worldview, people usually attempt to establish truth in two general ways: attempt to find truth independent of God and His Word is often called *reason* or *rationalism*. In its pure form, rationalism is the belief that the each person is born with certain innate ideas. The rationalist claims that, on the basis of these innate ideas, man can use reason and logic alone to discover ultimate truth. The rationalist does not believe that he must be dependent upon God's Word in order to think true thoughts about reality. Because rationalists do not think they need God's Word to think accurately, they replace God's Word as the starting point with the arrogant assumption that their own logic and reason alone is sufficient for arriving at truth. What idolatry! However, because the rationalist cannot prove these innate ideas, he is left with an uncertain foundation.

Human worldview, on the other hand, uses reason and logic as the ultimate authority to determine what is possible and what is not possible. Reason, rather than revelation, is used to determine what can and cannot be, and then these conclusions are imposed on the Bible. Since God's Word contains many secrets that He has revealed, it is impossible for anyone to start with reason and discover what is on God's mind (1 Cor. 2:11). He has rejected the witness of God's Word. This attitude elevates human reason in the position of ultimate authority: human reason determines what is and is not true in God's Word. By putting reason at a higher level than the Bible, reason replaces God and becomes an idol. The fatal flaw in this use of reason is that it provides *no external, objective criterion* for evaluating its conclusions (because it rejects the Bible as a valid criterion). Ultimately, this position must lapse into some form of subjectivity such as mysticism or emotionalism because reason alone can never establish an objective criterion upon which to determine why one thing is true and another thing is not true.

Biblical Worldview

A Biblical worldview does not reject the use of reason or logic—after all, God gave us a logical mind to use—but it rejects the *independent* or autonomous use of reason and logic. The Biblical worldview uses reason and logic *dependently*, starting with God's revelation as a basis for thinking God's thoughts after Him. This use is called *the dependent use of logic*: logic used under the authority of God's Word to maintain consistency of thought in accordance with God's Word. The all-knowing God has already told us through revelation what is true, and dependent logic seeks to apply this truth to every issue in life to see how it does or does not correspond with God's revelation. It is illogical that a person would start with error, or a mixture of truth and error, and end up with truth. Only when you start with *pure truth* as a foundation can you arrive at the full truth in all of its ramifications.

Remember what the Psalmist declared in Ps 36:9: "In Thy light (God's Word), O God, do I see light (truth)."

The real conflict is not between using reason and not using reason, but between *using reason under the authority of God* and *using reason independently of God*. The issue is *the proper place and use of logic*. Human viewpoint uses reason and logic in an idolatrous way, by placing it in the arena reserved exclusively for God's Word—determining what is true. Human viewpoint uses logic idolatrously, placing it in the arena reserved exclusively for God's Word.

13 Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, And the end of joy may be grief.

13 Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, And the end of joy may be grief.

13 Even in laughter there may be heartache, and at the end of joy there may be grief.

13 Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

14 One with a wayward heart will have his fill of his own ways, But a good person will be satisfied with his.

14 The backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways, But a good man will be satisfied with his.

14 The faithless one will pay for his behavior, but a good man will be rewarded for his.

14 The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.

(I) Wise and naïve (14:15-19)

15 The naive believes everything, But the sensible person considers his steps.

15 The naive believes everything, But the sensible man considers his steps.

15 An unthinking person believes everything, but the prudent one thinks before acting.

15 The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.

16 A wise person is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless.

16 A wise man is cautious and turns away from evil, But a fool is arrogant and careless.

16 The wise person fears and turns away from evil, but a fool is reckless and overconfident.

16 A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

17 A quick-tempered person acts foolishly, And a person of evil devices is hated.

17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of evil devices is hated.

17 A quick tempered person does foolish things, and a devious man is hated.

17 He that is soon angry deals foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.

18 The naive inherit foolishness, But the sensible are crowned with knowledge.

18 The naive inherit foolishness, But the sensible are crowned with knowledge.

18 The naïve inherit folly, but the careful are crowned with knowledge.

18 The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

19 The evil will bow down before the good,
And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

19 The evil will bow down before the good,
And the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

19 Evil men will bow down in the presence of good men and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

19 The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

(m) Poverty and labor (14:20-24)

20 The poor is hated even by his neighbor, But those who love the rich are many.
20 The poor is hated even by his neighbor, But those who love the rich are many.
20 The poor person is shunned by his neighbor, but many are the friends of the wealthy.
20 The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends.

21 One who despises his neighbor sins, But one who is gracious to the poor is blessed.
21 He who despises his neighbor sins, But happy is he who is gracious to the poor.
21 Whoever despises his neighbor sins, but whoever shows kindness to the poor will be happy.
21 He that despises his neighbor sins: but he that has mercy on the poor, happy is he.

22 Will they who devise evil not go astray? But kindness and truth *will be to* those who devise good.
22 Will they not go astray who devise evil? But kindness and truth *will be to* those who devise good.
22 Won't those who plot evil go astray? But gracious love and truth are for those who plan what is good.
22 Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good.

23 In all labor there is profit, But mere talk *leads* only to poverty.
23 In all labor there is profit, But mere talk *leads* only to poverty.
23 In hard work there is always profit, but too much chattering leads to poverty.
23 In all labor there is profit: but the talk of the lips tends only to penury.

24 The crown of the wise is their riches, *But* the foolishness of fools is *simply* foolishness.
24 The crown of the wise is their riches, *But* the folly of fools is foolishness.
24 The crown of the wise is their wealth, but the stupidity of fools is just that—stupidity!
24 The crown of the wise is their riches: but the foolishness of fools is folly.

(n) Security and life (14:25-28)

25 A truthful witness saves lives, But one *who* declares lies is deceitful.
25 A truthful witness saves lives, But he who utters lies is treacherous.
25 A truthful witness saves lives, but the person who lies is deceitful.
25 A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies.

26 In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge.

26 In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And his children will have refuge.

26 Rock-solid security is found in the fear of the LORD, and within it one's children find refuge.

26 In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, *By which* one may avoid the snares of death.

27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, That one may avoid the snares of death.

27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, enabling anyone to escape the snares of death.

27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.

28 In a multitude of people is a king's glory, But in the scarcity of people is a prince's ruin.

28 In a multitude of people is a king's glory, But in the dearth of people is a prince's ruin.

28 A large population is a king's glory, but a shortage of people is a ruler's ruin.

28 In the multitude of people is the king's honour: but in the want [lack] of people is the destruction of the prince.

(o) Anger and inner tranquility (14:29-30)

29 One who is slow to anger has great understanding; But one who is quick-tempered exalts foolishness.

29 He who is slow to anger has great understanding, But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly.

29 Being slow to get angry compares to great understanding as being quick-tempered compares to stupidity.

29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalts folly.

30 A tranquil heart is life to the body, But jealousy is rottenness to the bones.

30 A tranquil heart is life to the body, But passion is rottenness to the bones.

30 A tranquil mind brings life to one's body, but jealousy causes one's bones to rot.

30 A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

(p) Political issues (14:31-35)

31 One who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker, But one who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

31 He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker, But he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

31 Whoever oppresses the poor defies their Creator, but whoever is kind to the needy honors them.

31 He that oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker: but he that honors him has mercy on the poor.

32 The wicked is thrust down by his own wrongdoing, But the righteous has a refuge when he dies.

32 The wicked is thrust down by his wrongdoing, But the righteous has a refuge when he dies.

32 The wicked person is thrown down by his own wrongdoing, but the righteous person has a place of safety in death.

32 The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous has hope in his death.

33 Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding, But among fools it is made known.

33 Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding, But in the hearts of fools it is made known.

33 Wisdom is at rest in the mind of the discerning— even fools know this.

33 Wisdom rests in the heart of him that hath understanding: but that which is in the midst of fools is made known.

34 Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to *any* people.

34 Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to *any* people.

34 Righteousness makes a nation great, but sin diminishes any people.

34 Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

35 The king's favor is toward a servant who acts wisely, But his anger is toward him who acts shamefully.

35 The king's favor is toward a servant who acts wisely, But his anger is toward him who acts shamefully.

35 The king approves the wise servant, but he is angry at anyone who acts shamefully.

35 The king's favour is toward a wise servant: but his wrath is against him that causes shame.