

## PARENTING & PROVERBS

### Five Things You Will Never Hear In Public School

#### Introduction

Proverbs - this is a book of wisdom. As a Biblical text the Book of Proverbs is to give us skill for living life from God's perspective. Solomon is generally thought to have authored the entire Book of Proverbs except for three sections: Proverbs 30, Proverbs 31, and The Sayings of the Wise in Proverbs 22:17-24:34 where our text comes from today.

This section gets its name from the opening verses in Proverbs 22:17–21 (“Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise<sup>1</sup> . . . Have I not written for you thirty sayings?”<sup>2</sup>)

Today, as we think about parents, children and the family, the text I want you to consider with me is Proverbs 23:23–25. Previously to these verses, the Divine Author wrote, “*Hear, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way. Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat, for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will clothe them with rags.*” (Proverbs 23:19–21, ESV)

Let me point out the obvious: this is instruction to children. Today I have entitled this sermon: Five Things You Will Never Hear In Public School. This is for students and youth, particularly those of you who are schooled in the public system. Let’s read the passage.

#### Exposition

*“Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding. The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him. Let your father and mother be glad; let her who bore you rejoice.”* (Proverbs 23:22–25, ESV).

### Five Things You Will Never Hear In Public School

#### #1. Your Parents Are The Primary Human Authority in Your Lives

There are two human beings that children are primarily to listen to: your father and your mother. That sounds simple but in fact it’s very profound. In all the voices out there, friends, Google, teachers, etc. etc., above them God places the voice of parents. Under God, the primary teachers, instructors or guidance counselors are your parents. A fundamental command and promise in the Scriptures is to “*honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is*

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 22:17). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>2</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 22:20). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

*giving you.”* (Exodus 20:12, ESV). If this is true, and it is, EVERYTHING should be run by your parents – EVERYTHING.

**This means that there is no club, no activity, and no doctor’s appointment ... NOTHING that should be kept from your parents. There are no friendships or relationships that should be kept from your parents. Under God your parents are the most important voice in your lives.**

## **#2. You Need a Mother AND a Father.**

Notice “listen to your father who gave you life”<sup>3</sup> and “let her who bore you rejoice.”<sup>4</sup> Let me be clear about this. You will hear in our culture that the baby is the mother’s choice. The Bible clearly affirms both mother and father gave you life. Both parents. To emphasize this, notice the wording of verse 24: “he who fathers a wise son.”<sup>5</sup> The word translated “fathers” is the Hebrew verb to bear, to be born, to deliver and to labor. Paradoxically the verb used here might rightly refer to a mother laboring, bringing forth a child, birthing. Now we don’t kid ourselves. Mothers go through tremendous pain and struggle in childbirth. But God expects and anticipates fathers to exert the same effort in bringing a child into maturity. God has intended not only that your parents be your primary voice you listen to, but He has intended them to be a team.

**You will hear that two men can parent a family. That is a lie. You will hear that two women can parent a family. That two is false.** Even parents who have to single-parent because of sad and unusual circumstance will struggle parenting alone. Every child needs a mother and father.

## **#3. You Are To Never Stop Honoring Your Parents**

Look at verse 22. “Do not despise your mother when she is old.”<sup>6</sup> Although children will reach a point when they leave home and perhaps even marry, the command to honor your parents never expires. Bruce Waltke interprets this to mean that it “spans the entire life of both parents in relationship to their son, from his birth to their old age. Their gray heads are their crowns for having lived their lives in wisdom.”<sup>7</sup> Anyone listening today, who has the privilege of having parents still with them, has the responsibility to honor them. What does honor mean? Honoring them in this context is not letting go of their teaching.

**You will hear that a time will come when you can do what you want, when you want. Somebody will tell you, “You’re sixteen, eighteen, etc. Do what you want. Your parents can’t tell you what to do.” That’s false. You will never arrive at an age that your parents are unimportant.**

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<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 23:22). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 23:25). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>5</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 23:24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>6</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Pr 23:22). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>7</sup> Waltke, B. K. (2005). [The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 15–31](#) (pp. 258–259). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

#### #4. There is Right and There is Wrong and It Can Be Known

Notice verses 22 and 23: *"Listen to your father . . . Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding."* (Proverbs 23:22–23, ESV).

We know that we cannot buy truth. This is poetic language. What is the author getting at? Is it not this: Truth is a real thing and important enough to invest in, to treasure and to hold onto? The word Truth in this sentence in the Hebrew Bible is a noun, it is singular, and it is in the absolute form. **You will hear that there is "your truth" and "my truth". You will hear that everyone can be right. But the Bible is clear there is a thing called Truth and it can be known and experienced.**

Truth is the sum of 3 things: wisdom, instruction and understanding. Wisdom is the ability to make good decisions and it is based on right knowledge. Understanding is the ability to make an accurate evaluation one's choices. Another way to say this is that Truth is the total of doctrine, application, and discernment. And those that live that way are referred to as "righteous". In Proverbs "righteousness" means blameless, innocent and being in the right.

Someone will ask you, "What makes you so sure that you can be right?" People will call you proud and arrogant for saying you know what is right. Again, the Bible is clear. Truth and righteous living can be known, and the Bible clearly shows is this. There are no "truths". There is but one, absolute singular Truth.

#### #5. Live to Please Your Parents

Notice carefully:

*"The father of the righteous **WILL GREATLY REJOICE;**  
he who fathers a wise son **WILL BE GLAD** in him.  
Let your father and mother **BE GLAD;**  
let her who bore you **REJOICE.**"* (Proverbs 23:24–25, ESV)

Rejoicing parents is the theme of the last 4 clauses. Dr. Waltke agrees. He writes about the proverb, "The first half (vv. 22–23) presents the admonitions to attain and retain the parental wisdom, and the second half (vv. 24–25), the motivation (i.e., to give the parent's exuberant joy)."<sup>8</sup> Now this is totally counter-cultural. **Imagine entering a class setting and being asked as to why you do you do. Imagine answering, "Because it makes my parents happy?" This idea is so foreign to us that it even sounds wrong!**

But it is not foreign to Scripture. In relation to spiritual leaders the writer to the Hebrews counsels members of the Church: *"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your*

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<sup>8</sup> Waltke, B. K. (2005). [\*The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 15–31\*](#) (p. 258). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

souls, as those who will have to give an account. **Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.** (Hebrews 13:17, ESV).

Elsewhere Paul wrote a troubled Corinthian church and said, *““Not that we lord it over your faith, but **we work with you for your joy**, for you stand firm in your faith.”* (2 Corinthians 1:24, ESV)

Churches respond to their Elders for their joy; and spiritual leaders serve their church, for their joy, why should it be so strange that you ought to respond to their parents for their joy?

**You will hear, “Do what makes YOU happy.” The Bible teaches, “Do what makes your parents happy.”**

### Application

You will hear that you’re the boss of you, you have your own truth and you get to do what makes you happy. You will hear that families don’t really need a mother and a father. The Bible denies all that.

The main point of this Proverb is instruction to children: Finding and obeying the Truth is the most important goal of your life – more important than any sport, game, job, or desire. As a child you can best fulfill that goal by living a life that honors your parents and gives them great joy.

As I close let me remind you that Truth is far more than a product, it’s a Person. In the Gospels Jesus said, *“I am the way, and **THE TRUTH**, and the life . . .* (John 14:6, ESV). Another Old Testament writer tried to find truth “under the sun” but in the end he came up empty. Truth is found in a Person. His name is Jesus. To receive Him as your Lord and Savior He first changes your heart so you have the will and the capacity to receive truth. He then gives you His Holy Spirit so guide you in truth.