

Proverbs

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Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

- [0 : 00] As the Lord should be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the book of Proverbs, chapter 22, and the third verse.
- A prudent man foreseeeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.
- Chapter 22, the book of Proverbs, and the third verse. I want, as the Lord should help me, to say something to you that will be a help to you.
- Years ago I gave an address on this subject, but it has been laid on my mind to take it up again.
- And the times in which you and I are living are indeed perilous times. Much evil is abroad, in the world at large, and in the land in which we live.
- [1 : 33] And in this subject, there are two characters referred to. One is said to be prudent.
- And the other is said to be simple. And now what does that mean? There is another word in this book of Proverbs which says, A prudent man looketh well to his going.
- And that will help you to get a right understanding of what this adjective prudent means. And also the word foreseeeth will help you too.
- For it is evident, this prudent man has his eyes open to things which are happening in the world about.
- And he weighs these things up. And he thinks of the future. Looketh well to his going.
- [2 : 48] And now it is a very simple thing to bring before you, quite elementary. But it is a tremendous truth.
- All of us, preacher and people, whatever age, are going. And there are three questions we might ponder in our hearts in approaching the subject.
- What am I? Where am I? Where am I going? We are all going. Where?
- And now that will search out whether as yet you have been made prudent and God has opened your eyes. And you do want to know where you are going when time should be no more with you.
- For each of us is born for an eternal state. And there is a moment to come, sooner or later, with you young people, it will be, I should hope, later.
- [4 : 05] With some of us in life's evening time, it will be very much sooner. But the moment will come when heart and flesh shall fail and we shall step out of time into an eternal state.
- And what then? And now the prudent man is very concerned to know what then? what am I?
- I am a poor sinner with a never dying soul to be lost or saved. Where am I?
- I am in the world. God has ordained me to fill a niche in it for so many years. When those years are accomplished, the place that knows me will know me no more, forever.

So it is very important to get this question answered. Where am I going? You see, as you journey about, especially those of us who drive cars, how often you come against a notice, one way street.

[5 : 30] And that means you can only go up that street or down one way as the notice warns you. And now, dear young people, our life is just like that.

A one way street. Job said, when a few years are gone, I shall go hence the way and I shall not return.

You see, it is very desirable to be this prudent man, prudent woman, prudent youth, prudent maid.

The prudent man looketh well to his going. And Nehemiah was asked a question by the king whose servant he was.

For how long is thy journey to be? And he was able to set the king a time as to how long his journey should be because he was going to the land of promise to do good there for the glory of God and the benefit of his own people to whom he belonged.

[6 : 50] But it is a question that you and I might well ponder and the prudent will ponder it. For how long is thy journey to be?

How long? And now you just think what your answer will be. As you are here, a poor sinner with a never dying soul going on.

for how long is thy journey to be? 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80 years?

What guarantee is there that you will live so long? This is what you must be prudent to think about.

Only this frail and fleeting breath preserves me from the jaws of death. Soon as it fails at once I am gone and plunged into a world unknown.

[7 : 58] Poor sinners with never dying souls going either to heaven or hell. And now the subject tells us a prudent man foreseeeth the evil and hideth himself.

He wants a shelter. He wants to be found in a refuge that when he gets to the end of life's journey and is going out of time into eternity he will be aware that he is going to heaven.

There are some people in this cause of truth who by the grace of God have been made prudent and they are here with a hope in God a good hope through grace.

And sometimes they feel I am but a stranger here heaven is my home earth is but a desert drear heaven is my home danger and sorrow stand round me on every hand heaven is my fatherland and heaven is my home.

Oh how good it is if in life's mourning you dear young people will be helped to look well to your going and have to do with God to obtain from him some tokens for good some sure evidence that there is in you some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel.

[9 : 45] Suppose you pause a moment or two and let your conscience tell you whether you do possess some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel.

One of our hymn writers says and it is very beautiful how he says it and it is very simple and you dear young people though in life's mourning can know it if God grant you the mercy.

Does thy heart for Jesus pine and make it secret moan? He understands the side divine? He marks the hidden groan?

These pinings prove that Christ is near to testify his grace upon him call in unceasing prayer and you shall see his face.

A prudent man foreseeeth the evil. I said this word foreseeeth tells us a great truth. God has done something for this man in making him prudent.

[10 : 58] He has wrought a miracle. He has done what you read in Isaiah for this man and the eyes of the blind shall be opened.

and now dear young people how do you stand in the light of that scripture? Can any of you venture like the man in the gospel of John to make a declaration?

One thing I know whereas I was blind now I can see. it may be you cannot see yet very much of the things of God but you can see the absolute necessity to possess the things of God in your soul's experience and you can enter into the hymn writer's words Jesus is the one thing needful I without him perish must gracious spirit make me heedful help me in his name to trust and with pleasure in him as my portion boast the prudent man foreseeth the evil he realizes as he journeys on through life that there is that moment to come when heart and flesh shall fail and then he will step out of time into eternity and appear before God what a solemn thing that will be we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ

I was very impressed in reading what that really means in the original godly scholars help us to find these things out we must all appear we must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ the meaning is be turned inside out whether solid oak or a varnished deal and the difference will be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ whether a prudent man taught by the spirit of God or the simple who has just lived his life with a name to live some veneer on the outside a little kind of religious varnish but nothing known and felt within of the things of

God in reality and now let us look in opening up the subject at the other character the simple pass on and are punished the simple he may be a man a young man most likely driving his car and he comes to the traffic lights and they are red but he goes straight on and he will find the law of the land has got a punishment in store for him if he is alive to be charged with his folly in going past the red lights when he should stay and wait for them to turn to green the simple pass on it means one who is ignorant of

[14 : 49] God one of those people I'm not fitting any caps on but I have heard expressions like this and to one who preaches the gospel and desires the eternal welfare of young people I can tell you the pastor does not like to hear it I couldn't care less hey are you going to be the simple and live your life like that when things of purpose and profit are put before your eyes or you hear of them are you going to be simple when good counsel is given designed for your good in time and eternity too are you going to be heedless foolish and just say I want to live as I was born I am quite content to be in the world and of it

I want to live after the flesh the things of the flesh the things of God are nothing to me simple yes the simple pass on and are punished and now as you and I were born the word of God tells us the carnal mind is enmity against God is not subject to the law of God and neither indeed can be and now dear young people I want to open up this subject a little for I do want God in his great mercy if he will be pleased to so bless you to make you all prudent men and women youths and maids the greatest mercy that can befall you is that God should lead you into his truth and enable you to foresee the evil within you the evil without you all around you and that you see in it should desire to have

God to be your helper I think of Moses and he said to Hobab the son of Raguel we are journeying to the place of which the Lord has said I will give it thee come thou with us and we will do thee good and now that is just how men ordained to preach the gospel and those who teach you and love you in the Sunday school and labour in love on your behalf just how they feel we are journeying we hope God has enabled us to foresee that all things beneath the sun are passing and perishing he has made us aware that we are journeying he has taught us to pray so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom come thou with us and we will do the good what

Moses meant by that invitation all the good that God does to us as we journey through the wilderness you shall share in it and that is just our desire that you shall share in the things of God and know their blessedness realize their benefit in your everyday life and to realize as you journey on this God is our God forever and ever and he will be our guide even unto death and Moses could speak very feelingly about it because there was a time as you all know when he occupied a very high place in Egypt's history and was just about at the foot the bottom step that led up to

Egypt's throne but when God by his grace made him prudent he could foresee the evil and he refused any more to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and he went down to dwell with his brethren Israel in captivity who were then just a vast host of people making bricks and Moses said these are the people I belong to they are the people whom God has a special favor toward he has spoken good concerning Israel I do not want to mount on Egypt's throne and so we read when Moses was come to yours he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter esteeming the reproach of Christ greater treasure than all the riches of

[20 : 28] Egypt and Egypt at that time was the greatest realm in the world and the riches would be exceedingly great but he wanted to be one of the people of God he wanted a blessing indeed he wanted to realize he was a prudent man and God brought him forth to fill a great niche in Israel's history but you see what Moses did now this will help you to decide before God remember that whether you were prudent or whether you were still just the simple Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter then he esteemed the reproach of Christ to be greater treasures than the riches of

Egypt and then he made a choice choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season three things refusing esteeming choosing where do you come in have you got as far as refusing refusing what the world has to offer you which when all is said and done as I have already hinted all it can offer you is passing and perishing have you got something lodged in your breast that esteems the reproach of Christ do you sometimes feel oh if I could only be sure I was a real Christian how happy I should be God is making you prudent he will do much more for you yet than he has already done esteeming maybe you can look round the world and put your own valuation on it let others stretch their arms like seas and grasp in all the shore grant me the visits of thy face and

I desire no more esteem there is that in religion that God is the author of every little bit of it that you feel God has wrought in your soul's experience you esteem it you prize it you would not part with it at any price no no you can sing one of our hymns poor and afflicted lord are thine among the great unfit to shine and though the world may think it strange they would not with the world exchange yes the prudent man looketh well to his going he wants to know where he is going he wants to be able to say as another hymn writer did we are traveling home to

God in the way our fathers trod they are happy now and we hope their happiness to see let us look at Moses once more and that is when he has come to the end of his life work and all Israel a marvelous thing it is to picture it in your mind all Israel two millions of people are gathered together to hear Moses give as it were his farewell address as he was inspired and helped of God to do so and what are the last recorded words that the word of God tells us Moses spake as he addressed Israel's host happy art thou O Israel who is like unto thee O people saved by the

Lord and now that is just what the prudent man who foreseeeth the evil who foreseeeth that death is on the way and eternity is behind it he wants to have matters made right between his soul and God his great concern and a wonderful mercy if you have got that concern is to realize his name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins all people saved by the Lord all he feels with them numbered I would be now and in eternity but I must hasten on the prudent man foreseeeth the evil and hideth himself and now I have already hinted that life is a journey and you and

[26 : 02] I young and old are all going there are two ways wherein to go and that means two different destinations to arrive at either heaven or hell you see dear young people you will hear Jesus Christ do listen you will hear Jesus Christ speak to you beyond the grave and he will either say oh that he may say it come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world or else he will look at you and I was going to say with reverence and I will you will not need for him to say what he is going to say for you will know it by his countenance the way in which he does look at you but you will hear him say depart from me ye cursed

I never knew you you went to chapel I know all your life you heard thousands of sermons but you were simple you were heedless foolish what you long for was the amen to conclude the worship of God and you go where you felt atone in following the world at large these things are very solemn to contemplate and now I want to show you some of the evil which a prudent man foreseeth a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself but the simple pass on and are punished when a sinner is made prudent his eyes are opened and he sees what he is by nature and the sight is very solemn and as long as he lives he will continue to see further openings up of what one is by nature as the hymn writer says how sad our state by nature is our sins how deep their stains

Solomon has a word I often quote it as you will remember which shall know every man the plague of his own heart you may say well is there any benefit in knowing that yes blessed are the men of broken heart who mourn for sin with inward smart the blood of Christ divinely flows a healing balm for all their woes and remember what Isaiah declares from the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it wounds and bruises and putrefying sores and this is an evil which a man who is made prudent a young man he foreseeth it and how does he react to what he sees hold up my goings in thy paths that my footsteps slip not oh lord i am oppressed undertake for me my supplication lord is this that all my sins may be subdued that all thy precious promises may be to me and for my good a prudent man foreseeth the evil this evil of what one is by nature here a little there a little you learn more and more of it as long as you live and yet there is a hiding place for you when i was in my late teenage life as i have told you sometimes from this pulpit preaching the sermons one of our hymns was a very great help to me it is still a help to me amid the sorrows of the way lord Jesus teach my soul to pray and let me taste thy special grace and run to Christ my hiding place a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself and you must hide yourself like the Israelites did on the Passover night when the firstborn in every Egyptian household was slain the Israelites were under their own home roofs and the blood of the slain sacrifice was sprinkled on the lintels of the door and the door posts and they were as it were sheltering under the blood when i see the blood said the destroying angel i will pass over you and so a prudent man foreseeth the evil and he says like the psalmist i flee unto thee to hide me and what a mercy there is such a blessed hiding place for poor sinners who realize being made prudent their need of such a shelter and how kind who can estimate the love of God in providing that blessed hiding place you read about it in Isaiah a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind and the cover from the tempest as rivers of water in a dry place as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land the

prudent man foreseeth the evil and hide it himself what an evil is sin you look round the world as much of it as you can see and what you hear about it too as you do in the news and those of us who hope God has made us to be prudent who can foresee the evil we understand our hymn writer when he said oh thou hideous monstrous sin what a curse hast thou brought in all all creation groans through thee growing cause of misery sin is the cause of all the woes the world has ever seen and now if God make you a prudent man you will be able to foresee the evil of sin and that it is mixed with all that you do and how good it will be if you should be kept alive in your soul's concern day by day to hide yourself in that refuge for sinners which the gospel makes known and do remember this be sure your sin will find you out however long ago it was committed whatever it was about but oh there is a place where sin cannot find us out and that is when you were sheltered in this blessed hiding place that

God has made known and that is why the gospel of his grace is preached to you to tell you a refuge for sinners the gospel makes known it is found in the merits of Jesus alone and this is the way to get into it if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness I can only give you hints a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself now there is the evil arising from the solemn fact that you were born a sinner and being born a sinner although you came into the world according to the purposes of God yet being born a sinner you were born under the curse of a broken law and in need of a righteousness to be acceptable to

[35 : 44] God and now it is a great mercy to realize our need of a righteousness you might think being young that if you go to the house of prayer and behave fairly well there and if you go to Sunday school likewise and try to follow the lessons along that you might gather up a little bit of righteousness and you might make a possible appearance God will have none of it and neither must you build any hope of heaven upon it except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it and how good it is that God has provided a hiding place where the curse of a broken law can have no more to do with you because Jesus

Christ has died in your stead Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone which believe it there is another evil and that I want to say a little about as the Lord shall help me and that is the evil in the world about us when I was a lad at school a very long while ago in geography lessons we learned about the Sargasso sea and we learned that that was a sea that was the death trap of hundreds of ships which if they once got on the outskirts of it it was like a whirling gulf and a ship having got in it went down down and could not get out of it the sargasso sea and now the world is like that with all the evil made manifest in it it affects our eyes our ears it affects our minds our tongues it turns aside our feet and sometimes it moves our hands to do things so that our actions are not what they should be according to the word of God it is a veritable sargasso sea and any ship once entangled therein is doomed the evil in the world about us and when you look at the world as it is at the present time with hell itself let loose in it maybe some of you dear young people think about the more or less immediate future that is what

I hope you will do and I hope God will help you to do it and I hope he will make you this character a prudent man for see the evil and hideth himself if God in his mercy should do for you what he did for Solomon when he for wisdom prayed that will be a wonderful help to you as you journey on through life whatever the future may unfold they they that in the Lord confide and shelter in his wounded side shall see all dangers overpassed stand every storm and live at last that is just what the prudent man lives for the moment he is a sinner born again and his eyes are open to see he is born for an eternal destiny heaven or hell it is his concern from that time on to be found amongst the people of

God with whom it is well in time and eternity too a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself and now maybe you dear young people wonder what the future will unfold for you you have your life before you if all is well and you wonder what is going to happen in the world being as wicked as it is a thousand times more wicked than it has ever been in its long wicked history well if you should be made a prudent man and foresee the evil if you should seek to do this commit thy way unto the Lord trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass there is a word I much like the eye of the

Lord is upon them that fear him and on them that hope in his mercy you may wonder some of you young people whether you do fear him maybe you could venture to say you do hope in his mercy but you do seek him and in seeking him you desire that he will be with you and guide you amidst the ills and evils of everyday life and guard you therein the Lord bless you it shall be well with them that fear God the word of God declares whatever the wicked may be doing God has his eye upon you and he knows what you are doing he knows when you are down on your knees when you are seeking to hide in that blessed refuge which the word of

[41 : 50] God makes so plain is available as I have told our dear people so many times you can stand at the foot of Jacob's ladder at any time anywhere and with faith as a grain of mustard seed you can look up and see the Lord standing above it to hear what you have to say to his holy majesty and to do you good make crooked things straight rough places plain and make his goodness pass before you in the way but a prudent man remembers what the word of God says I will be inquired of by you all house of Israel to do these things a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself now there is another evil and that is the evil of death and death is an evil in its nature but to those who by the grace of

God are made prudent men and women youths and maids death comes in another guise altogether when he comes to such characters now his office is to wait between the saints and sin a porter at the heavenly gate to let the pilgrim in but oh if you should be the simple heedless careless don't care less about either life or death when death does appear oh how awful it will be no words of any preacher can describe what death will be to those who are sinful who turn their backs on God and will have none of the things of

God death will be an awful reality and it will usher you into an eternal state as long as God shall God remain so long shall last hell's lingering pain who can picture it God grant you may never never know what it is to enter into the reality of it oh that he would by his grace make you prudent grant you the inestimable mercy to be led into his truth and for the word of God to be a lamp unto your feet a light unto your path I must soon come to the amen but I want to say just a little more a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself some young people's services ago

I do not know quite how many but I read to you something that Mr. Colwell once said in a sermon when he was preaching at West Street Croydon where I used to be and he said this you can hear it again it will bear repetition one Sunday as I was preaching I saw sitting before me a young man apparently from the country accompanied by a young woman a few days later the young woman called upon me saying her friend was very unwell and asked me to go and see him I did so and after a little conversation I asked him what his hope was in the prospect of death he answered alas I fear none for I have been brought up under the gospel yet have neglected what

I have heard two or three times before this I have been ill and have made vows of reformation which have vanished with my illness and now I feel my soul is indeed lost too late the godly minister tried to put before him the mercy of God telling him God had a long arm to reach the most desperate case but he could not receive it twice afterward I visited him but found him still in the most despairing state very painful to witness for he was not able to grasp any comfort or hope shortly after someone called from his house and requested me to come saying he was wringing his hands in the agonies of despair this I found too true again I attempted to direct his mind to the mercy of

[47 : 27] God to lost and ruined sinners but he put it from him and said I am lost lost lost and so he died what more can I tell you to illustrate the simple pass on and punished of all the calamities I cannot conceive a more solemn calamity than as it were to go down into eternal misery and yet remember the music of the gospel trumpet ringing in your ears wherein the preacher sought to encourage poor sinners to trust in the Lord and prove him as he is so ready and willing to be proved the sinner's friend dear young people do lay these things to heart

I shall not probably be able to give you many more young people services I shall as long as I can but I do want you to be helped of God in listening and I want God in his great mercy to make you this character a prudent man for see the evil and hideth himself I desire the blessing of God upon you for time and for eternity and remember this a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself rock of ages cleft for me now let us get down to bed rock and see if we can get a little encouragement for you how do you sing that hymn when it is announced to be sung top lady wrote it and he could do that rock of ages cleft for me you would not venture maybe to sing that do you turn it into a prayer shelter me rock of ages shelter me let me hide myself in thee oh that is the blessed hiding place which

God in his mercy helps poor people ordained of God to preach in the gospel of his grace and the weary the tempted the burdened by sin were never exempted from entering therein and who can tell but what God will be gracious unto you and as you live your lives dear young people whether it be at school or at college or farther on in life to earn the bread which perisheth with all your duties that come upon you in everyday life and difficulties to face do remember God is ever ready to help he is said to be and he is a God ready to pardon and he has left this word to help you if any lack wisdom let him ask of

God who giveth to all men liberally and upraised not and it shall be given him a prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself but the simple pass on and are punished there is a safe and secret place beneath the wings divine reserved for all the hairs of grace oh be that refuge mine so our hymn writer sings oh be that refuge mine and dear young people God grant it may be yours amen