



*The hearing ear
and the seeing eye,
The Lord has made
them both.*

Proverbs 20:12

Last week Solomon told us about the “seeing eye” and now we turn to the “hearing ear.” Much of what might be said about the eyes can also be said, in a general sense, about the ears. We begin with a passage that was used a few presidents ago (Johnson) . . .

He who passes by and meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a dog by the ears.

Proverbs 26:17

It is still good advice! Then we have,
He who answers a matter before he hears it, It is folly and shame to him.

Proverbs 18:13

Today, I suppose, this would refer to a man whose mouth gets ahead of his brain. We can do this in Christian matters as well as others. Sometimes we do more harm than good to the spread of the Gospel by saying things before we think them through.

Turning to more positive thoughts,
The ear that hears the rebukes of life Will abide among the wise.

Proverbs 15:31

The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge, And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

Proverbs 18:15

*Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise,
And apply your heart to my knowledge;*

Proverbs 22:17

Solomon notes we may use our ears for two types of information: a rebuke - hearing about what we are doing wrong, and knowledge - things we need to do that are right. This advice goes both ways. We may head the good advice we hear, and we may also give it.

Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear.

Proverbs 25:12

*He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward
Than he who flatters with the tongue.*

Proverbs 28:23

This advice is repeated in the New Testament.

Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Galatians 6:1

One interesting piece of advice Solomon gives is of great value today.

Do not go hastily to court; For what will you do in the end, When your neighbor has put you to shame? Debate your case with your neighbor, And do not disclose the secret to another; Lest he who hears it expose your shame, And your reputation be ruined.

Proverbs 25:8-10

As Christians, we need to be very careful about what we say in the earshot of non-Christians. All too often, today, the work of the Great Commission is hindered by people saying things that are heard and misinterpreted by non believers (especially the press). Along with this, Solomon says,

Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

Proverbs 23:9

A New Testament parallel to this is found in the words of Christ,

Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

Matthew 7:6

So, finally, you and I, as Christians, need to heed the advice,

Hear, my son, and be wise; And guide your heart in the way.

Proverbs 23:19

Apply your heart to instruction, And your ears to words of knowledge.

Proverbs 23:12

If we do not heed this, the word is,

Cease listening to instruction, my son, And you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Proverbs 19:27

I cannot help but close with a note concerning what the Lord hears and does not hear.

The Lord is far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.

Proverbs 15:29

Well, you'll hear more from me next week, Lord willing!

Wayne

