

**ST. SIMEON ANGLICAN CHURCH, OFF FUTA ROAD,
AKURE
BIBLE STUDY, 12/12/2007**

STUDY 10

FOLLY AND WISDOM

Ecc. 10:1 – 20

This study seems to be like Solomon's proverbs, a collection of wise sayings and observations, rather than a part of his sermon; but the preacher studied to be sententious, and "set in order many proverbs," to be brought in his preaching. Yet the general scope of all the observations in this chapter is to recommend wisdom to us, and its precepts and rules, as of great use for the right ordering of our conversation and to caution us against folly. He recommends wisdom to private persons, who are in an inferior station. 1. It is our wisdom to preserve our reputation, in managing our affairs dexterously (v. 1-3). 2. To be submissive to our superiors if at any time we have offended them (v. 4). 3. To live quiet and peaceable lives, and not to meddle with those that are factious and seditious, and are endeavouring to disturb the government and the public repose, the folly and danger of which disloyal and turbulent practices he shows (v. 8–11). 4. To govern our tongues well (v. 12–15). 5. To be diligent in our business and provide well for our families (v. 18, 19). 6. Not to speak ill of our rulers, no, not in secret (v. 20). He recommends wisdom to rulers; let them not think that, because their subjects must be quiet under them, therefore they may do what they please; no, but, 1. Let them be careful whom they prefer to places of trust and power (v. 5-7). 2. Let them manage themselves discreetly, be generous and not childish, temperate and not luxurious (v. 16, 17). Happy is the nation when princes and people make conscience of their duty according to these rules.

1. Preservation of a character for wisdom

Ecc. 10:1–3; Exodus 30:25; Proverbs 13:16; 18:2; 12:33; 15:2; 15:2, 28; 1:29; 23:23

Those especially who make a profession of religion, should keep from all appearances of evil. A wise man has great advantage over a fool, who is always at a loss when he has anything to do. Sin is the reproach of sinners, wherever they go, and shows their folly.

2. Respecting subjects and rulers

Ecc. 10:4–10; Acts 28:3; Psalm 52:2; Proverbs 25:15; Ecc. 8:3; I Samuel 25:24–33; Esther 3:1; James 2:3–5; Esther 6:8; Proverbs 19:10; 30:22; Judges 9:53–57; Esther 7:10; Psalm 7:15; Proverbs 26:27; Amos 5:19

Solomon appears to caution men not to seek redress in a hasty manner, nor to yield to pride and revenge. Do not, in a passion, quit thy post of duty; wait awhile, and thou

wilt find that yielding pacifies great offences. Men are not preferred according to their merit. And those are often most forward to offer help, who are least aware of the difficulties, or the consequences. The same remark is applied to the church, or the body of Christ, that all the members should have the same care one for another.

3. The contemptibleness of folly

Ecc. 10:11–15; Psalm 58:4–5; Jeremiah 8:17; Proverbs 10:14, 32; 12:13; 10:14; 18:7; Ecc. 7:25; Luke 4:22; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6; Proverbs 15:2; Ecc. 3:22; 6:12; 7:14; 8:7

There is a practice in the East, of charming serpents by music. The babblers tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison; and contradiction only makes it the more violent. We must find the way to keep him gentle. But by rash, unprincipled, or slanderous talk, he brings open or secret vengeance upon himself. Would we duly consider our own ignorance as to future events, it would cut off many idle words which we foolishly multiply. Fools toil a great deal to no purpose. They do not understand the plainest things, such as the entrance into a great city. But it is the excellency of the way to the heavenly city, that it is a high-way, in which the simplest wayfaring men shall not err, Isaiah 25:8 . But sinful folly makes men miss that only way to happiness.

4. Duties of rulers and subjects

Ecc. 10:16–20; Isaiah 3:4–5,12; 5:11; Proverbs 3:14; 24:30–34; II Peter 1:5–10; Judges 9:13; Psalm 104:15; Ecc. 2:3; 7:12; Exodus 22:28; Acts 23:5

The happiness of a land depends on the character of its rulers. The people cannot be happy when their princes are childish, and lovers of pleasure. Slothfulness is of ill consequence both to private and public affairs. Money, of itself, will neither feed nor clothe, though it answers the occasions of this present life, as what is to be had, may generally be had for money. But the soul, as it is not redeemed, so it is not maintained with corruptible things, as silver and gold. God sees what men do, and hears what they say in secret; and, when he pleases, brings it to light by strange and unsuspected ways. If there be hazard in secret thoughts and whispers against earthly rulers, what must be the peril from every deed, word, or thought of rebellion against the King of kings, and Lord of lords! He seeth in secret. His ear is ever open. Sinner! curse not THIS KING in thy inmost thought. Your curses cannot affect Him; but his curse, coming down upon you, will sink you to the lowest hell.