

# Get Smart: A Study in Proverbs

## Study #9: Smoothing the Way

As we interact with people throughout our life, we are bound to come into conflict. The book of proverbs has much to teach us about these matters. It shows us how to avoid unnecessary conflict. It shows us that some conflict is good. It teaches us how to respond to some things that could result in conflict but do not need to.

### Wisdom and Anger

When we think of conflict, it is hard not to think of anger. Much conflict is under girded by feelings of anger. If we are going to be wise in conflict situations, we need to know how to handle our anger and how to respond to angry people

- Proverbs 15:1      A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
- Proverbs 15:18      A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.
- Proverbs 29:8      Mockers stir up a city, but wise men turn away anger.
- Proverbs 29:11      A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.
- Proverbs 29:22      An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins.

### Wisdom in Avoiding Conflict

In many situations the wisest course of action is to not stir up conflict, but rather being willing to let things go. This includes being the type of person who is not quick to quarrel, but also being wise in knowing when to drop an issue.

- Proverbs 12:16      A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.
- Proverbs 14:9      Fools mock at making amends for sin, but goodwill is found among the upright.
- Proverbs 17:9      He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.
- Proverbs 17:14      Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.

Proverbs 17:19	He who loves a quarrel loves sin; he who builds a high gate invites destruction.
Proverbs 18:19	An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel.
Proverbs 19:11	A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.
Proverbs 20:1	Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.
Proverbs 20:3	It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.
Proverbs 22:10	Drive out the mocker, and out goes strife; quarrels and insults are ended.
Proverbs 26:17	Like one who seizes a dog by the ears is a passer-by who meddles in a quarrel not his own.
Proverbs 26:20-21	Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down. 21 As charcoal to embers and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.
Proverbs 30:33	For as churning the milk produces butter, and as twisting the nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces strife."

### **Wisdom in Confrontation**

While there is certainly wisdom in avoiding some conflicts, there is also a time when it wise to confront a person or an issue. Proverbs speaks much about giving and receiving a rebuke. The path of wisdom is certainly one in which correction is willingly received and appropriately given. Fools turn a rebuke into a fight.

Proverbs 9:8	Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you.
Proverbs 9:7-9	"Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse. 8 Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you. 9 Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.

- Proverbs 12:1      Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid.
- Proverbs 13:1      A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a mocker does not listen to rebuke.
- Proverbs 13:10     Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.
- Proverbs 15:31     He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise.
- Proverbs 17:10     A rebuke impresses a man of discernment more than a hundred lashes a fool.
- Proverbs 19:20     Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.
- Proverbs 19:25     Flog a mocker, and the simple will learn prudence; rebuke a discerning man, and he will gain knowledge.
- Proverbs 25:12     Like an earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold is a wise man's rebuke to a listening ear.
- Proverbs 27:5      Better is open rebuke than hidden love.