

# The Lakeview Lamp

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." - Psalm 119:105*

**July 6, 2008**

## *Live and Learn*

J.R. Bronger, edited

Many are heard to say: *"Oh well, live and learn."* This expression suggests that the longer we live and the older we get the wiser we become. Sadly this is not always the case.

As we grow older we should learn; we should learn from our mistakes, we should learn from experience and from the wisdom of others. This is the theme of the book of Proverbs. It was written so as *"to know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding, to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity; to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. . ."* (1:2-4). Young man – live and learn!

Knowing that we are all sinners (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8-10), it stands to reason that throughout our life we make serious mistakes; we have errors in judgment, and in action. However, as we grow older we should not be making the same foolish choices and we should not be falling into the same errors. That is, all should *"live and learn."*

The simple young man of Proverbs is the young man (or woman) who is naïve and inexperienced in life. The writer cautions him to *"live and learn."* *"A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel"* (Proverbs 1:5).

In Proverbs 7 the writer warns of sexual enticements and the consequences of yielding to those temptations. *"With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him. Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life. Now therefore, listen to me, my children; pay attention to the words of my mouth,"* (:21-24). Sexual promiscuity is sinful, and it is destructive. Some who have given in to its allurements have come to themselves and repented, they have *"lived and learned."* Others have not!

A young woman I knew fell hard for a young man in high school. She wanted not only to have him as a boyfriend but also to marry him. He did not have the same interest. She decided that if she slept with him then he would love her. So, she began having sexual relations with him and became pregnant. Instead of marrying her, he broke it off and started dating others. Devastated, she faced the future as an unwed mother. She made a public confession of sin and was restored both to the Lord and to the church. But she still embraced the fantasy that the young man really loved her but was simply confused.

After the baby was born they begin *"hooking up"* again. She becomes pregnant a second time. He still refuses to marry her. When the two children are perhaps three and one, the young man finally decided to marry their mother. She is elated, all is now working out—or is it? The marriage lasted only a few years, he never loved her. Now the children are in their twenties, and the woman has been alone for years. She simply refused to *"live and learn."*

In Proverbs 23 the warning is given: *"Hear, my son, and be wise; and guide your heart in the way. Do not mix with winebibbers, or with gluttonous eaters of meat; For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe a man with rags. Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old"* (19-22). This is because you will *"learn his ways and set a snare for your soul"* (Proverbs 22:25). How foolish can some people be? Both parents and children ignore the wisdom found in this warning of Solomon. It is absolutely folly to think that the friends one chooses will not have an effect on him.

A young man asked me the best way to teach his friends about the evils of drinking alcoholic beverages (wine, beer, strong drink). As we talked I soon discovered this man felt that social drinking was not prohibited by the Bible.

He only wanted to convince his friends that drunkenness was sinful. Who influenced whom? He did not begin by accepting social drinking, but he does now! He is on a slippery slope, and I fear for him.

Sin is like a snare into which one is thrust and caught. ***“His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and he is caught in the cords of his sin. He shall die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray”*** (Proverbs 5:22-23).

Sin is like a shop vice. Most men have a vice in the garage that clamps onto objects in order to hold them in place. Once the jaws of the vice close, the object is not going anywhere. This is how sin closes around the foolish until, in the words of Paul, it is reigning in the body (Romans 6:12). In police departments there is a team called the “vice squad.” They address matters that we might label as moral issues; prostitution, drugs, and alcohol. I have always found the name of these units interesting. Even the world recognizes not only the destructive nature of these activities but it also knows how these can get a grip on one and destroy him.

Things like beer, wine, wine coolers, and hard liquor are not things to use in moderation. These are vices! Drugs, including marijuana, will get one in their jaws and destroy him. Sadly many of our children have been introduced to them by their friends; friends we have allowed to enter our homes and our lives, naively believing they would not be able to influence our children. We can hardly expect our children to live and learn when we fail to do so.

***“The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor”*** (Proverbs 11:9). If anybody ever needed to “live and learn” it is the one who fails to control his tongue. Some live their lives clipped to an uncontrollable tongue; a tongue that seems to be blowing in the wind. Filled with bitterness they are always saying whatever pops into their empty heads. And, tragically, they never seem to learn. ***“A man of great wrath will suffer punishment; for if you rescue him, you will have to do it again”*** (Proverbs 19:19).

Some parents drive their children away from them and from the Lord with their tongues. Seldom offering kind words of encouragement, instead they bite with sarcasm and hateful language. A young person might spill tea at dinner and for the next several minutes sits and listens as one or both parents talk about how klutzy and dumb he is. Not content to simply humiliate him, they finally send him away, *“you want to eat like a dog, go to the garage and eat.”* Parents, you better rein that flapping tongue in, or else you will destroy a relationship. Do you really believe that child meant to “ruin your meal” by spilling that tea? These parents might have lived, but they haven’t learned.

Let us not only be interested in living a long and full life, but let us learn as we go along. Read the book of Proverbs, for it contains a wealth of information designed to help us “live and learn.”

# News and Notes

The **meal list for the upcoming meeting** is posted in the back. Both lunch and supper times need to be taken, so please do your part and sign up soon. Both J.R. and his wife Sue will be here and need meals.

**Flyers for the meeting** are now available in the back.

**Mary Burnett** remains at home on Hospice care with up and down days.

**Julia Edwards**, who used to worship here, lost one of the twins she was carrying. She is now 10 weeks along with the other one. There are cards for her on the table in the back if you would like to sign one.

**Metty Fain** remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.

**Cotton Read** continues to have breathing problems.

**Nancy Read** continues to have problems with her eyes.

**Ame White** has an MRI scheduled for tomorrow to further examine injuries from where she fell a few weeks ago.

**Absent:** Chris Gertsch (Alaska), Katie Greene (OH).

**New Reports:** Ron Chaffin (South Africa), Gary Hunt (NY), Chad Lynn (WV).

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*"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks" (1 Thes 5:16-18).*