

Proverbs Week #130 (12:24-25)

"The diligent person will rule, but the slothful will become a slave. Anxiety in a person's heart weighs him down, but an encouraging word brings him joy." (Proverbs 12:24-25 NET)

The two verses for today's lesson declare differing results concerning work and anxiety. Remembering that proverbs are not promises but treasure chest of wisdom, what can we learn about the importance of a healthy work ethic? What kind of people does God want us to be, free or slaves? The Messiah died in order to set us free.

Verse 25 speaks of anxiety and how it weighs down a person's heart. We all feel anxiety at different times in our lives. Anxiety comes in many forms. It is often that feeling in your stomach when you are afraid or worried. Some anxieties come on quick like when someone scares you, you remember something important you forgot to do, or when you break something of great value. Others linger and they are hard to get rid of like when you know you did something wrong but don't know how to make it right or when someone you love has been very sick for a long time. Many people think that worry, stress, and anxiety are mainly adult problems. While children may not understand stress or anxiety they certainly feel anxiety when it is present in a family. Mothers and Fathers who are anxious spread that anxiety to the rest of their family.

Our proverb gives the remedy for families, communities, and even nations who are anxious. It tells us that an encouraging word brings joy. The trials we face produce in us character. This is what Peter teaches us.

"This brings you great joy, although you may have to suffer for a short time in various trials. Such trials show the proven character of your faith, which is much more valuable than gold—gold that is tested by fire, even though it is passing away—and will bring praise and glory and honor when Yeshua the Messiah is revealed." (1 Peter 1:6-7 NET)

I want to connect the two verses in today's lesson and present three things that we need to remember when it comes to growing in wisdom and proving to be faithful to God with godly character qualities.

- 1) **God sets us free for Himself - to be a people who are zealous for good works (Titus 2:11-14)**
 - a. We are instructed in how to live
 - b. We have a hope that Messiah will again appear
 - c. His desire for us is that we would do what is good in His sight
- 2) **We are set free to produce good fruit and show the great value of our God's love, sacrifice, and faithfulness (John 15:8-11)**
 - a. He is the vine – connected to Him we bear fruit of the same kind He does
 - b. The grafting into Him is based upon love-the same kind of love that the Father has for the Son
 - c. The fruit we bear lets the world know we are His disciples
- 3) **We work out our salvation as God works in us (Phil 2:11-16)**
 - a. His work is to bring about the desires and the results
 - b. As a rule – when we work we should not grumble or argue with each other
 - c. His desire is that we are to be blameless and pure children of God – without blemish as we live in a world full of crooked and perverse people