

Wisdom and Warfare

Proverbs 24

When Israel was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, they were surrounded with enemies who wanted to stop that work. This created a difficult situation: A construction zone that could become a battle zone at any moment. Nehemiah 4:17-18 describes it this way, ¹⁷ *They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.* ¹⁸ *For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.*

This Biblical scene, along with the prevailing conditions of apostasy and the assaults on the reliability of the Bible, led Charles H. Spurgeon to create a magazine called, “The Sword and The Trowel.” – still being printed today. Spurgeon said, *“We would ply the Trowel with untiring hand for the building up of Jerusalem's dilapidated walls, and wield the Sword with vigor and valor against the enemies of the Truth.”*

It is so easy to think, “If only we didn’t have so many distractions and problems, we could get the Gospel to everyone in the world and they would be saved.” Living a godly life and doing the work of the Gospel is like trying to build a fire during a rainstorm. The entire environment is against you.

The Scriptures give many instructions, warnings and encouragements on this topic (i.e. I Timothy 4:12-16; II Timothy 2:1-19; 4:1-8). Proverbs 24 is not commonly listed as one of those places in Scripture. Yet, it yields a lot to think about in this area. In this chapter we have the need to build up ourselves and others in wisdom and understanding. At the same time we must address the problems of conflict with enemies and rescuing people from the destruction of worldly deception. See Proverbs 24:5-6.

Let’s see how the verses of this chapter might apply:

Developing and Disciplining Ourselves in Wisdom, Knowledge and Character.

Proverbs 24:1-10 – The pursuit of eternal and enduring values.

Proverbs 24:13-14 – The sweet benefits of godly wisdom.

Proverbs 24:30-34 – The danger of sloth and neglect.

Warfare: Conflict with the world, Separating from Wickedness, Yet Reaching out to Those in Peril.

Proverbs 24:6,10-12 – Face adversity. Care for and defend the oppressed.

Proverbs 24:15-26 – Do not fear nor desire the ways of wicked men. Love mercy. Hate partiality and flattery. Rebuke evil. Love truth.

Proverbs 24:27-29 – Sacrifice, priorities, restraint – not revenge.