

Warm-up Questions

1. What is one of your favorite words and why?
2. What is one of your least favorite words and why?

Warm-up Activity (Pick a few volunteers)

Turn to the person to your right and share three words that describe this person.

Why do you think most of these words convey positive aspects of these people rather than negative?

Can You Relate?

Our Proverbs passages this week describe both negative and positive ways in which humanity responds to one another as we seek to help each other grow spiritually as the body of Christ. As we relate to one another, we can forsake God and walk in foolishness and sin, or we can follow God and walk in the way of His righteousness. Forsaking God leads to words and actions that tear apart unity and fellowship, while following God leads to words and actions that help knit together a healthy, vibrant community of believers.

1. Read Proverbs 9:8-9. What are a few characteristics of a 'scoffer'?

How would these characteristics drive their response to correction (reproof)?

Describe a time you've seen this dialogue in action, and the ending results. (This could be a personal experience, or even something on a national or global scale)

2. Looking at Proverbs 9:9, what are a few characteristics found in a wise man?

How do these characteristics work together to help one eagerly receive correction?

Describe a time in which you greatly benefitted from correction (reproof).

3. What are a few examples of the wrong way to deliver correction.

What are a few examples of the right way to deliver correction.

Have you ever received reproof delivered in a way that caused you harm? Describe.

4. Read Proverbs 15:5. Define and describe a 'fool'.

In this passage the word 'father' carries the meaning of a person in authority over you. Who are a few of these people in your life? Among these, who do you find the most difficult to heed instruction from and why? Who among them is it most easy to receive from and why?

5. Read Proverbs 16:27-30. Describe manners in which a person can 'plot' evil. How much effort does it take?

These passages describe a person who digs up ways to slander another person; who spreads disunity among close friends; who seeks to drag other people into sin; and who cooperates with other people to commit wrongdoing.

Does this passage bring a situation to mind either past or current? If current, how do you think you can be used by God to protect the unity of community? If past, share what you learned from the experience (whether personal or at large).

Live it Out!

We are all in the process of sanctification; the process of seeking to become more and more like Christ as we grow closer to Him. As a body of Christ, we learn and grow together, and a necessary part of this process includes welcoming – or delivering - correction when we or someone we know is behaving in a way that is out of line with what God teaches in His Word. However, there is a proper way to receive, and a proper way to deliver. We must deliver correction with wisdom and love, and when receiving, we must let go of pride as we welcome instruction as a necessary part of our growing relationship with God and with each other. When we welcome our spiritual mothers and fathers to reproof us as needed, we gain wisdom that fans into flame a desire for even more.

Does this study suggest an area in your life in which you might need correction? Seek wisdom from a spiritual mother or father.

Does this study bring to mind a person in your life in need of correction? Discuss in your group the proper way in which to approach this situation.

Encourage your group to commit time to pray for one another, encourage one another, meet each other's needs, fellowship together and interceded for each other as the Lord leads. Encourage them to continue to meet and to return for the next scheduled gathering.

For further study Read James 3:5-12, then describe the dangers of the tongue.