

# Multicolored Wisdom

Proverbs 21 – 27 (selected verses)

Multicolored Wisdom

Introduction

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- In **Ephesians 3:10**, Paul speaks of the “manifold wisdom of God.”

# Multicolored Wisdom    Introduction

- Explaining the Greek word for “manifold,” one possible definition in the Greek lexicon says,
  - much variegated, marked with a great variety of colors
  - of cloth or a painting

# Multicolored Wisdom    Introduction

- We see something of this multicolored wisdom of God in the book of **Proverbs**.
- Assorted topics are addressed.
- Wisdom shows itself in assorted ways.

# Multicolored Wisdom    Introduction

- The variations in the topics are like variations in colors.
- Some are very different – like red and green.

# Multicolored Wisdom    Introduction

- Some are more closely related.
- They are like red and a slightly darker red.
- Or like green and a slightly bluish green.

# Multicolored Wisdom    Introduction

- All of these come together to paint a picture of the manifold – or **multicolored wisdom of God**.

# Multicolored Wisdom    Introduction

- We're going to look at fourteen different "colors" of wisdom that appear in **Proverbs 21 – 27**.
- Each of these glimpses gives us a slightly different shade or aspect of the wisdom of God.

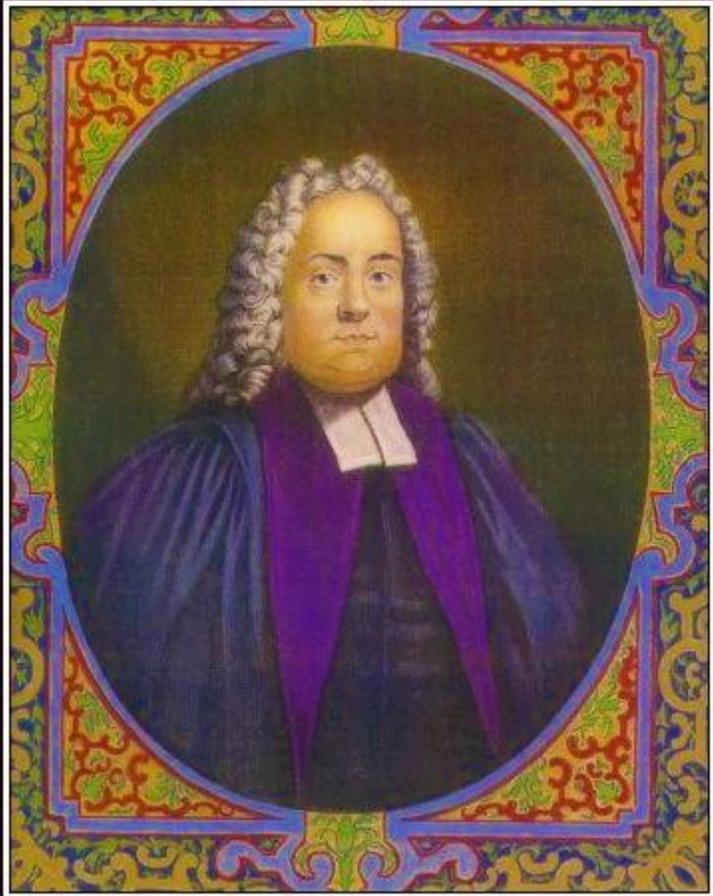
Color #1    Proverbs 21:5

# Color #1 Proverbs 21:5

- “Get rich quick” schemes make you poorer.
- Plan instead to “get rich slow” through consistent effort.

Color #2      Proverbs 21:31

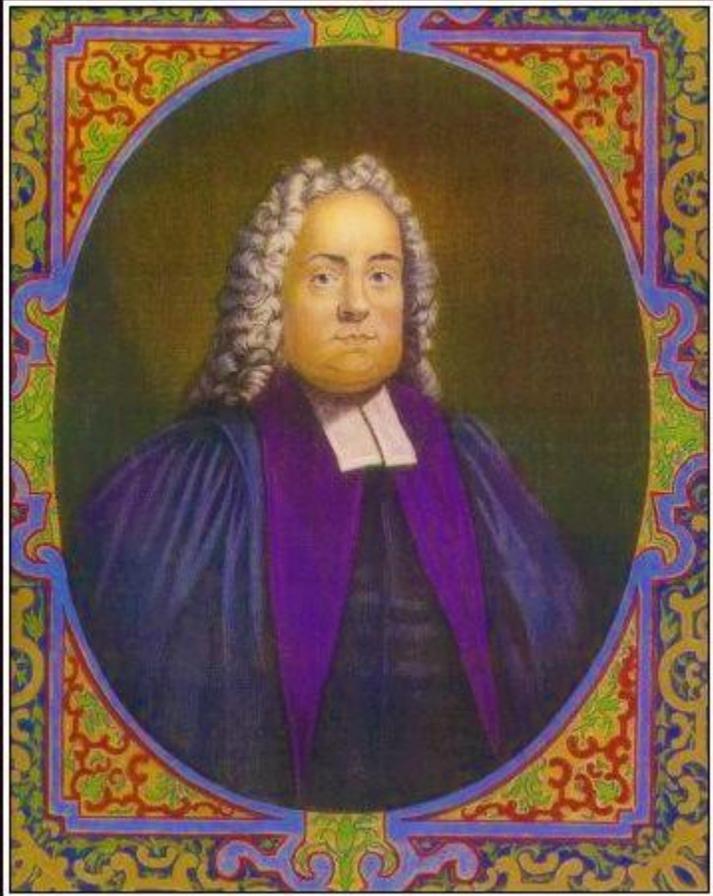
## Color #2    Proverbs 21:31



*Be the cause ever so good, and the patrons of it ever so strong, and wise, and faithful, and the means of carrying it on, and gaining the point, ever so probable, still they must acknowledge God and take him along with them ...*

*– Matthew Henry (1662 – 1714)*

## Color #2    Proverbs 21:31



*... When we are preparing for the day of battle our great concern must be to make God our friend and secure his favour.*

*– Matthew Henry (1662 – 1714)*

## Color #2      Proverbs 21:31

- Make plans.
- Be prepared.
- Do whatever it takes.
- Finally, trust the Lord, for there is ultimately no success without him.

Color #3      Proverbs 22:6

## Color #3     Proverbs 22:6

- Early training pays off.
- “The way he should go” = better, “according to his way.”
- We have to respect the child’s individuality or capacities.

## Color #3     Proverbs 22:6

- But we also have to teach them right from wrong.
- See **22:5**, the previous verse.
- It helps to take **22:5-6** together

Color #4      Proverbs 23:17-18

## Color #4     Proverbs 23:17-18

- Asaph struggled with this very type of envy.

**Psalm 73:1–3 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

<sup>2</sup> But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped.

<sup>3</sup> For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

## Color #4     Proverbs 23:17-18

- One way to stay out of this trap is to gain a better grasp of God's love.

Color #4    Proverbs 23:17-18

*If we are in the love of God we shall be in his fear; for though perfect love casts out fear that hath torment, it introduces the fear that dares not cause needless pain to the Infinite Lover of souls.*

*– F. B. Meyer (1847- 1929)*



## Color #4    Proverbs 23:17-18

- Immersed in the love of God, we learn to be content with all that he gives us.
- What others have no longer makes much difference.

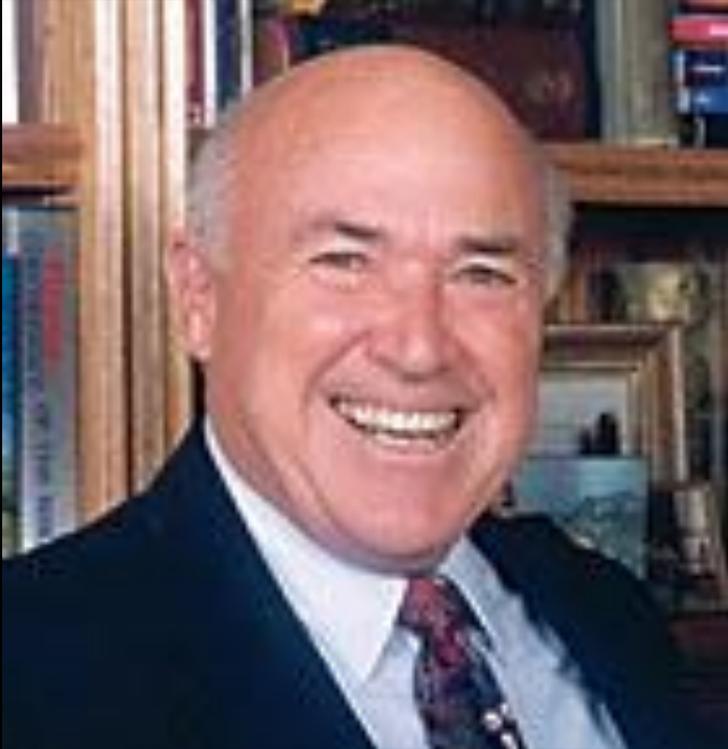
Color #5      Proverbs 23:26-28

## Color #5      Proverbs 23:26-28

- This is a basic life lesson.
- Keep track of how many famous people fall at this point.
- You can easily lose count.

Color #6      Proverbs 23:29-35

# Color #6 Proverbs 23:29-35



*Things that you would not normally say. Things that you would not normally do. But now that you're under the influence, your inhibitions have been loosed, you're going to do all kinds of weird and stupid things.*

*– Pastor Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013)*

## Color #6      Proverbs 23:29-35

- Another basic life lesson.
- In our day, several drugs can also fall into this category.
- Marijuana can be legalized, but retaining a clear head will always be smarter.

Color #7      Proverbs 24:10

## Color #7     Proverbs 24:10

- Consider Paul's experience as an apostle – compared with the false apostles.

**2 Corinthians 11:21-28** (ESV) But whatever anyone else dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. <sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I.

## Color #7     Proverbs 24:10

- Consider Paul's experience as an apostle – compared with the false apostles.

**2 Corinthians 11:21-28** (ESV) <sup>23</sup> Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. <sup>24</sup> Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one.

## Color #7      Proverbs 24:10

- Consider Paul's experience as an apostle – compared with the false apostles.

**2 Corinthians 11:21-28 (ESV)** <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; <sup>26</sup> on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers;

## Color #7      Proverbs 24:10

- Consider Paul's experience as an apostle – compared with the false apostles.

**2 Corinthians 11:21-28** (ESV) <sup>27</sup> in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup> And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

# Color #7      Proverbs 24:10

- Life can be difficult.
- Don't quit.

Color #8      Proverbs 24:30-34

## Color #8      Proverbs 24:30-34

- The sluggard comes up repeatedly in **Proverbs**.
- He never gets anything done.

## Color #8      Proverbs 24:30-34

- This is what Paul said to the Thessalonians:

**2 Thessalonians 3:6, 11-12 (ESV)** <sup>6</sup> Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. ... <sup>11</sup> For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. <sup>12</sup> Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

## Color #8      Proverbs 24:30-34

- The usual solution for poverty in **Proverbs** is work.
- Paul thought that was still a good policy.

Color #9      Proverbs 25:11-14

## Color #9      Proverbs 25:11-14

- Sin is a tempter that promises things it cannot give.
- False prophets speak words that they cannot fulfill.
- Empty boasters are like both of these.

## Color #9      Proverbs 25:11-14

- How much better to speak just the right word at the right time or to be a faithful messenger.

Color #10

Proverbs 26:4-5

## Color #10      Proverbs 26:4-5

- Sometimes there is a right way to respond to a fool.
- Sometimes there isn't.
- Either way, it's tough to win with a fool.

Color #11      Proverbs 26:11

# Color #11      Proverbs 26:11

- Peter relates this verse to those who have experienced something of God's grace and then have turned away.

## Color #11      Proverbs 26:11

**2 Peter 2:21–22 (ESV)** <sup>21</sup> For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. <sup>22</sup> What the true proverb says has happened to them: “The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire.”

# Color #11      Proverbs 26:11

- Some people keep making the same life-ruining mistakes over and over again.
- Don't be one of them.

Color #12      Proverbs 27:1-2

## Color #12      Proverbs 27:1-2

- Boasting is for fools.
- One good reference from someone else is better than the sum of all bragging.

Color #13      Proverbs 27:17

# Color #13    Proverbs 27:17

*The point of 27:17 is that constructive criticism among friends develops character.*

*– Dr. Tewoldemedhin Habtu,  
Africa International University,  
Nairobi, Kenya*

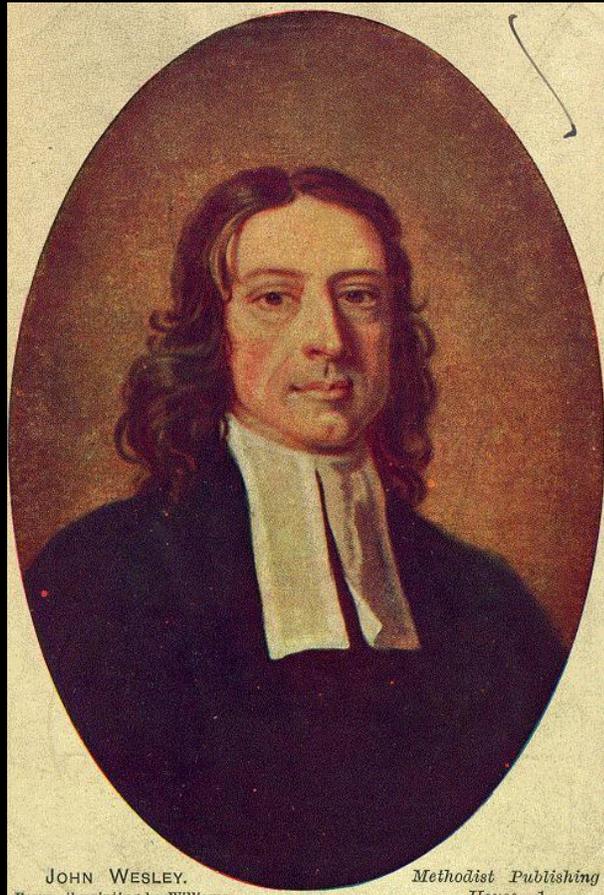


## Color #13      Proverbs 27:17

- It's hard to accept criticism from just anyone.
- You have to know that the person is a real friend.
- Make friends with people who will make you better.

Color #14    Proverbs 27:23-27

# Color #14      Proverbs 27:23-27



John Wesley (1703 – 1791) explains,  
*What thou dost now possess, will not last  
always. If a man had the wealth of a  
kingdom, without care and diligence it  
would be brought to nothing.*

## Color #14     Proverbs 27:23-27

- Wealth and treasure of every kind is normally acquired through diligence.
- It is also kept through diligence.

Multicolored Wisdom

Conclusions

# Multicolored Wisdom      Conclusions

- God's wisdom is wide and varied.
- At the present time it is on display in the various ways he works in us – his church.
- Listen to what Paul says in **Ephesians 3**.

# Multicolored Wisdom      Conclusions

- **Ephesians 3:7–10** (ESV) <sup>7</sup> Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. <sup>8</sup> To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ...

# Multicolored Wisdom      Conclusions

- **Ephesians 3:7–10** (ESV) ... <sup>9</sup> and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, <sup>10</sup> so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

# Multicolored Wisdom      Conclusions

- God has saved us from a life of pointlessness through Christ.
- He is preparing us for eternal glory with Christ.

# Multicolored Wisdom      Conclusions

- He is now demonstrating his multicolored wisdom to the whole universe through you – followers of Christ.
- We each can display God's wisdom in various ways.

# Multicolored Wisdom      Conclusions

- Sometimes we will be very like one another – because our wisdom is the shared wisdom of God.
- Other times we will display his wisdom in differing or contrasting ways.

# Multicolored Wisdom      Conclusions

- If we become lovers of wisdom our lives will become an effective demonstration of the wisdom of God.
- This will be true of each of us separately and all of us together.
- Let's make that our prayer and our goal.