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Leadership from the Book of Proverbs

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Here is the listing of Bible passages from Proverbs that refer to the subject of leadership from a variety of perspectives—16:10; 16:12, 14; 20:2, 8, 26, 28; 22:11; 24:21, 22; 25:1, 2, 3-4, 5, 6-7; 28:2, 4, 12, 15-16; 28:28; 29:2, 4; 29:12, 14, 18.

Solomon wrote Proverbs for his son who will one day be king. **Most of us are not kings or governing officials. But we are leaders in other ways—family leaders, business leaders, church leaders, or discipleship leaders.** So I have tried to glean some general principles of leadership from Solomon's exhortations about the king. They will be very different from most "successful leadership" type of courses because they are based in the fear of God.

Here Are Four Principles about Leadership:

16:10, *A divine decision is in the lips of the king; His mouth should not err in judgment.*

(1) Leadership should be based on accurate judgment.

Leaders are judges in the sense that they represent godly discernment to their followers. They must constantly be making decisions which help those they lead to recognize false teachers in the schools, churches, and throughout their community. **If you do not want to be judgmental, then do not assume a place of leadership.**

20:28, *Loyalty and truth preserve the king, and he upholds his throne by righteousness.*

29:14, *If a king judges the poor with truth, His throne will be established forever.*

(2) Good leaders will preserve truth and righteousness.

Leaders must be loyal to those they lead. But loyalty must always be in the context of truth and righteousness. The American President Richard Nixon made that mistake in "The Watergate Scandal." His men broke the law, and his loyalty to them took precedence over the truth, so he lied to protect them. Those lies cost him the presidency.

20:26, *A wise king winnows the wicked, and drives the threshing wheel over them.*

25:5, *Take away the wicked before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.*

(3) Good leadership includes the removal of wicked people.

Wicked people should not surround the leader or the people he or she leads. If wickedness is allowed to continue unchecked, others will suffer, because wickedness tolerated is wickedness approved.

Unrepentant sinners must not be permitted to influence those I lead. But neither should they influence me. Borrowing on Solomon's words: *take away the wicked before the leader, and his leadership will be established in righteousness.*

25:2; 28:2; 29:18, *It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter. By the transgression of a land many are its princes, but by a man of understanding and knowledge, so it endures. Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained, but happy is he who keeps the law.*

(4) Good leaders provide vision that includes knowledge and understanding.

God, being infinite, provides us with mysteries. We do not know much about the nature of the Trinity, the details of God's eternality, what heaven is like, or how God can be sovereign and yet offer us real free-will choices. The glory of God conceals matters. But this is not to be so with human leaders. It is our job to *search out a matter*, and give as good an explanation as is reasonably possible. But our search has to be based upon understanding and knowledge, not mysticism. This *vision* provides laws, or reasonable principles, which people can follow.