

Studies in the Book of Proverbs by [John T Polk II](#)  
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

## (#26) The Proverbs of Solomon Proverbs 10:13-15-Rich or Poor?

**Proverbs 10:1 - 24:34** are randomly written, as if they were Judgments Solomon made about individual cases brought to him for Divine Wisdom ([1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10](#)), or simply God-given explanations about life. New Testament passages may help see the continuation of Wisdom offered through Jesus Christ.

**Verses 13-14:** A word to the wise: Words of the wise always show understanding. A word to the unwise: Talk your head off, and you'll only show your lack of wisdom, and probably lose your argument and be given "a rod" (punishment).

To "store up knowledge" (**verse 14**) means the wise will have a repository of wisdom to use whenever it is needed, while "near destruction" means the "foolish" always throw away wisdom in their words. This is a recurring contrast between the "lips" of the wise and unwise (foolish):

- **10:20**- "choice silver" versus "worth little;"
- **10:21**- "feeds many" versus "die for lack of wisdom;"
- **10:31**- "brings forth wisdom" versus "tongue cut out;"
- **10:32**- "know what is acceptable" versus "perverse mouth." The words of a fool cannot provide for anyone, while words of wisdom work!

**Verse 15:** The tendency for "rich people" is to think they are protected from problems as if they were in a "strong city," Solomon adds "like a high wall" ([Proverbs 18:11](#)). Paul warns Timothy to: "Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy" ([1 Timothy 6:17](#)). No one is rich without blessing from God! And no one is rich without relying on many workers to produce and protect those riches! The arrogance of the rich, like the depression of the poor, says more about their mistaken attitudes than about their station in life!

Likewise, the "poor" seem to think they live in "destruction" because they are "in poverty" (have not) as though it is a life's sentence. The "poor" should not become covetous of the rich, nor overlook the fact that the rich have to hire the poor, nor ignore the principle that the difference between the blessings of the rich and the poverty of the poor, oftentimes, is simply a matter of work!

"The rich and the poor have this in common, The LORD is the maker of them all" ([Proverbs 22:2](#)). As far as God is concerned, wealth cannot buy salvation. "The

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rich rules over the poor, And the borrower is servant to the lender” (Proverbs 22:7). The people with debt don’t own their possessions, those who loaned them their money do! All creditors have title to the possession until it is paid back.

THE NATION WITH THE GREATEST DEBT HAS BEEN SOLD OUT TO THOSE WILLING TO PUT UP THE MONEY FOR IT! Economic slavery is slavery! “He who oppresses the poor to increase his *riches*, And he who gives to the rich, *will surely come to poverty*” (Proverbs 22:16). Becoming rich by oppressing the poor will surely fail. Whether the oppressing is done by cheap wages, excessive taxation, extortion, or inflated interest on loans, the system will fail. Giving to the rich is not for good motive, but involves bribery, social influence, political power, extravagance, or personal honor, and it is a false system of confidence in men, not God.

“The rich man is wise in his own eyes, But the poor who has understanding searches him out” (Proverbs 28:11). A poor person with God’s Wisdom “has understanding” to know more than a “rich man” who is “wise in his own eyes,” but not in God’s eyes!

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