

December 5, 2021AM – Kevin Olivier  
**Proverbs 30:1-14** – “Three Ways to Grow”

A. The Proverbs are mostly focused on imparting wisdom to youth, yet today’s text gives us an example of an older, wise man offering up a prayer to God.

B. Who was “**Agur the son of Jakeh**” mentioned in **v1**?

1. The Hebrew word behind his name could be translated as a collector or one who gathers.
  - a. Some have supposed this is a fanciful name Solomon took up for himself in this chapter.
  - b. In all this, all I can give you are possibilities.
2. Moving behind the questionable identity of Agur, let’s look at his title as the oracle.
  - a. The word oracle can be translated as a burden or pronouncement given by a prophet.
  - b. **Prov 30:1** definitely testifies that Agur’s words were prophetic— given by the God.

God gives you 3 ways to grow in your faith.

- I. HUMBLE YOURSELF
- II. HEED GOD’S WORD
- III. PRAY HE KEEPS YOU FROM TEMPTATION

I. HUMBLE YOURSELF Look at what the oracle of God had to declared in **vv2-3**.

A. How can **vv2-3** qualify as revelation coming from a man who claims to be God’s oracle or prophet?

1. The divine lesson here must be for us to imitate the humility of this man of God. What he is doing here is not out of the ordinary in Scripture.
  - a. Here we have one of the wisest men of the ancient world saying he is “**more stupid than any man.**”
  - b. The apostle Paul, one of the most godly men who ever lived, call himself the chief or foremost of all sinners (**1 Tim 1:15**).

2. In **Mat 23:12**, Jesus said, “**Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; & whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.**”

B. The problem with mankind is pride.

1. A proud person cannot be taught.
2. →Turn to **Prov 16:18-20** for help to flee the sin of pride.

C. Agur in **Prov 30:4** asked questions that were intended to humble us.

1. The closing statement here is intended to mock & humble the proud man, woman, or child.
2. This verse was written prior to the revealing of the Son of God as Messiah yet still gave a glorious expectation of God’s Son.
3. For NT Christians, we might want to say we have most of the answers to these questions.

-- Jesus said, “**But blessed are your eyes, because they see; & your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets & righteous men desired to see what you see, & did not see it, & to hear what you hear, & did not hear it**” (**Mat 13:16-17**).

4. All the glorious revelation we have through Christ came by the hand of God; He even enabled you to receive these truths by His Holy Spirit. For these reasons, we cannot see ourselves as superior. “**What do you have that you did not receive?**” (**1 Cor 4:7**).

→ Turn to **Rom 11:33-36** for our call unto humility even on this side of the cross of Christ.

D. The purpose of our being made humble is so that we will be willing to listen to God & His Holy, infallible Word rather than shutting our ears & our hearts to His word.

## II. HEED GOD'S WORD Our text today gives us good reason to heed God's Holy Word:

### A. His Word is tried & true; it has stood the test of time (**v5**) **"Every word of God is tested"**

1. If you are like me, it grieves your heart to see the condition of the many churches in America.
    - a. There has been a compromise of doctrine (or faith) & of practice (i.e. scandal).
    - b. To a large degree, this comes from those who have departed from a close adherence to doing what the Word of God says.
      - 1) Such churches with compromised many essential, holy Christian doctrines:
        - a) They have denied Scripture as objective, infallible, inerrant truth.
        - b) One chief way that theological liberals have denied the truth of Scripture is their denial of **John 14:6** **"I am the way, & the truth, & the life; ..."**
        - c) Some have denied the virgin birth & the resurrection of Christ as well.
      - 2) These compromised churches have dwindled greatly in number because of theological liberalism. It should be no wonder why many have closed their doors.
    - c. Jesus warned the churches, **"you left your 1<sup>st</sup> love... repent & do the deeds you did at 1st; or else I am coming to you & will remove your lampstand out of its place"** (**Rev 2:4-5**).
  2. If you are a skeptic & not so sure about God's claim that His word is absolute truth, He wants you to put it to the test. Consider the life of Dr. Rosaria Butterfield.
- B. (**vv5-6**) give us the right attitude each of you must have concerning God's Word.
1. Take refuge or shelter in the God who wrote this magnificent Bible. Take refuge in Christ!
  2. Evaluate all things in accordance to God's word.

## III. PRAY HE KEEPS YOU FROM TEMPTATION (**vv7-9**)

### A. Notice the boldness in His prayer to God, **"Two things I asked of You, do not refuse me before I die."**

1. The depth of this man's wisdom & mention of death as a concern both point to his being older.
2. Perhaps with age & limited time left on this earth, he became tired of "beating around the bush" when he prayed to God.

### B. Jesus taught us to pray, **"lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"** (**Mat 6:13**). These 3 verses in Proverbs 30 give us some very detailed, practical ways we can pray this prayer that we can pray this portion of the Lord's prayer more effectively.

1. He prayed 1<sup>st</sup>, **"keep deception & lies far from me."**
  - a. Does he mean, keep others from deceiving him?
  - b. Does he mean, keep himself from the temptation to practice deception & lies?
  - c. We cannot know for certain. I do know that it is absolutely wise to pray for both!
2. Agur prayed that God would providentially arrange his life to keep Him from temptations. He prayed for God to give him a balanced portion of the necessary things in this life— not too & not too little.
3. The logic or wisdom of this prayer can be applied to other matters as well. For example:
  - a. "Lord, give me contentment & great love for the wife of my youth so that I would not be tempted to commit sexual immorality."
  - b. "Lord, give me friends yet not too many of them." **Prov 18:24** **"A man of too many friends comes to ruin."**

### C. Being kept from temptation greatly helps you grow in your sanctification; it is also a chief way God preserves you in the holy faith He has given you in Christ.

Review, conclusion, & further application: