



MINISTRY UPDATE

Drollinger Addresses Evangelical Leaders from Across Russia..... 2

VERSE OF THE WEEK

Proverbs 3:5-6 3

FROM OUR FOUNDING FATHERS

Thomas Stone 5
Samuel Adams 6

ABOUT

Capitol Ministries® 8



Who Are the Guides in Your Life?



My father was considered one of the pioneers of America’s outdoor industry and through his influence, and with constant exposure to the thrill of outdoor pursuits, I developed an extensive lifetime hobby of mountaineering. I have occasionally utilized guides in attempts to reach difficult summits and recognize and appreciate their value. Here in Proverbs, Solomon lists a team of guides you should choose—and conversely those whom one should avoid—in pursuing your course in life. This week notice how this simile plays out repeatedly through the Proverbs pertaining to one’s direction. Who are the primary informants of the personal and familial aspects of your life, and your career path? Are they good or bad guides? Are you listening to them? To what degree are you listening to them? How much sway do they have? Where will they lead you? Herein is picturesque speech incorporating the idea of staying on the right path—versus falling off the cliff—while en route to your objectives in life. Proverbs 11:14 summarily states:

Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory.


 Ralph Drollinger

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- Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff: Wednesdays 7am, Zoom.*
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Drollinger Addresses Evangelical Leaders from Across Russia



The Scriptures teach that political leaders should be first in priority when it comes to sharing God’s Word with the world, CapMin’s Ralph Drollinger said to Russian Baptist Union Leaders at a recent presentation at the Moscow Theological Seminary.

At the invitation of his friend Peter Mitskevich, executive director of the Russia Baptist Union and president of Moscow Theological Seminary, Drollinger spoke to Baptist Union leaders who had traveled from all eleven time zones across Russia for the regularly scheduled meetings.

Drollinger’s teachings concentrated on the Scriptures that formed the foundation for Capitol Ministries which he and his wife Danielle

Continued on page 4

I. SEVEN EXCELLENT GUIDES

The following seven counselors, or guides, are those who will prepare and protect you, not only for effective living in the capital, but also for life outside and after the capital.

A. GOD

First, notice how you inure God’s protection over your *path* if you choose to honor Him:

Guarding the paths of justice, and He preserves the way of His godly ones (2:8).

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight (3:5–6).

I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths (4:11).

For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He watches all his paths (5:21).

The way of the LORD is a stronghold to the upright, but ruin to the workers of iniquity (10:29).

Many plans are in a man’s heart, but the counsel of the LORD will stand (19:21).

God and His Word should be your counsel, your guide.

B. WISDOM

A steady diet of the Word of God leads one to a proper fear of the LORD which is the foundation of wisdom, the skill at

living life for God’s glory. Notice these proverbial descriptors of wisdom related to our subject:

To deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things; from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness (2:12–13).

Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are peace (3:17).

Then you will walk in your way securely and your foot will not stumble (3:23).

“I walk in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice” (8:20).

Conversely, those who have not wisdom, Proverbs says, live foolishly; that is to say, without skill or dexterity.

C. WISE COUNSELORS

Building on God’s Word (point A) and personal skill (wisdom, point B) is the addition of close, wise confidants whom you have grown to trust, who provide you with good counsel.

So you will walk in the way of good men and keep to the paths of the righteous (2:20).

The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel (12:15).

The righteous is a guide to his neighbor, but the way of the wicked leads them astray (12:26).

Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed (15:22).

A plan in the heart of a man is like deep



water, but a man of understanding draws it out (20:5).

Prepare plans by consultation, and make war by wise guidance (20:18).

For by wise guidance you will wage war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory (24:6).

D. PARENTS

Your parents are special, additional guides. They know you best, and often have the greatest *context* (relative to your long past display of strengths and weaknesses) to provide appropriate, wise, insider counsel. Herein Solomon speaks to his son Rehoboam:

I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths. When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; and if you run, you will not stumble (4:11–12).

Listen, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way (23:19).

Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes delight in my ways (23:26).

Too many young people in our culture resist their parents' counsel, only to appreciate their wisdom years later, often after much chagrin. To reject these insider guides is foolishness. What a treasure from God our parents are!

E. ANTS

Ants are used in Proverbs as an illustration of industriousness. They provide quite an illustrative guide! Have you ever sat by an ant pile and just watched them?

Go to the ant, O sluggard, observe her

ways and be wise ... (6:6).

The backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied with his (14:14).

The way of the lazy is as a hedge of thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway (15:19).

The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty (21:5).

The point about ants, as it pertains to industriousness, is that they have *No chief, Officer or ruler* (6:7).

They are *self-starters* who can govern their own lives. Industrious persons possess a measure of self-control (Galatians 5:23) over their sin nature and can get up and go; they determine their emotions, not vice-versa. These people enjoy the fruits of personal discipline imposed from within. In this way they are much like the example of the ants!

F. PERSONAL INTEGRITY

It is important to see how each of the aforementioned points build on one-another as we build a “guide theology” herein: With the fear of the LORD, His ensuing skill, good counselors, insiders, and habits of industriousness, a man or woman holds the manifest ingredients for a life of integrity and personal righteousness or “right-way-ness.” The word “integrity” stems from the Latin root “*integer*,” which means a whole number, versus a fraction. Integrity then refers to wholeness, or in essence, a lack of “fractionalization” in one’s life, i.e., hypocrisy. Everything about them comports!

♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

Proverbs 3:5–6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.



God and His Word should be your counsel, your guide!





Continued from page 2

established in 1996 with a mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ in the political arena throughout the world.

A major theological education institution, The Moscow Theological Academy and Seminary is located within the grounds of the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra in Serguiev Possad, Moskovskaya Oblast, north of the city of Moscow, Russia.

Speaking through an interpreter, Drollinger taught that the book of Acts records how a small band of men—the Apostles—*turned the world upside down* in a short amount of time during the first century.

They were not elite leaders, they were common, mostly uneducated men who reached the world with the Gospel in a matter of decades without the use of a printing press, newspapers, or the internet.

“How were they able to saturate the world with the Gospel?” Drollinger asked. “How did they change lives, change the culture, and eventually change the Roman Empire?”

“Scripture provides the answer. Not only did they do it one soul at a time through a ministry of geometric evangelism and discipleship, but they did it by concentrating on and impacting a particular genre of society—political leaders.”

By speaking to the large gathering of faith leaders at the Seminary, Drollinger is hoping to further the understanding across the world about the church’s biblical calling to reach political leaders with the Word of God.

He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out (10:9).

The righteousness of the blameless will smooth his way, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness (11:5).

In the way of righteousness is life, and in its pathway there is no death (12:28).

Here then are six guides to a smooth ascent in life (in or out of office). There’s one more.

G. INFORMED PERSONAL JUDGMENT

The following are powerful Proverbs on the virtue of having built personal integrity into one’s life via the aforementioned building blocks. From a rock-solid, concrete and rebar footing flow wise personal judgments:

The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way, but the foolishness of fools is deceit (14:8).

A wicked man displays a bold face, but as for the upright, he makes his way sure (21:29).

Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards himself will be far from them (22:5).

SUMMING UP EXCELLENT GUIDES

Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established (4:26).

The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; he who watches his way preserves his life (16:17).

The word *established* is used throughout Proverbs relative to *what God does* in the life of those whose hearts are totally His. The other word here in the second Proverb, *preserves*, relates to the man-side of the equation and what occurs as a result of taking personal responsibility for recruiting and contracting with the right guides in one’s life.

II. FIVE TERRIBLE GUIDES

A. UNRELIABLE GUIDES

The Hebrew word for *treacherous* can also be translated as “traitorous” or “perfidious, unfaithful.” These are those who people follow, who end up being untrustworthy, leaving one in a lurch.

Good understanding produces favor, but the way of the treacherous is hard (13:15).

He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, but he who is devious in his ways despises Him (14:2).

Devious means “to turn aside or depart.” In the following Proverb a *devious* person is also *crooked*, which means “twisted, distorted, or perverted.” In old English (KJV) this person is said to be *froward*.

Whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways (2:15).

“Bad, bad,” says the buyer, but when he goes his way, then he boasts (20:14).

The way of a guilty man is crooked, but as for the pure, his conduct is upright (21:8).

Woe to the man or woman who walks, stands, or sits with such unreliable guides (cf. Psalm 1).



B. VIOLENT GUIDES

Violence in Hebrew has the idea of dishonest gain via plunder. This is someone who takes by sheer force. Further, notice in all of the following Proverbs the repeated use of the word *ways*. It refers to the overall course of a person's life: what one is given to doing.

So are the ways of everyone who gains by violence; it takes away the life of its possessors (1:19).

Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways (3:31).

A man of violence entices his neighbor and leads him in a way that is not good (16:29).

Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself (22:24–25).

C. WICKED GUIDES

Wickedness carries the broad idea in the Hebrew language of the OT of describing someone who is harmful, selfish, unpleasant, threatening, and wild. Not the kind of guy you want on your rope team as you attempt to ascend hugely challenging mountains as a public servant. The following is picturesque of a pre-dawn climb wherein the guide has no flashlight, providing you, his client, with no value or aid whatsoever.

The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble (4:19).

Are you following any such guides right now, guides who provide you with little or no value?

In chapter six of Proverbs, there is a listing of seven sins which the Lord especially hates. Notice that the one who plans *wickedness* is one of them.

A heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil (6:18).

Here's a sure way to fall during your climb: listed once more:

The righteousness of the blameless will smooth his way, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness (11:5).

Righteousness guards the one whose way is blameless, but wickedness subverts the sinner (13:6).

One who plans to do evil, men will call a schemer (24:8).

D. SEDUCTIVE GUIDES

Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold of Sheol. She does not ponder the path of life; her ways are unstable, she does not know it (5:5–6).

The way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a ship in the middle of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid. This is the way of an adulterous woman: She eats and wipes her mouth, and says, "I have done no wrong" (30:19–20).

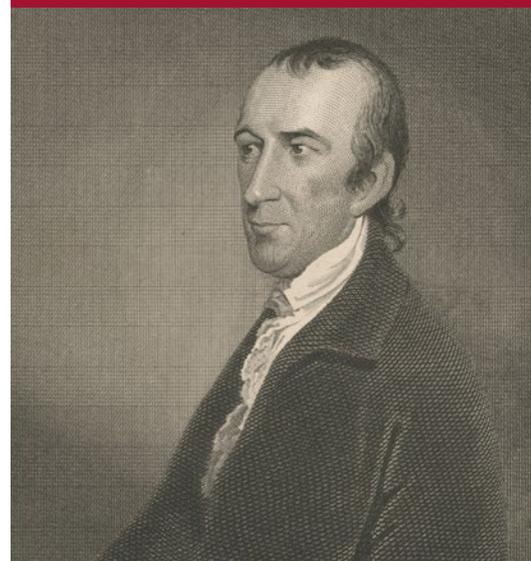
Men, do not go near this woman, not to mention any outings. Solomon is firm on how to deal with her:

Keep your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house (5:8).

Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths (7:25).

While Proverbs is written by a father

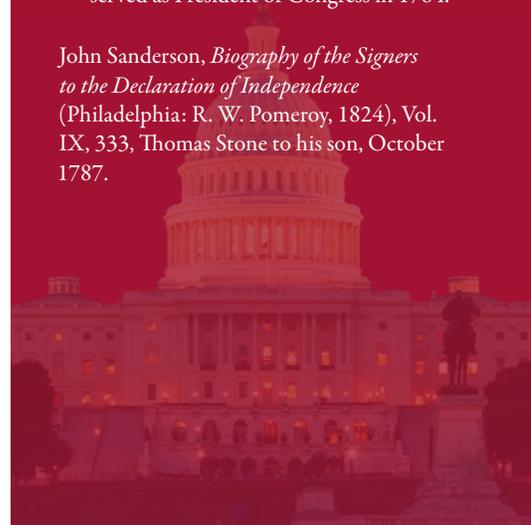
Thomas Stone



"Shun all giddy, loose, and wicked company; they will corrupt and lead you into vice and bring you to ruin. Seek the company of sober, virtuous and good people ... which will lead [you] to solid happiness."

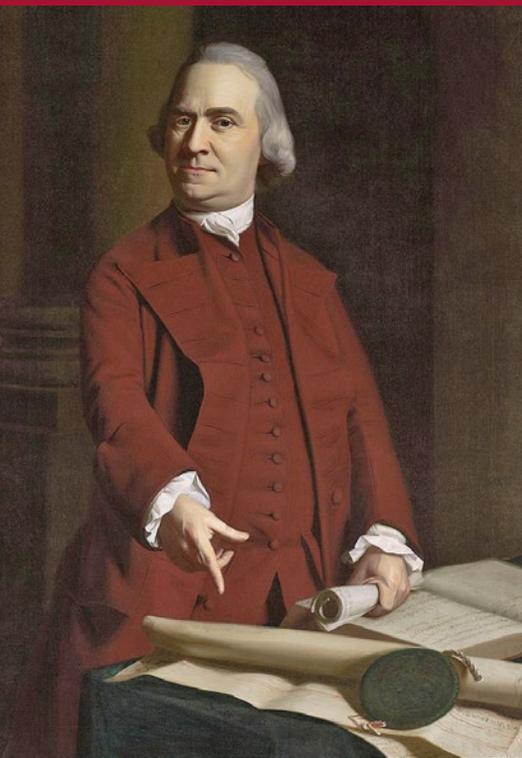
— Thomas Stone, signer of the Declaration of Independence, selected as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, lawyer, member of the committee that formed the Articles of Confederation in 1777, served as President of Congress in 1784.

John Sanderson, *Biography of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence* (Philadelphia: R. W. Pomeroy, 1824), Vol. IX, 333, Thomas Stone to his son, October 1787.





Samuel Adams



“The name of the Lord (says the Scripture) is a strong tower; thither the righteous flee and are safe (Proverbs 18:10). Let us secure His favor and He will lead us through the journey of this life and at length receive us to a better.”

— Samuel Adams, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Father of the American Revolution, ratifier of the U.S. Constitution, Governor of Massachusetts.

Letters of Delegates to Congress: August 16, 1776–December 31, 1776, Paul H. Smith, editor (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1979), Vol. 5, 669–670, Samuel Adams to Elizabeth Adams on December 26, 1776.

to his son, it is important for women to heed this passage as well. There are many smooth-talking men in the capital with seductive power. Remember that power is an aphrodisiac. Do not fall prey to their ways—avoid seductive male and female guides lest you take a huge fall during your ascent.

E. ARROGANT, MOUTHY GUIDES

Many years ago when I climbed the Matterhorn, I hired a local guide in Zermatt. He cussed me out the whole way up the mountain; what a fun day that was! Elite Swiss guides have this attitude: they feel like they own the Alps and do not have a high view of Americans climbing in their backyard. I thought to myself all day long, “And I paid for this?” Here then is the last of five kinds of guides you should avoid.

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate” (8:13).

The perverse in heart are an abomination to the LORD, but the blameless in their walk are His delight (11:20).

SUMMING UP TERRIBLE GUIDES

These are the people, who, if followed, end up leading one right into a crevasse—just about the time when one thinks the route is going well.

There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death (14:12).

The naive believes everything, but the sensible man considers his steps (14:15).

Also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge, and he who hurries his footsteps errs. The foolishness of man ruins his way, and his heart rages against the LORD (19:2–3).

III. KEYS TO CHOOSING THE RIGHT GUIDES

A. ASK GOD TO ASSIST IN THE SELECTION

For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life (6:23).

Grievous punishment is for him who forsakes the way; he who hates reproof will die (15:10).

B. GOD WANTS YOU TO CHECK YOUR GUT

A key to spiritual maturity is to do gut-checks. Check your motives, as motives lead to actions, both right and wrong. Put your emphasis here versus pursuing a legalistic approach to outward actions of “dos and don’ts.”

All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the LORD weighs the motives (16:2).

Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the hearts (21:2).

C. GOD WANTS YOU TO TRAIN YOUR KIDS TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT GUIDES

Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it (22:6).

Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with



the rod, he will not die (23:13).

IV. FOUR VISTAS PROVIDED BY EXCELLENT GUIDES

A. BLESSINGS

“Now therefore, O sons, listen to me, for blessed are they who keep my ways” (8:32).

B. LIVELINESS

“Forsake your folly and live, and proceed in the way of understanding” (9:6).

The Hebrew root for *live* means “to be alive!” Have you ever noticed how energized Spirit-filled believers are, and how much fun they are to be around?

I just love being around all of you senators, representatives, and former cabinet members in our growing Members Bible studies! You are great people to be with! We have such great fun studying God’s Word together—liveliness to the max!

C. FAVOR

The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but He loves one who pursues righteousness (15:9).

D. PEACE

When a man’s ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him (16:7).

Who doesn’t desire blessing, liveliness, favor, and peace! Choosing the right guides results in these virtuous vistas!

V. THREE DISASTROUS TRIPS LED BY TERRIBLE GUIDES

Bad advisors wreak havoc on the less-discerning, those who follow along with them on their destructive journeys.

A. THE TORRID TREK TO REAPER’S ROCK

In the same way that the physical universe contains inviolate laws, so does the moral world, created similarly by God. One such law is that of reaping and sowing. Generally, “what goes around comes around.” Proverbs 22:8 and 1:31 state this principle quite vividly:

He who sows iniquity will reap vanity, and the rod of his fury will perish (22:8).

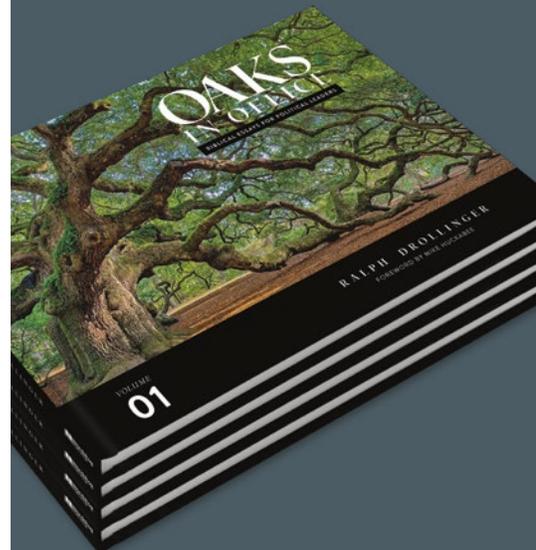
“So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way and be satiated with their own devices” (1:31).

One of the virtues of older life is to have experienced the truths of Proverbs. In this case we have seen many times how one’s sins eventually come around to bite them.

B. THE NO-RETURN RAMBLE UP EGO MOUNTAIN

Judges 17:6 summarily depicts God’s chosen people, Israel, when they had turned their back on God’s ways: *“Every man did what was right in his own eyes.”* Similarly, anyone void of God’s revelation, counsel, and integrity will one day face due consequences:

There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death (16:25).



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Many plans are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the LORD will stand (19:21).

C. THE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS AROUND SIMPLETON SLOPES

A man who wanders from the way of understanding will rest in the assembly of the dead (21:16).

Finally, Solomon states the outcome for terrible counselors themselves:

He who leads the upright astray in an evil way will himself fall into his own pit (28:10).

VI. SUMMARY

The direction of one's life from a human perspective has much to do with character and who one chooses as his counselors or guides along the way.

At the same time, from a divine perspective, God remains sovereign over the affairs of men. This tension in Scripture (from a human perspective—not God's) is seen in the following conclusive Proverbs:

The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD (16:1).

Commit your works to the LORD and your plans will be established (16:3).

The mind of man plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps (16:9).

The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD (16:33).

Man's steps are ordained by the LORD, how then can man understand his way (20:24)?

It is incumbent upon you and me to responsibly choose the right guides in life. Scripture, Proverbs, is clear as to who those guides are and where each one will lead you. Blessings to you as you gain discernment in this area, my friend.

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