

**THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION**  
**Proverbs: Topical Applications of Proverbs**  
**III. The Proverbs Themselves, Proverbs 10:1-31:31**  
**P. God's Guidance On Relating To Our Superiors**

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Relating well to one's superiors is a significant challenge today:

(1) It was evident at the recent Lindsay Clancy trial that captured nationwide attention: "Dawn Light, a 56-year-old retired nurse . . . was arraigned after being arrested Tuesday when Massachusetts State Police confirmed that she had taken and deleted a video of some of the jurors . . . She had parked her car in a restricted area reserved for jurors and prosecutors, state police said. Light said she was trying to film Lindsay Clancy leaving the courthouse . . . She was ordered by the judge to stay away from the courthouse, court grounds, and any witnesses or jurors in the Clancy case. . . . 'The sanctity of the judicial system is at risk because of her actions,' said Nicole Piacentini, Plymouth assistant district attorney. 'It's an extremely serious matter for the commonwealth.' Light 'essentially was tampering with the jury,' Piacentini said." (Peter Yankowski, Lisa Backus and Austin Mirmina, "Trial again at a stalemate," Republican-American, September 3, 2026, p. A1)

(2) Insubordination to duly established authority occurs in the upper levels of society: "Billionaire investor Leon Black refused to appear for a sworn deposition before Congress" recently "and instead sued the House Oversight Committee, asking a federal court to block subpoenas issued as part of its investigation into disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein . . . The top Republican and Democratic lawmakers on the committee both criticized Black's lawsuit and said they planned to discuss . . . whether they would hold him in contempt of Congress . . . Being held in contempt opens up a witness to criminal prosecution." (Joey Cappelletti, "Black skips Epstein deposition, sues House panel over subpoenas," *op. cit.*, September 4, 2026, p. A8)

(3) Insubordination to federal law is common among even many state officials: "For while the governor and other Democrats will never put it plainly, their position is that people who enter the country illegally . . . should be forgiven their lawbreaking and left alone unless they are caught committing *another* crime. State government's position to that effect is . . . (seen in its) granting driver's licenses to illegal immigrants and its law forbidding state and municipal police from assisting ordinary immigration enforcements . . . Connecticut invites people to take their chances breaking immigration law rather than to try to enter the country through the normal legal procedures." (Chris Powell, "Outrage about Danbury arrests shows Dems want open borders," *op. cit.*, September 3, 2026, p. A6)

(4) It's a big problem at the local level: Though 1 Timothy 2:12 directs women not to exercise authority over men nor to teach them, this verse is often violated in marriages, in church roles and widely in business. Ephesians 6:1 commands children to obey their parents, but that verse is often violated. 1 Peter 2:13 orders us to obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, but one only need drive on Interstate 84 to see drivers going over 80 miles per hour, weaving in and out of various lanes of traffic as they pass car after car of worried drivers!"

**Need:** *So we ask, "In view of the problems we see in people relating to their superiors, what would God direct?"*

- I. **God's "wisdom," His *hokmah*, or fixed eternal moral order for success and blessing, applies to many issues of human concern, including the issue of relating well to superiors.**
- II. **We thus view proverbs as translated from the Hebrew Biblical text (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica) in the Book of Proverbs that provide God's directives on relating well to our superiors (as follows):**
  - A. God wants us to respect those in authority over us:
    1. "As the heavens are high and the death is deep, so the hearts of kings are unsearchable," Proverbs 25:3.
    2. "When a king sits on his throne to judge, he winnows out all evil with his eyes," Proverbs 20:8.
    3. "A wise king winnows out the wicked; he drives the threshing wheel over them," Proverbs 20:26.
    4. "When a king's face brightens, it means life; his favor is like a rain cloud in spring (when the latter rains come that are essential for a good harvest)," Proverbs 16:15.
    5. "Revere Yahweh, my son, and revere the king, and do not join with the rebellious, for those two (Yahweh and the king) will send sudden destruction upon them, and who knows what calamities they can bring!" (Proverbs 24:21-22)
    6. "Do not exalt yourself in the presence of a king, and do not claim a place among great men; for it is better for him to say to you, 'Come up here (to a higher position) than for him to humiliate you in the presence of a nobleman (in his court by directing you to go to a lower position)," Proverbs 25:6-7.

- B. God also wants us to be supportive of those who are in authority over us:
  - 1. “The delight of a king is in a servant who is attentive, but a shameful one incurs his wrath,” Prov. 14:35.
  - 2. “He who loves a pure heart and who is gracious in his speech will have the king as his friend,” Pr. 22:11.
  - 3. “He who tends a fig tree will eat of its fruit, and he who looks after his master will be honored,” Pr. 27:18.
- C. Conversely, God calls us not to anger our superiors:
  - 1. “The wrath of a king is a messenger of death, but a wise man will appease it,” Proverbs 16:14.
  - 2. “A king’s rage is as the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass,” Proverbs 19:12.
  - 3. “A king’s wrath is like the roar of a lion; he who angers him forfeits his life,” Proverbs 20:2.
  - 4. “Do not slander a servant to his master, or he will curse you and you will pay for it,” Proverbs 30:10.
- D. In addition, God directs that we avoid being misled by a cunning superior: Proverbs 23:1-3 asserts, “When you sit to dine with a ruler, discern well what is before you and put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony! Do not crave his delicacies, for that food is deceptive. (Influential people often have false motives in showing hospitality to people in lower classes, so one should not be swayed by their hospitality!)”
- E. Ultimately, we must trust God’s sovereignty over our superiors: Proverbs 21:1 states, “The heart of a king is as irrigation ditches of water in the hand of Yahweh; He inclines it (like a farmer directs the flow of water in an irrigation ditch by moving mounds of dirt about) wherever He desires.”

***Lesson:*** *God wants us to respect our superiors since their thinking and influence is often far above us, and He also calls us to be supportive of our superiors. On the other hand, God calls us to avoid angering our superiors and to watch for false motives in leaders while also trusting God to be sovereign over all who are in authority over us.*

***Application:*** *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we rely upon the indwelling Holy Spirit of God to respect and edify our superiors, to avoid angering them or being misled by influential people as we trust God to be sovereign over our superiors.*

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message and/or provide additional guidance . . . )

The July 4<sup>th</sup> storm that hit our part of Torrington, Connecticut this year was quite destructive. My wife and I were away celebrating the day with family in Granby, and the storm occurred as we were on our way home.

When we arrived at the Torrington city line, the carnage of the storm was everywhere. Trees had fallen across the streets, some had fallen on houses, and every direction we turned to try to get to our house seemed blocked by fallen debris of some kind.

Finally, we circled around and started to come in from the north along our street, but when we got to the intersection of County Road and Bradford Street, we spotted a fireman’s truck blocking the County Road entrance. Not knowing what else to do, I drove up to the fireman, lowered my window in the rain and said, “My house is at 490 County Road, and I was wondering if I could go there!”

He replied, “Nobody’s going down there! We have numerous blown transformers, live, and arcing wires lie all over the place and one guy’s yard is on fire! You’re not going down there!”

I was concerned about my need to get to my house, for I knew that if there was a hole in the roof, the insurance company expected us to try to cover it up or they could use our failure to cover the hole as an excuse not to pay for repairs! On the other hand, the fireman had town authority, and he was stationed at the head of the street to protect us from getting into a dangerous, life-threatening situation, so I knew I really should listen to him and not concern myself about the insurance company at that point in time. Accordingly, we thanked the fireman and drove away to stay overnight at the Church before preaching the next day in our recreational clothes!

As it turned out, though there was hail damage all over the roof and the aluminum siding of our home, there never was a leak where water could enter. No tree branch had crashed through anything we owned although neighbors to the north and to the south of us saw damage due to flying branches or overturned trees. Last week, the workmen finished installing new siding and a new roof, but we’re still waiting for gutters, downspouts, and shutters!

The experience has been very educational – what with working with a contractor, workmen, home insurance, etc. Hopefully, we don’t have to go through it again! However, the biggest lesson was to pay heed to people in authority like that fireman at the intersection of County Road and Bradford Street.

**May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we then rely on the Holy Spirit to respect and edify our superiors, to avoid angering them or being misled by influential people as we trust God to be sovereign over our superiors.**