

# Proverbs 20: 6.



“Most men will  
proclaim each his own  
goodness,  
But who can find a  
faithful man?”  
Proverbs 20: 6.



# I. Introduction

Faithfulness is almost a forgotten value. Man has tendency to live like a bee, flying from flower to flower, changing his goals and his mind. However, there is no true love, compassion, and kindness without the true faithfulness

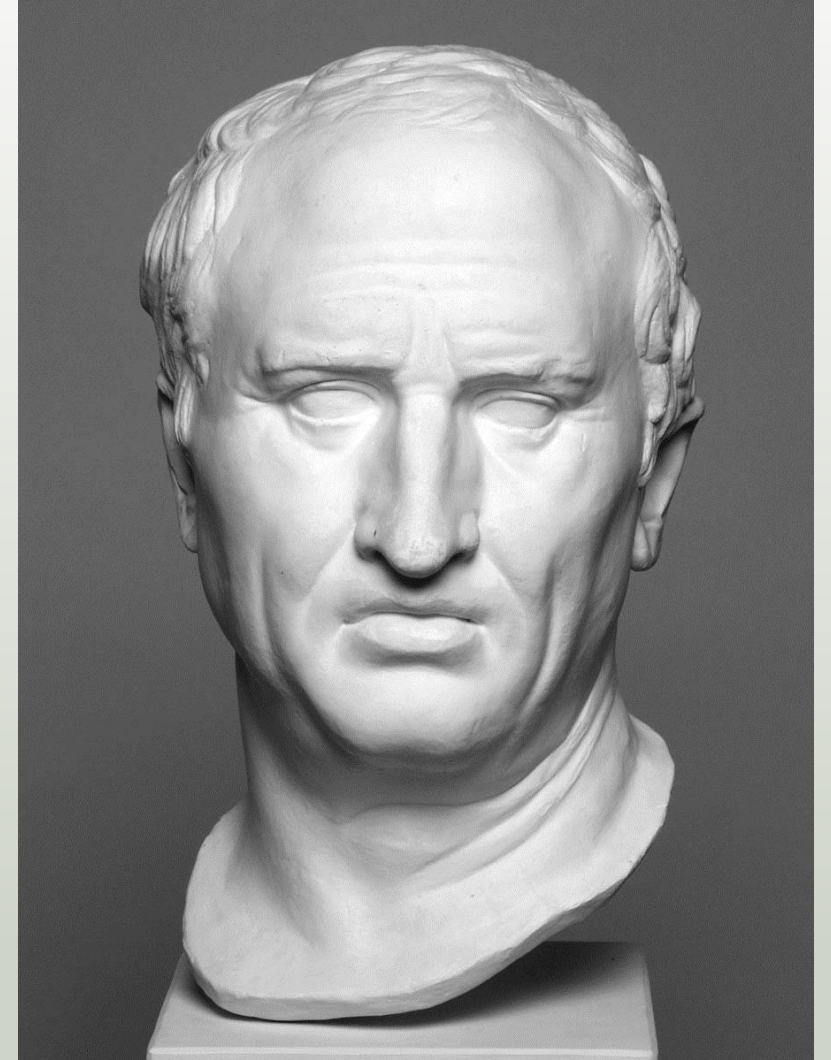




“Faithfulness in little things is a big thing.”  
St. John Chrysostom



“Nothing is more noble, nothing more venerable than fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are the most sacred excellences and endowments of the human mind.”  
Cicero



“The Lord desires His people to reach the highest round of the ladder that they may glorify Him by possessing the ability He is willing to bestow. Through the grace of God every provision has been made for us to reveal that we act upon better plans than those upon which the world acts. We are to show a superiority in intellect, in understanding, in skill and knowledge, because we believe in God and in His power to work upon human hearts.

But those who have not a large endowment of gifts need not become discouraged. Let them use what they have, faithfully guarding every weak point in their characters, seeking by divine grace to make it strong. Into every action of life we are to weave faithfulness and loyalty, cultivating the attributes that will enable us to accomplish the work.”

Ellen G. White, Christ’s Object Lessons, p. 358.



“Faithfulness is not a human question, but a divine one.”

Sebastian Barry, *The Secret Scripture*



“Did you know that there is not a single case of "one-on-one discipleship" in the New Testament? The choice to become and remain a disciple rests with individuals, but discipleship is always nurtured corporately. Discipleship is not a course you go through; it's a life you live out, fostered in a community of interdependence, support, teaching and admonishment. This is why faithfulness to and active participation in a local church and its small groups are so vital. The local church is the nursery for discipleship.”  
Chuck Sligh





“Real men stay faithful. They don't have time to look for other women because they're too busy looking for new ways to love their own.”  
Unknown



“Marriage has a unique place because it speaks of an absolute faithfulness, a covenant between radically different persons, male and female; and so it echoes the absolute covenant of God with his chosen, a covenant between radically different partners.”

Rowan Williams



## II. Context





## Book of Proverbs – Structure

<b>INTRO</b>	1: 1 – 1: 7	The Fear of the Lord for young man: Purpose of the Book, First lesson
<b>1</b>	1: 8 – 9: 18	Wisdom 101 (Introduction to Wisdom)
<b>2</b>	10: 1 – 24: 34	Wise Children (Proverbs for the Youth)
<b>3</b>	25: 1 – 29: 27	Wise People (Proverbs for general public)
<b>4</b>	30: 1 – 30: 33	Wisdom of Agur
<b>5</b>	31: 1 – 31: 9	Wisdom of King Lemuel's Mother
<b>CONCL</b>	31: 10 – 31: 31	Finding the Virtuous Wife with the Fear of the Lord Conclusion of the Book, Last lesson before marriage

Being part of a big section dedicated to the youth (chapter 10 – 24), our text develops the profile of human qualities. There is a contrast between the king ('melekh' in Hebrew) and ordinary man ('ish'). The structure of a short poem (20: 2 – 8) confirms the importance of the social cohesiveness and the respect of authority. A wise man is always considerate for the well-being of the society.



## Book of Proverbs, Chapter 20: 2 – 8. Structure

A	20: 2	Anger of the King Man who provokes the king eliminates himself
1	20: 3	Honorable man
2	20: 4	Lazy man
3	20: 5	Man of Understanding
4	20: 6	Faithful man
5	20: 7	Righteous man
A'	20: 8	Judgment of the King The king eliminates evil (dissipates, scatters)



The second and the fourth distinctive characteristics of men in our poem, laziness, (20: 4) and pride (20: 6), allow to underline other three essential characteristics of wise men:

HONOR 20: 3, (KAVOD)

UNDERSTANDING 20: 5 (TAVUN)

RIGHTEOUSNESS 20: 7 (TSADEK)



Kavod in Hebrew means honor and glory, but also 'to give weight to another person'. The same word is used to describe something 'heavy'. For ex. The sins of Sodom were considered as 'very heavy'.

Thus, to honor someone is to consider him as important, notable, eminent, and to respect him, his deeds and his words.

The understanding of man is crucial for his fulfilled life. But he is not full of self. He is using the unsearchable understanding of God.

“Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of  
the ends of the earth,  
Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is  
unsearchable.”  
Isaiah 40: 28.



# III. Don't put your trust in SELF





## 1. Pride

“Most men will  
proclaim each  
his own  
goodness”  
(22: 6)



Vanity is what we would  
have others think of  
us."

Jane Austen, *Pride and  
Prejudice*



"As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on thing and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down you cannot see something that is above you."

C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*





“It is the highest form of self-respect to admit our errors and mistakes and make amends for them. To make a mistake is only an error in judgment, but to adhere to it when it is discovered shows infirmity of character.”

Dale Turner



## Danger of Self-Exaltation

“Among a multitude of counselors there is safety. God would not have many minds the shadow of one man’s mind. God has given men brains to use, intellect to cultivate, to employ to His glory; and He would be the One to mold, control, and fashion the minds after His own impress. Men are only men whatever may be their work. The more responsible the position, the more important that the one who stands in this position have no more honor or exaltation given him than is for his good. In fact, people are ruined through praise and honor bestowed upon them as though they were infallible. While due respect should be given to those whom God has entrusted with more than ordinary talents, that man thus endowed needs to walk more humbly and closely with God as he advances...

... All the influence that these capabilities give him will make him a better, holier, more meek and humble man or it will lead him to think as others have thought, I am not a common man, and I may do things that others cannot do, and it will be no sin. This is a common error, but it is a destructive error. That man needs to learn daily important lessons from the greatest Teacher the world ever knew. Christ must dwell in that man's heart, just as the blood must be in the body and circulate there as a vitalizing power. I cannot on this subject be too urgent. I cannot press it home to you too strongly, that you shall not trust in self."

Ellen G. White, Letter 7, 1886 (April 26, 1886, to J. H. Kellogg).

“To boast means to tell others without any courtesy ‘I’m better than you’”

Pierre Boiste

Me > You

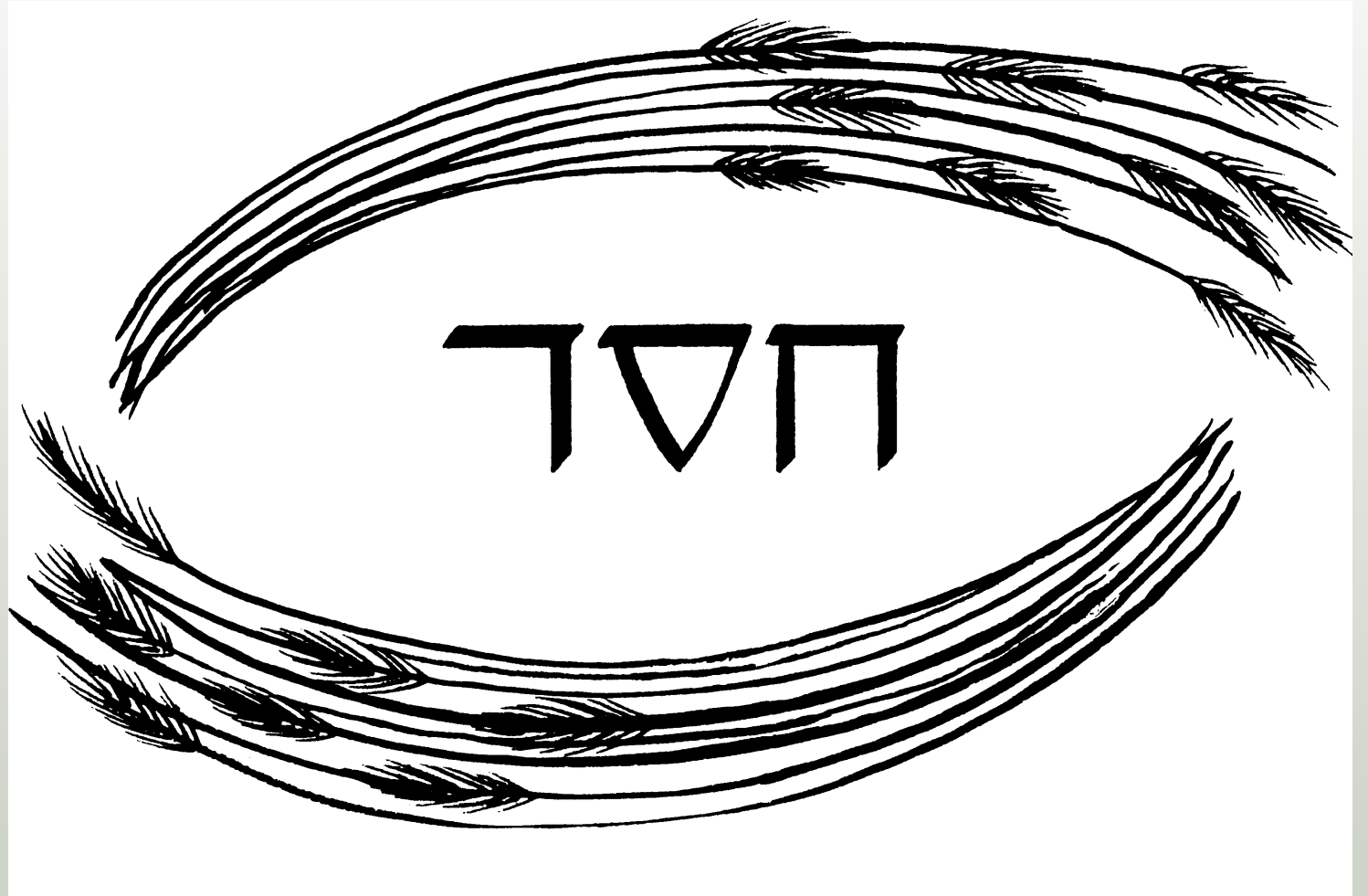


“When boasting ends,  
there dignity begins.”  
Owen D. Young



## 2. Goodness

Most men will proclaim  
each his own goodness  
(HESED)



“As divine hesed on the vertical plane intersects with the human horizontal plane, it transforms it. Our lives are infused with the hesed we experience from God, creating new relationships with those around us as his goodness pours through us. We see this in the Old Testament when God demands hesed of his people (e.g., Mic. 6:8) and when David asks if there is anyone remaining in Jonathan’s house to whom he may show “the hesed of God” (2 Sam. 9:3; cf. 1 Sam. 20:14). Jesus also illustrates this principle in the parable of the unforgiving servant, who after having a great debt forgiven by the king is expected to forgive his fellow servant (Matt. 18:23–35). The climax of the story is the king’s accusation of the unforgiving servant using the verb form of the Greek word most often used to translate hesed: “And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?” (v. 33).”  
Will Kynes, Cambridge University, Summer 2010.

“Based in a covenantal relationship, hesed is a steadfast, rock-solid faithfulness that endures to eternity:

“Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love (hesed) for you will not be shaken” Isaiah 54:10.

Hesed is a love that is so enduring that it persists beyond any sin or betrayal to mend brokenness and graciously extend forgiveness:

“No one is cast off by the Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love (hesed).” (Lamentations 3:31-32)  
Hesed is to love as God loves.”

LOIS TVERBERG



### 3. Faithfulness

“But who can find a faithful man?”



“Faithfulness is not good intentions about doing the right thing. Even managing to do the right thing most of the time doesn’t make you faithful. True faithfulness is loyalty that never fails or falters, the kind of loyalty we only see in Jesus Christ. When He speaks of His work, He says, “I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me” (John 6:38 ESV). He held Himself accountable to His Father in everything He did.

We as Christians benefit from the Son’s faithfulness. Not only has He been faithful to the Father; God in turn is faithful toward us! Again and again the Scriptures assure us of the faithfulness of God to humanity. St. John tells us, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9 ESV)...

God calls us to faithfulness too. The Spirit moves us to faithful lives before Him. Guided by His Word, we know the Father’s will, and we seek to be faithful to His calling on our lives as His children. The same is true for us as a church body. God’s faithfulness to us calls us to faithfulness in our mission to the world.

David Bode

"Man is faithful when he believes in God and his promises; God is faithful when he grants to man what he has promised."  
Augustine, Psalm 32, II, s. I, 9: PL 36, 284.



“It is of the LORD's mercies  
that we are not consumed,  
because his compassions  
fail not. They are new  
every morning: great is thy  
faithfulness.”  
Lamentations 3: 22. 23.





## Prayer for faithfulness

"Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know you, a heart to seek you, wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing to you, faithful perseverance in waiting for you, and a hope of finally embracing you. Amen."

Thomas Aquinas



# V. Conclusion

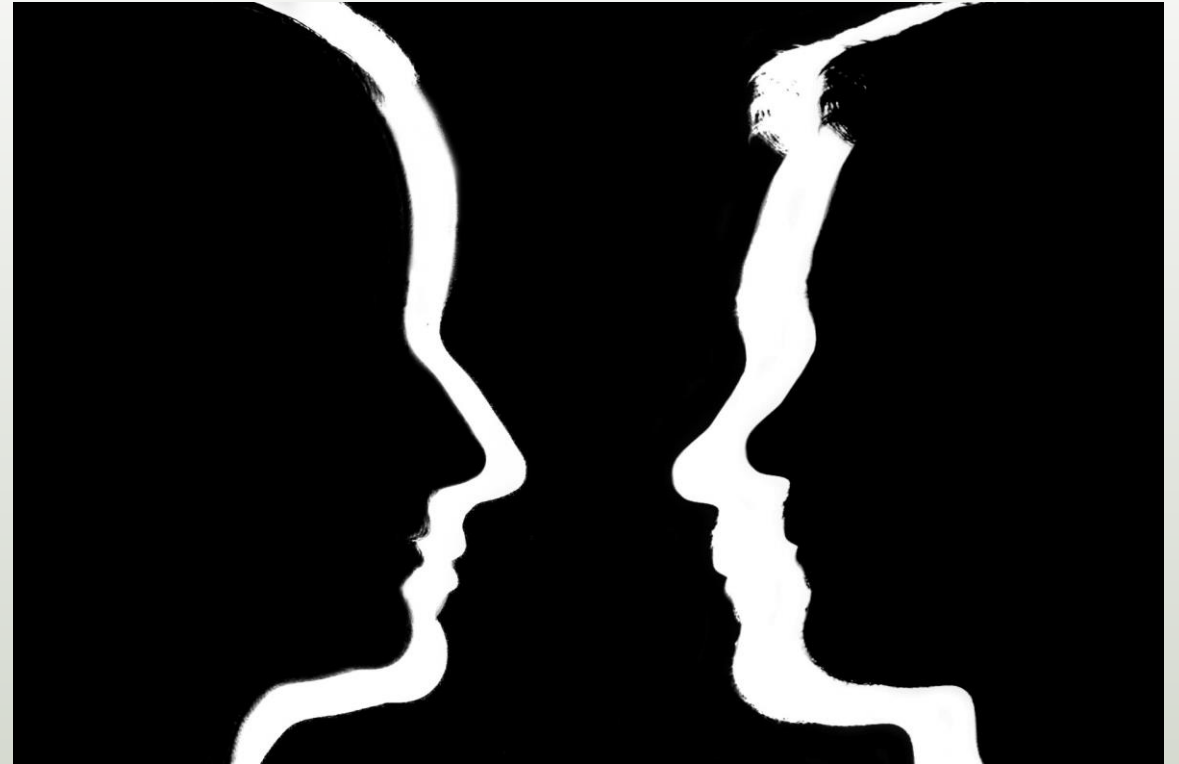


'Who can find' is an expression reserved in the book of Proverbs in two instances:

'Who can find a faithful man?'  
(20: 6)

'Who can find a virtuous wife?'  
(31: 10)

The ideal is obviously FAITHFULNESS and VIRTUE, pointing to the fear of the Lord, common for both experiences.



“The consecrated messengers who in the early days of Christianity carried to a perishing world the glad tidings of salvation, allowed no thought of self-exaltation to mar their presentation of Christ and Him crucified. They coveted neither authority nor pre-eminence. Hiding self in the Saviour, they exalted the great plan of salvation, and the life of Christ, the Author and Finisher of this plan. Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, was the burden of their teaching.”

Ellen G. White, Acts of Apostles, p. 209.



“The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall.

But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature—the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man.

Ellen G. White, Education, p. 57.

# Proverbs 20: 6.

