

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

(#54) The Proverbs of Solomon 12:9- Who Has Bragging Rights?

Since God Created humans, only God can provide specific understanding of human behavior. God gave Solomon Divine Wisdom (**1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10**) to explain what and why behavior is as it is, and **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.

Proverbs 12:9:

Better is the one who is slighted but has a servant, than he who honors himself but lacks bread.

A loyal "servant" knows his master, and serves, regardless of circumstance or outside opinion. Being "slighted" by others should not discourage a person from being honorable and respected at home. However, acting like things are better than they actually are is an exercise in hypocrisy and self-deceit! Being proud when there is nothing of which to be proud is despicable. Putting up a front of self-honor when the facts are he "lacks bread" makes life look like a stage setting: all image and no substance. Self-praise is NO praise!

- Have you found honey? Eat only as much as you need, lest you be filled with it and vomit. (**Proverbs 25:16**)
- *It is not good to eat much honey; so to seek one's own glory is not glory.* (**Proverbs 25:27**)

Too much of a sweet thing is sickening, and so is it to be around those who praise themselves! It is one thing to receive the accolades of one's peers, but quite another to be acknowledged by those outside of our personal sphere. Another proverb teaches this:

Proverbs 27:2: Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

We expect our parents and grandparents to "praise us," so the emphasis here is "a stranger," someone who is outside our family. It is even more pathetic to be around someone who cannot get recognition without self-promotion! An untreatable medical condition is caused by the sprained elbow of people patting themselves on their own backs! How pitiful is it for the best opinion about someone to be from that person!



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Even Jesus Christ had others who bore witness of Him ([John 5:31-47](#)) to show that "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true." Jesus Christ said to His disciples concerning people in the world:

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ([John 15:19](#))

"The world would love its own" is Jesus' way of saying the worldly-minded will always support each other by propping up everyone who thinks like they do, and verbally or physically attack all righteous people who will not conform to their standards! Christians should not expect former "friends" to be encouraging:

For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ([1 Peter 4:3-5](#)).

