

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

## (#118) The Proverbs of Solomon 17:1- Hurtful Holidays?

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 17:1:**

Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife.

Holidays seem to be built around family gatherings for a meal. Whether it is in the form of a cookout, a banquet in, or a buffet of common dishes, families reunite for a meal, and there's the problem! Some speak of "blue" holidays and they dread those times of "togetherness." The problem is not the holiday itself, or the mealtime, but the family failure to gather in peace!

"Strife" is associated with "envy" (jealousy) from the very first time it is mentioned in Scripture:

Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land. So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren." (**Genesis 13:5-8**)

When possessions mean more than relationships, strife is the result. Solomon has said:

- Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins. (**Proverbs 10:12**)
- A wrathful man stirs up strife, but *he who is slow to anger* allays contention. (**Proverbs 15:18**)
- A perverse man sows strife. (**Proverbs 16:28**)
- He who loves transgression loves strife. (**Proverbs 17:19**)



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- Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; yes, strife and reproach will cease. (**Proverbs 22:10**)

Hatred, wrath, perverse thinking, loving transgression, scoffing, all produce “strife.” There is NO love expressed in “strife,” hence, when families or churches can’t gather in love, it is because some hold onto old, past, unsettled differences. Living in the past, hurts the present, and jeopardizes the future.

“Love covers all sins” doesn’t mean sins are covered over, but that love extends mercy and forgiveness for all kinds of sins! To those who murdered Jesus on the cross, God extends the offer of repentance and forgiveness of sins (**Acts 5:31-32**). Families, friends, business associates, schoolmates, are some of the relationships we have that should mean more to us than being at odds with them and criticizing them! We, like Abram, should emphasize our closeness, rather than our problems! “Strife” comes from people who:

- Do “not like to retain God in their knowledge” (**Romans 1:28-32, verse 29**);
- Are not spiritually-minded (**1 Corinthians 3:3**);
- Do “not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness” (**1 Timothy 6:3-5**);  
or
- Engage in “foolish and ignorant disputes” (**2 Timothy 2:23**).

“Strife,” in a church or family or business, is a killer of love, understanding, peace, forgiveness, and devotion, and has ruined many a good meal!

