

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

## (#128) The Proverbs of Solomon 17:18- Co-signers, Beware!

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 17:18:**

A man devoid of understanding shakes hands in a pledge, and becomes surety for his friend.

Contracts and deals are sealed with a "handshake," a visible sign of a word of agreement. Signatures on paperwork are simply confirmation in writing of the contract that was decided. These are binding in God's sight.

Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few. For a dream comes through much activity, and a fool's voice is known by his many words. When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; for He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed- better not to vow than to vow and not pay. Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger of God that it was an error. Why should God be angry at your excuse and destroy the work of your hands? (**Ecclesiastes 5:2-6**)

We all need to weigh heavily what we are getting ourselves into before we commit to it! The old adage is true; we should "look before we leap." Other inspired proverbs support this warning:

- Take the garment of one who is surety for a stranger, and hold it as a pledge when it is for a seductress. (**Proverbs 20:16**)
- Do not be one of those who shakes hands in a pledge, one of those who is surety for debts; if you have nothing with which to pay, why should he take away your bed from under you? (**Proverbs 22:26-27**)
- Take the garment of him who is surety for a stranger, and hold it in pledge when he is surety for a seductress. (**Proverbs 27:13**)



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It was a seemingly insignificant thing for Esau to promise his birthright to his twin brother, Jacob, for a bowl of soup ([Genesis 25:19-34](#)), but it changed the course of the Middle East till today! Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus Christ by conferring with “the chief priests and captains,” who “agreed” to pay him when “he promised and sought opportunity to betray Him to them in the absence of the multitude” ([Luke 22:1-6](#)): a decision he regretted but couldn’t change ([Matthew 27:1-5](#))! Jesus taught that when we decide to follow Him, we should be totally committed to that decision:

Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, ‘Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.’ Then He said to another, ‘Follow Me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, let me first go and bury my father.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.’ And another also said, ‘Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.’ ([Luke 9:57-62](#))

Have you agreed to follow Jesus Christ? “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” ([Mark 16:16](#)).

