

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

(#189) The Proverbs of Solomon 28:3- Beware of the Merciless Poor

Proverbs 28:3:

A poor man who oppresses the poor is like a driving rain which leaves no food.

"A driving rain" can wash away planted seeds, top soil, and even the crops, themselves. "A poor man who oppresses" is merciless and unforgiving to those like himself. Power or authority in the hands of one who hasn't earned it is a weapon of mass destruction! Jesus Christ, who was "greater than Solomon" ([Matthew 12:42](#)), best described this wisdom in [Matthew 18:23-35](#):

"Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses." ([Matthew 18:23-35](#))

People have a tendency to not show pity to those who have sinned like they have, though their sin may have been worse! A "poor man" is harder and more impatient



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with other "poor" people because they are like he was. James warns us of this attitude:

So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. ([James 2:12-13](#))

Anyone who knows what it is like to have sins forgiven ([Mark 16:15-16](#)) should know how to forgive others as in another Proverbs:

- He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy. ([Proverbs 28:13](#))

We who have admitted our own sins before God should have compassion on others.

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