

## **“Iron Sharpens Iron”**

Proverbs 27:17

Tuesday Bible Lunch

April 16, 2024

**Introduction:** The book of Proverbs is one of my favorite books in the Bible. It is a book of principles that are generally true. It is not a book of Bible promises. If a person does not understand that they will either lose their faith or lose their mind.

Proverbs 27:17 is one of my favorite Bible verses in the book of Proverbs. It is a figure of speech known as a simile. A simile is a comparison of things. Let’s look at the verse.

**Text:** Proverbs 27:17

- Iron against iron improves the quality of both.
- The lesson here is that wisdom is neither acquired nor maintained in isolation.

Now all of us have had and hopefully have people who are “iron” to us. This is an area of my life that I have been unusually blessed. About two years ago I realized that many people who had been “iron” to me had died. As I thought about it, I decided I wanted to thank those who had been “iron” to me before they died. I made a list and started my project. It is taking longer than I had thought, but I am making progress. Many live a great distance away and I want to do this in person.

One of the people who has been “iron” in my life is a man named Dr. Bernie Spooner. Dr. Spooner was the Minister of Education at Travis Avenue for a good number of years. For three years, I was one of two assistant pastors at Travis Avenue, and I learned a lot from Dr. Spooner.

Dr. Spooner was a Minister of Education, but he had great understanding of all areas of the church. About three months before I left Travis Avenue to become the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Lenior City, Tennessee I asked Bernie to give me some advice of what he would do if he were going to a new church as the

pastor. About a month later Bernie saw me late one Friday afternoon and asked if I had a few minutes. I said yes and sat down in his office. In our visit, Bernie gave me a list of five things he thought every pastor going to a new church would be wise to consider. His list of five things have helped me all these years. The first on the list was to remember that somehow the church had existed before I came. Bernie Spooner has been “iron” to me since the late 1960’s.

I planned a surprise visit to tell Bernie thank you for what he has meant in my life and ministry. (To hear the story, listen to the sermon on the church website.)

I think when we get to heaven, we will see how some people were “iron” to us that we never realized. I think other times at least for me, we are years in realizing how someone was iron to us. I had this experience as recent as Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. (To hear the story, listen to the sermon on the church website.) The story is about a book given to me by a lady named Melba Anglin in the late 70’s that has been iron to me in 2024. I read something in the book on Monday, April 1, that was needed “iron” for me. It was a quote by Dr. B.H Carroll to 19-year-old George Truitt. The quote: **“Never take counsel of your fears or of appearances.”**

That nine-word quote is filled with wisdom!

**Conclusion:** Two thoughts to end with today.

1. It would be good to thank people who have been “iron” to us before they die (or we die).
2. Ask God to help you be “iron” to others.