The New Geneva Study Bible states, “Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings from a number of authors… also, that Solomon’s general influence upon the Book of Proverbs is considerable, and his direct authorship of much of the material need not be doubted.” The need for wisdom was crucial for New England’s Puritans, especially at the end of the seventeenth century, as they sought guidance in the wake of church schisms and full-scale Indian wars. In other words, they were experiencing challenges that the Book of Proverbs may have helped them face.

Isaac Foster’s January 2 sermon is the first in his sermon series from Proverbs, and is mainly concerned with sin and confession, and their relationship to justification. Perry Miller’s definition of justification is straightforward. He calls it “the first act of regeneration” and states that it is a stage in which God is fully satisfied that the criteria of his justice and law have been met; hence, the individual is absolved of their sins. Atheism reappears in this sermon, and there is an interesting segment on the nature of secret sin. Foster also emphasizes the importance of forsaking sin over simply confessing it, since the act itself is the foremost concern.

Mr. Foster: (Sunday) January 2, 1680. (28 Proverbs 13) “He that hideth his sinnes, shal not prosper: but he that confesseth, and forsaketh them, shal have mercie.” He that covereth sin shall not prosper, but whoe so confesseth them and forsakes shall find mercy. Since man fell in to sin it hath been his guise to hide it. It is as naturall to men to hide sin as to confess it. Adam had no sooner sined but he thought to cover it as in (31 Job 33). Least I hide sin as Adam. Cain hid his sin by denying of it. Solomon in the text showes the great folly of man in soe doeing. That which man thinkes the way to misery is the way to mercy. The text [discovers] an Impenitent siner. He is [ ] that sins cover sin shall not prosper. A penitent siner he confesseth his sin

1 The New Geneva Study Bible, 923.
2 Perry Miller. The Puritan Mind, the Seventeenth Century, 27.
forsakes it. He shall prosper. An impenitent sinner is one that covers it. He hides it. Covering sin Implyes pardon of sin. It is sayed to be covered when it is pardoned. (32 Psalm 1) Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven and whose sin is covered because God doth put out of his sight. When we forgive sin it is covered. Charaty it doth cover a multitude of sins. Love covers all sins. How so? By forgiving of them. Forgiveness of God forgiveness of man [ ] covering. 1 Concealing of sin, hideing of it, is covering of it. There is a hideing of sin from God: not that man can doe so, but he that doth Indeavoure it doth not confess it and acknowledge it before God. 2 He that covers sin from man shall not prosper. We are not always bound absolutely to confess sin to man as we are to God. We are not bound to confess our sins to man in som cases, but in some cases we are Bound to confess it to man. 2 An impenient sinner is discovered by the consequence of his [ t] he shall not prosper. 3 Things implied. 1 They shall not attend that end they aime at in covering of sin. That they seeke to hide shall be discovered. Those that hide their sin God will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. (2 Hebrews 13) At the great day of judgment all sin shall be brought forth (1 Corinthians 4:5) and discovered. (12 Luke 2) There is nothing covered but shall be revealed, and what is hid shall be made known. 2 He shall not prosper Implys God’s denying of his blessing to them. A secret curss will follow those that go on in secret sins. He shall not have peace and joy and comfort on his soule. It implies a great and heavy curss upon those that doe hide their sin. He shall not only not be happy but shall not be blessed. 2 In the text there is the description of the truly penitent. He doth confess it, own and acknowledge it. He that truly confess, he doth confess the fact what is done in this or that case. (7 Joshua 19) 2 There is the confession of the fault the evill of the dead. (51 Psalm 4) Against the have I sined and done this evill. (1 Samuel 23) I have done foolishly. 3 There is the confession of the [merit] of the fact. (51 Psalm 4 verse) There is a justifying of God. 2 He doth also forsake his sin. Bare confessing of sin is not enough to procure mercy, but we also must forsake it. 3 He that doth thus shall have mercy and that he Implyeth forgivenes of God. He shall be forgiven (1 John 1.9) and clensed. He shall be Justified and satisfied and 2 he shall be graciously accepted of God and Entertained by Him.

Doctrine: As Ever we would prosper and have mercy of God we must confess and also forsake sin. Must not be covered but confessed if we would Finde mercy. Our confessing is the way to God’s covering and obtaining mercy of God. In the Doctrine: 1 He that covers his sin