

Out of Trouble

Proverbs 11:1-8

- The Old Testament book of Proverbs is our destination today
- As we talk about honesty and integrity
- Rightness and uprightness
- And then - exactly the opposite

- As is often the case in Proverbs, righteousness and wickedness are contrasted
- We see how much better God's plan can be
- And make note of the destruction rebellion can cause

- Topics are widely varied on this edition
- But we focus on a phrase near the end of Proverbs 11:1-8
- As our theme is "Out of Trouble"

- Wise words of advice and keen insights on life are common in the Proverbs
- These chapters challenge our thinking, especially at times when we are tempted to stray from God's path
- The truth they deliver sometimes cuts like a knife
- It puts us into one category or another: trusting and following God or rejecting His ways
- And then lets us know about the benefits and the consequences

- We start getting personal right from the beginning of Proverbs 11
- As God expresses His concern for the way we do business...

Proverbs 11:1

1 A false balance is abomination to the LORD: but a just weight is his delight.

- Proprietors who sell in a community market use scales to measure their product
- Show up at any grocery store deli today and order your meat and cheese by the pound
- Often measured on a scale in your presence

- A common trick in the ancient market was to falsely mark the weights
- Giving the advantage to the seller
- You get a little less product and the marketer gets a little more profit

- This is a false balance
- It is dishonest
- Cheating and stealing
- And the Lord says it is an abomination

- Any modern form of dirty dealings in business can be put in the same category
- God expects those who follow Him to operate a "just weight"
- Dealing in every situation - personal or business - with integrity

- This is His delight
- Our pride or humility may play a part...

Proverbs 11:2

2 When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

- The pride mentioned here is an insolence, a presumptuousness, an arrogance
- When we do anything with this kind of pride, disgrace has a high probability of following
- This is when we are thinking too highly of ourselves
- Assuming we know best
- Doing wrong and arrogantly believing we can get away with it
- Shame comes to a person like this
- But a humble person does not face the same danger
- The humble (or lowly) acts in wisdom
- That is, he listens to God, because he does not presume he knows everything
- And He carefully listens, obeying God's word in spite of his own opinion
- We're back to the theme of integrity next...

Proverbs 11:3

3 The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

- When a person knows God and walks with God, integrity is one of the character traits they develop
- And this integrity provides a foundation for successful living
- Those who are crooked and dishonest have no such hope
- The perverseness of their living leads only to destruction
- We see this clearly when any man is confronted with a choice
- To tell the truth and face difficult circumstances
- Or to lie and escape difficulty
- The truth-teller may find some initial discomfort
- But His integrity is always be rewarded in the long-term
- And whatever trouble the liar avoided today
- Will come back in larger quantities and with more intensity in the future
- What else do the Proverbs say?

Proverbs 11:4

4 Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

- Money can make life easier, there's no doubt
- But anyone reliant upon money for safety in the day of judgement will be disappointed
- The wealthy do not avoid judgement
- Riches do us no good at all when we stand before God
- Everyone stands before Him on equal footing
- He is no respecter of persons

- Those who accept the righteousness of His son
- Placing their faith in Jesus
- Are given eternal life
- This righteousness is worth more than any earthly treasure
- For it lasts forever

- There is more about righteousness as we continue...

Proverbs 11:5-6

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.

- These verses are quite similar
- They basically say that a righteous person has a straight path set out before them
- And they have the freedom only righteousness can provide
- But the wicked are tripped up by their own wickedness
- And they make themselves slaves to their own lust

- We have said often that righteousness is never obtained when men go it alone
- It is the man who has faith in God, through His son Jesus Christ, that is declared righteous
- Not because of anything He does
- Because of what Christ has already done on the cross

- Those who know Him are guided
- And walk in freedom

- Two more Proverbs today...

Proverbs 11:7

7 When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust men perisheth.

- There is a good restatement of this verse in the ESV...

"When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too."

- Reliance upon anything in this world will let us down

- No amount of money rescues men from death
- And there is no hope for a man rejecting Jesus and following his own way
- Whatever hope or expectation was established by the wicked man during his life dies with him
- And his money stays behind, to be foolishly hoped upon by someone else
- Or, perhaps, better used in service to God
- Our theme appears in our final verse...

Proverbs 11:8

8 The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

- This deliverance from trouble means exactly what you might think
- God has a way of helping and protecting and shielding those who follow Him
- But wicked men walk into trouble
- Their own desires and their own ways lead them there
- A person rejecting God seems unable to avoid it
- I wonder if we see more of ourselves in the righteous man or in the wicked man?
- Even the man who knows Christ can walk his own way for a time
- We should know that surrender to Him
- Obedience to Him
- Trust in Him is a blessing
- But to reject Him brings trouble and difficulty and complication
- And though His servants face plenty of all three - because life remains hard
- The wicked heap more and more upon themselves by their own action
- Therefore, we must turn to Him

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2022