

The Righteous

Proverbs 10:17-23

- The Proverbs are like self-contained units of wisdom
- Dispensed one by one
- Moving from topic to topic without pause
- Sometimes carrying a theme across more than one verse, but not always
- Today we approach Proverbs 10
- Solomon speaks as a father to a son
- Providing advice on life
- Contrasting the righteous and the evil
- Encouraging diligence and exposing laziness
- Inviting us to examine our speech
- And quite a few other things
- Today, "The Righteous" are mentioned toward the end of the passage
- As that is our theme, from Proverbs 10:17-23
- Let's read our entire passage first
- Then we'll take a closer look...

Proverbs 10:17-23

17 He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.
 18 He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.
 19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.
 20 The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.
 21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.
 22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.
 23 It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

- Now, the first verse...

Proverbs 10:17

17 He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.

- There is instruction, especially that which comes from God, that leads to life
- The Bible makes this clear
- An example is John 5:24 in the New Testament, which says...

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

- A person hears God's word - God's instruction

- In it, they discover Jesus, the Savior of all men
- Place their faith in Him
- And are granted access to the Father, because of His life-giving sacrifice
- Then, they look forward to eternal life in Him

- But other instruction leads to abundant life
- Jesus said in John 10:10...

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

- And how do we obtain it?
- Through our relationship with Him
- Reading and trusting His word, which helps us to know Him
- And then obeying that word
- These are instructions that put us on a path to life

- But there are those that reject instruction
- Almost any instruction
- Not just that which points us to Christ
- But anything that would reveal our flaws or declare us unworthy

- Not only will this lead the prideful man away himself
- But he will take others with him
- Showing an example of rejecting instruction
- And convincing others that instruction is not needed

Proverbs 10:18

18 He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.

- Kind words do not always come from a kind heart
- Words can be deceptive
- A person can hold hatred in their hearts toward another person
- But cover up those feelings with lying lips

- And while a hateful person may be congenial to the subject of their hate
- They may also slander them before others
- Lying, questioning their character, and undermining them publicly
- The Bible calls that person a fool

- More about our words as we continue...

Proverbs 10:19

19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

- When we talk too much, we face a particular danger

- Committing sin with our words
- This type of sin may be one of the most common
- We say more than we should
- We say less than we should
- We fail to tell the whole truth
- We tell the opposite of the truth
- We gossip
- We assassinate character
- And who knows what else

- A lot of this happens in a "multitude of words"
- That is, when we talk more than we should

- But there is an alternative
- Talking less
- Holding something back
- Stopping ourselves when we have the urge to keep talking
- Wisdom is shown when we do this

Proverbs 10:20

20 The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.

- The right and just say things of value
- Often of great value
- They do not waste their breath with the frivolous or vain
- And these words of choice silver come from a heart of rightness
- Without a doubt, given by God
- Through a relationship with Him

- But others reveal their hearts
- Sometimes in words, sometimes in actions
- And if it is a heart of wickedness
- Those words and actions are of little worth
- They are value-less

- In this case, we move from the tongue to the lips
- Same idea: about our speech...

Proverbs 10:21

21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.

- Righteous people say things that help others
- Their lips are filled with encouragement
- And wisdom
- And exhortation
- All of which help those listening

- Fools do not help
- They don't help those listening
- And they don't help themselves
- They have nothing to offer
- Because they haven't listened to wise words
- Often rejecting them
- And they have not embraced wisdom or, and this is the most important part, the God of wisdom

Proverbs 10:22

22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

- A man becomes wealthy because of the blessing of the Lord
- Certainly no man obtains anything without the permission of God
- Who rules all things
- But we may be thinking of those who obtain riches through nefarious means
- No doubt that happens
- That's where the second portion of the verse comes in
- This says the blessing of wealth has no sorrow along with it
- But those lying, cheating, and stealing to obtain wealth
- Cannot say the same
- Much sorrow, either today or in the future, will come to them
- For evil has consequences
- There's more from Proverbs...

Proverbs 10:23

23 It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

- This verse can be said another way...

"Fools enjoy doing wrong, but the wise enjoy wisdom."

- I like the idea of wise people enjoying wisdom
- This makes sense
- Those who love God
- And who have embraced His word
- Return to His word
- To learn more of Him
- To develop character
- To know His instructions, which they intend to obey
- And for many other reasons
- But the fool, the one who lacks all wisdom, enjoys doing wrong

- He is deceived into believing evil is fun
- And while it may seem fun for the moment
- It doesn't remain fun
- It bites like a serpent in the end

*Christopher Harper, **Take Note** 2024*