

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes Book of Proverbs—Proverbs 28

12/19/12

Wisdom On Treating Others Right

THEME: Wisdom For The Leaders (Chapters 25-31)

PURPOSE: Solomon wanted to impart wisdom to all people, regardless of their age, sex, or position in society. These short, wise sayings give us practical wisdom for daily living. We should study them diligently and integrate them into our life.

OUTLINE:

1. A STABLE GOVERNMENT (28:1-2): Wise and knowledgeable leaders make a stable nation.
2. A POURING RAIN (28:3) : "A poor person who oppresses the poor is like a pounding rain that destroys the crops."
3. INTEGRITY (28:4-9): People of integrity follow the Lord and understand justice. God does not answer the prayers of the evil, who are unjust and ignore the law.
4. THE BLESSINGS OF THE GODLY, THE PLIGHT OF THE GODLESS (28:10-15): Honest people inherit good things; everyone is glad when they succeed. If people confess their sins and stubbornness and adopt a tender conscience, they will receive mercy.
5. THE RISE OF THE JUST, THE FALL OF THE UNJUST (28:16-20): An honest king will have a long reign, but a stupid king will oppress the people. The honest will be rescued, while the crooked are destroyed.
6. PARTIALITY AND PUNISHMENT (28:21) : It is never good to show favoritism, but some may do so for almost nothing.
7. BEING CRITICAL (28:22-24): "People appreciate frankness more than flattery."
8. GREED AND GENEROSITY (28:25-28): "Greed causes fighting. ... Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing."

Proverbs 28

(New International Version)

(Verses 1-2) A STABLE GOVERNMENT (28:1-2): Wise and knowledgeable leaders make a stable nation.

¹The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion. ²When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers, but a ruler with discernment and knowledge maintains order.

PROVERBS 28:2

For a government or a society to endure, it needs wise, informed leaders—and these are hard to find. Each person's selfishness quickly affects others. A selfish employee who steals from his company ruins its productivity. A selfish driver who drinks before taking the wheel makes the state highways unsafe. A selfish spouse who has an adulterous affair often breaks up several families.

When people live for themselves with little concern for how their actions affect others, the resulting moral rot contaminates the entire nation. Are you part of the problem or the solution?

(Verse 3) A POURING RAIN (28:3) : "A poor person who oppresses the poor is like a pounding rain that destroys the crops."

³ A ruler who oppresses the poor is like a driving rain that leaves no crops.

(Verses 4-9) INTEGRITY (28:4-9): People of integrity follow the Lord and understand justice. God does not answer the prayers of the evil, who are unjust and ignore the law.

⁴ Those who forsake instruction praise the wicked, but those who heed it resist them. ⁵ Evildoers do not understand what is right, but those who seek the LORD understand it fully. ⁶ Better the poor whose walk is blameless than the rich whose ways are perverse. ⁷ A discerning son heeds instruction, but a companion of gluttons disgraces his father. ⁸ Whoever increases wealth by taking interest or profit from the poor amasses it for another, who will be kind to the poor. ⁹ If anyone turns a deaf ear to my instruction, even their prayers are detestable.

PROVERBS 28:5

Because justice is part of God's character, a person who follows God treats others justly. Justice begins with concern for what is happening to others. A Christian cannot be indifferent to human suffering because God isn't. And we certainly must not contribute to human suffering through selfish business practices or unfair government policies. Be sure you are more concerned for justice than for the bottom line.

PROVERBS 28:9

God does not listen to our prayers if we intend to go back to our sin as soon as we get off our knees. When we forsake our sin and follow him, however, he willingly listens—no matter how bad our sin has been. What closes his ears is not the depth of our sin but our secret intention to do it again.

(Verses 10-15) THE BLESSINGS OF THE GODLY, THE PLIGHT OF THE GODLESS (28:10-15): Honest people inherit good things; everyone is glad when they succeed. If people confess their sins and stubbornness and adopt a tender conscience, they will receive mercy.

¹⁰ Whoever leads the upright along an evil path will fall into their own trap, but the blameless will receive a good inheritance. ¹¹ The rich are wise in their own eyes; one who is poor and discerning sees how deluded they are. ¹² When the righteous triumph, there is great elation; but when the wicked rise to power, people go into hiding. ¹³ Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy. ¹⁴ Blessed is the one who always trembles before God, but whoever hardens their heart falls into trouble. ¹⁵ Like a roaring lion or a charging bear is a wicked ruler over a helpless people.

PROVERBS 28:11

Rich people often think they are wonderful; depending on no one, they take credit for all they do. But that's a hollow self-esteem. Through dependence on God in their struggles, the poor may develop a richness of spirit that no amount of wealth can provide. The rich man can lose all his material wealth, while no one can take away the poor man's character. Don't be jealous of the rich; money may be all they will ever have.

PROVERBS 28:13

It is human nature to hide our sins or overlook our mistakes. But it is hard to learn from a mistake you don't acknowledge making. And what good is a mistake if it doesn't teach you something? To learn from an error you need to admit it, confess it, analyze it, and make adjustments so that it doesn't happen again. Everybody makes mistakes, but only fools repeat them.

PROVERBS 28:13

Something in each of us strongly resists admitting we are wrong. That is why we admire people who openly and graciously admit their mistakes and sins. These people have a strong self-image. They do not always have to be right to feel good about themselves. Be willing to reconsider—to admit you are wrong and to change your plans when necessary. And remember, the first step toward forgiveness is confession.

(Verses 16-20) THE RISE OF THE JUST, THE FALL OF THE UNJUST (28:16-20): An honest king will have a long reign, but a stupid king will oppress the people. The honest will be rescued, while the crooked are destroyed.

¹⁶ A tyrannical ruler practices extortion, but one who hates ill-gotten gain will enjoy a long reign. ¹⁷ Anyone tormented by the guilt of murder will seek refuge in the grave; let no one hold them back. ¹⁸ The one whose walk is blameless is kept safe, but the one whose ways are perverse will fall into the pit. ¹⁹ Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies will have their fill of poverty. ²⁰ A faithful person will be richly blessed, but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.

PROVERBS 28:17, 18

A sinner's conscience will drive him into either guilt, resulting in repentance, or to death itself because of a refusal to repent. It is no act of kindness to try to make him feel better; the more guilt he feels, the more likely he is to turn to God and repent. If we interfere with the natural consequences of his act, we may make it easier for him to continue in sin.

(Verse 21) PARTIALITY AND PUNISHMENT (28:21) : It is never good to show favoritism, but some may do so for almost nothing.

²¹ To show partiality is not good—yet a person will do wrong for a piece of bread.

(Verses 22-24) BEING CRITICAL (28:22-24): "People appreciate frankness more than flattery."

²² The stingy are eager to get rich and are unaware that poverty awaits them. ²³ Whoever rebukes a person will in the end gain favor rather than one who has a flattering tongue. ²⁴ Whoever robs their father or mother and says, "It's not wrong," is partner to one who destroys.

(Verses 25-28) GREED AND GENEROSITY (28:25-28): "Greed causes fighting. ... Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing."

²⁵ The greedy stir up conflict, but those who trust in the LORD will prosper. ²⁶ Those who trust in themselves are fools, but those who walk in wisdom are kept safe. ²⁷ Those who give to the poor will lack nothing, but those who close their eyes to them receive many curses. ²⁸ When the wicked rise to power, people go into hiding; but when the wicked perish, the righteous thrive.

PROVERBS 28:26

For many people, the rugged individualist is a hero. We admire the bold, self-directed men and women who know what they want and fight for it. They are self-reliant, neither giving nor asking advice. What a contrast to God's way. A person can't know the future or predict the consequences of his or her choices with certainty. And so the totally self-reliant person is doomed to failure. The wise person depends on God.

PROVERBS 28:27

God wants us to identify with the needy, not ignore them. The second part of this proverb could be restated positively: "Those who open their eyes to poor people will be blessed." If we help others when they are in trouble, they will do whatever they can to return the favor (see 11:24, 25). Paul promises that God will supply all our needs (Philippians 4:19); he usually does this through other people. What can you do today to help God supply someone's need?