



Introduction to Proverbs 3:33-35

Sunday, February 12, 2017
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There are many ways we categorize people. We categorize them by age, race, gender, wealth, intelligence, abilities, et cetera. Within each of these realms we have many different ways of classifying people. We assign value to certain attributes and we disdain people who possess other attributes (usually attributes that make others different from us). Yet the Bible is clear that there are only two kinds of people: those who are righteous (which means they have trusted Christ, are clothed in His righteousness, and live by the Spirit of Christ in accordance with the will of God) and those who are wicked (those who, whether religious or not, have not humbled themselves, and pledged whole-hearted allegiance to Christ).

For those who don't think the Bible is very clear, the book of Proverbs offers a refreshingly straightforward perspective on these two fundamental categories: the righteous and the wicked. Not only does it offer *a* perspective on these two kinds of people, it offers *God's* perspective. Therefore, when we examine our own lives to see which describes us, we ought to remember that God knows the truth. There will be no injustice in the end: He will reward the righteous and punish the wicked.

Context

Proverbs is a collection of sermons or lectures on wisdom. The first several chapters consist of lectures given by a father to his son(s). In this way, we can be certain that this wisdom is not to be stored up, but to be passed on. It is not a body of knowledge, but clarity about how to live. This section (3:33-35) comes at the end of a lecture which began in 3:20. The thrust of the overall lecture is that the son(s) ought to live peaceably with all people, and in so doing, demonstrate his faith and confidence in the LORD (3:26).

Read and Reflect (*Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.*)

Read Proverbs 3:33-35; 1 Peter 5:5-6; James 4:6

“Two Kinds of People”

Differences

Wicked – Guilty; rebels against God

Proud – Overtly proud or more subtle

Foolish – Living actively out of step with God’s word

Righteous – Innocent; “in the right” before God

Humble – Low; afflicted; poor in spirit

Wise – Not how much you know, but how much you put into practice what you know.

Destinies

Wicked – Cursed by the LORD

Proud – Mocked by the LORD

Foolish – Shamed by the LORD

Righteous – Blessed by the LORD

Humble – Graced by the LORD

Wise – Honored by the LORD

Discuss

- 1) Why do you think the Bible insists so strongly that there are fundamentally only two kinds of people? (In addition to Prov. 3:33-35, consider Matthew 25:31-46, Romans 8:5-8, and 1 John 5:12)

- 2) ‘Wicked,’ ‘proud,’ and ‘foolish’ are words that describe anyone who is not a Christian, both in their status before God and in their attitudes and actions. Why is it so difficult to realize these things? What is it that prevents us from seeing our true condition apart from Christ?

- 3) ‘Righteous,’ ‘humble,’ and ‘wise’ are words that describe anyone who is a Christian in terms of their status, but we are continuously growing in those attitudes and actions as we continue to grow in Christ-likeness. How have you grown in righteousness, humility, and wisdom over the past year or so?

- 4) When you think about the destiny of the wicked, proud, and foolish as described in the Bible, what comes to mind? (Consider *who* it is that is in control of their destiny).

- 5) When you think about the destiny of the righteous, humble, and wise as described in the Bible, what comes to mind? And how does that reflection encourage us to persevere in righteousness, humility, and wisdom in the meantime?