

the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Timothy 6:17) "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;"

3. Principles for us to personalise

a. Wealth is not nearly as important as character.

- 1) God clearly states that integrity is the key to these verses not wealth. We must seek to do right!
- 2) Whether we have little or much, God focusses on our character. He looks at our heart.

b. Our daily walk is to be in integrity.

- 1) Our **daily** walk must be one of integrity or uprightness. It must be our habit not an occasional event.
- 2) A children's song that I learned in my youth says, "I want to be more than a Sunday-go-to-meetin' Christian. I want a religion that thrills me every day."

c. Integrity always trumps perverseness.

- 1) We must not let the devil deceive us. Integrity, i.e., doing right, **always** trumps the devil's twisted pleasures. It is always far better in God's sight. It will always lead us right. It will bring us God's blessings.
- 2) Do right till the stars fall!

Conclusion: Clearly, God tells us that the better choice in life is integrity, i.e., living upright. A twisted, perverse life will always lead to heartache and lack of God's blessing. That is the undesirable life of a fool. DO RIGHT!

Song: Only One Life - 395

Better Choice - Integrity

27 September 2020 PM - Proverbs 19:1, 28:6 - BC20 - Scott Childs

Introduction: Whenever I buy wood for a carpentry project, I carefully examine it for knots, and cracks, but especially for straightness. If it is twisted or bent, it lacks integrity. It is not right or suitable for use.

Transition: This evening, I want us to note the contrasts in these verses and then identify principles that we should personalise.

1. Contrasts in Proverbs 19:1

a. Their traits contrasted

- 1) The first is a *poor* man.
 - a) There are many other Hebrew words translated poor, which refer to the humble, afflicted, low, and weak. However, this word describes one who is in want; he is hungry. This poor destitute person is mentioned no less than 16 times in the book of Proverbs.
 - b) As you study the Bible, you will soon discover that the wealthy often despise the poor, but God has a tender spot in His heart for the poor.
 - c) Solomon contrasts the poor man here with a fool. It appears that this destitute person is one who fears God and seeks God's wisdom. There is nothing shameful about being poor as long as the poor person fears God and lives wisely.
- 2) The second is a *fool*.
 - a) This fool is one who places his confidence in something foolish rather than in God. He rejects God's wisdom, glories in the shameful and unreasonable.
 - b) Many poor people are fools, but since this fool is contrasted with a poor man, he is likely not poor.
 - c) Financial status does not determine whether a person is wise or foolish. Any person who rejects God's wisdom found in the Bible is a fool. (Proverbs 1:7) "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*" Sadly, many professing Christians live

like fools when they do not study the Bible and seek to live by its principles.

b. Their conduct contrasted

- 1) The poor man *walks in his integrity*.
 - a) The Bible uses a person's *walk* to describe his daily way of life. It depicts one's lifestyle or his customs. Our walk is not something we do occasionally, but rather it is how we live all the time.
 - b) This poor man's daily way of life, customs, and habits were in *integrity*. This word describes wholeness, completeness, integrity of mind, uprightness, and innocence. He sought to daily walk wholly and completely according to God's righteousness. He lived in uprightness. He knew what God said was right and he sought to live by that standard.
 - c) The fact that his walk in integrity is contrasted with the fool's perverse lips suggests that walking in his integrity included controlling his mouth. (Proverbs 15:28) "*The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.*"
 - d) God wants each of His children to walk in integrity. *The world, the flesh and the devil* want to ruin our integrity, but we must do right. (2 Timothy 2:22) "*Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*"
- 2) The fool is *perverse in his lips*.
 - a) The word translated *perverse* means to be twisted, distorted, or bent out of shape. The KJV often translates it "froward". *Like a twisted board*.
 - b) When he is perverse in his lips, the things he says are twisted, distorted or bent out of shape. They are not the straight truth. They are bent to hide or confuse the truth.
 - c) When a person fails to tell the whole truth, he is speaking perversely. A twisted truth is just a lie.

2. Contrasts in Proverbs 28:6

a. Their traits contrasted

- 1) The first is a poor man. This is the same as in Pr 19:1.
- 2) The second is rich.
 - a) The rich man is wealthy. Being wealthy is not wrong, but human nature often elevates the rich and lowers the poor. That was typical in Bible days as well.
 - b) God knows that there is a temptation to think that a rich man is blessed and a poor man is cursed. That seemed to be a typical view during Bible days. However, a person's financial status is not a good measure of his standing with God. God blesses in many ways besides financial.
 - c) Of the rich fool in Luke 12 who died and left all, Jesus said, (Luke 12:21) "*So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*"

b. Their conduct contrasted

- 1) The poor man walks in his uprightness. The word translated *uprightness* is the same as the word *integrity* in Proverbs 19:1. Thus, this first line is a repeat.
- 2) The rich man is *perverse in his ways*.
 - a) The word *perverse* is the same word that we found in Proverbs 19:1, meaning twisted.
 - b) Here, however, his *ways* that are twisted. *Way* describes his path in life. He follows a twisted and distorted path in life. His path does not follow God's straight way. It twists and bends through all the ungodly pleasures of life. Being rich, he partakes in many vanities of life where he wastes his substance on riotous living, as did the Prodigal son.
 - c) Being rich did not make him perverse or twisted, but it certainly increased the temptation.
 - d) Though he was rich and elevated in the eyes of society, his way of life was twisted and displeasing to God. (1 Timothy 6:9-10) "*But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is*