

Proverbs 28: The Righteous and the Wicked — Wisdom, Justice, and Integrity

I. The Character of the Righteous and the Wicked (vv. 1–6)

Verse 1 — The boldness of the righteous: The wicked flee when no one pursues and fear, but the righteous are bold as a lion.

Verse 2 — Many leaders can be a curse or judgment of sin. But wise leadership can strengthen a nation through understanding and stability.

Verse 3 — The danger of oppressive leadership: A poor man who oppresses the poor is like a destructive rain during harvest. (**Matt. 18:23-35**)

Verse 4 — The influence of God's law causes those who forsake the law to praise the wicked, but those who keep His Word will contend with them. (**Rom.13:1-7**)

Verse 5 — The importance of seeking the Lord: Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand all.

Verse 6 — Integrity is better than riches: It is better to be poor and walk in integrity than rich and crooked. * God values righteousness and integrity more than power, position, or wealth.

II. The Importance of Obedience and Generosity (vv. 7–11)

Verse 7 — Wisdom is demonstrated by obedience: Keeping the law shows understanding, while others may claim wisdom but walk in disobedience, which brings shame.

Verse 8 — Wealth accumulated through excessive interest and exploitation ultimately benefits those who show kindness to the poor.

Verse 9 — God desires an obedient heart: Turning away from God's law makes even one's prayer an abomination.

Verse 10 — The consequences of leading others astray: Those who lead the upright into evil will fall into their own traps.

Verse 11 — The danger of self-deception: The rich may be wise in their own eyes, but the discerning poor can see through them. *True wisdom is revealed through obedience to God, compassion for others, and humility.

III. The Blessing of Righteousness and the Danger of Sin (vv. 12–18)

Verse 12 — The influence of righteous leadership: When the righteous rejoice, there is great glory; when the wicked rise, people hide themselves.

Verse 13 — The path to mercy: Whoever conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will find mercy.

Verse 14 — The blessing of reverence for God: Happy is the person who continually fears the Lord, but the one who hardens his heart falls into trouble.

Verse 15 — The danger of wicked rulers: A wicked ruler is like a roaring lion or a charging bear over a helpless people.

Verse 16 — The value of understanding: A ruler who lacks understanding practices oppression, while one who hates dishonest gain prolongs his days.

Verse 17 — The burden of guilt: A person burdened by bloodshed will flee until death; others should not support or protect such a person from justice.

Verse 18 — The security of integrity: Whoever walks blamelessly will be saved, but the one whose ways are perverse will fall. * Confession and repentance lead to mercy, while hardened hearts and persistent wickedness lead to destruction.

IV. Diligence, Contentment, and Trust in God (vv. 19–22)

Verse 19 — The reward of hard work: Those who cultivate their land will have plenty, while those who pursue fantasies will have poverty.

Verse 20 — The blessing of faithfulness: A faithful person will abound with blessings, but one eager to become rich quickly will not go unpunished.

Verse 21 — The danger of partiality: Showing favoritism is wrong, even when motivated by a small reward.

Verse 22 — The trap of greed: A person eager to get rich has an evil eye and does not recognize the poverty that awaits. * Faithfulness, diligence, and contentment are wiser than shortcuts, favoritism, and the pursuit of quick wealth.

V. Correction, Generosity, and the Fear of Man (vv. 23–27)

Verse 23 — The value of honest correction: One who rebukes another will ultimately find more favor than one who flatters.

Verse 24 — The seriousness of dishonoring parents: Taking from one's parents and claiming it is not wrong is equivalent to destructive behavior.

Verse 25 — The contrast between pride and trust: The greedy stir up conflict, but those who trust in the Lord will prosper.

Verse 26 — The danger of self-reliance: Whoever trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered.

Verse 27 — The blessing of generosity: Giving to the poor brings blessing, while ignoring their needs leads to hardship.

* Wisdom welcomes correction, trusts the Lord, and responds to the needs of others.

VI. The Consequences of Wicked Leadership (v. 28)

- Verse 28 — The rise and fall of the wicked: When the wicked rise, people hide themselves; when they perish, the righteous increase. * Wicked leadership creates fear and instability, but righteousness allows people and communities to flourish.

** The wise person lives with integrity, responds humbly to correction, turns away from sin, works diligently, cares for the poor, and trusts in the Lord.