

Two Highways
Proverbs 4:10-19
August 16, 2015

Introduction

The Bible is absolute in everything: life and death, good and wicked, light and darkness, clean and unclean, Christ-righteousness and self-righteousness. When the Bible deals with absolutes, it is telling us that we are confronted with a choice: God or self. When we come to God, we have life, and when we rely on ourselves, we are courting ruin. The Old Testament frequently gives us those two choices.

Deuteronomy 30:15 *See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil,*

Jeremiah 21:8 *Furthermore, tell the people, "This is what the LORD says: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death."*

1 Kings 18:21a *Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal is God, follow him."*

Even Jesus tells us that we are confronted with such choice.

Matthew 7:13-14

13 *Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.*

14 *But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*

What Jesus is doing is that he is contrasting between two kinds of righteousness: righteousness that comes from God and the righteousness that does not. Jesus tells us that the Pharisees seek their own righteousness for themselves.

Matthew 5:20 *For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Luke 18:9 *To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else,*

Even simpler what Jesus is saying: are you good enough or you cannot be good enough to enter heaven. Understand that Jesus is saying that both ways are telling us the way to heaven; however, only one is the true way and the other is false. Jesus tells us to enter by the narrow gate. It is a command, a command to repent and believe.

In Proverbs, Solomon tells his son that he is in front of two highways: one leads to life and the other leads to destruction. He is urging his son to choose life. His words are urgent, and they are somber warnings. Let us hear what Solomon says and pray that we are choosing Wisdom's way.

I. Walking the Way of the Wise (10-13)

- Listen and accept what I say
 - This is the hardest part of Christian living: overcoming selfish pride and openly listen and accept counsel
 - This is a must for Christians

Proverbs 12:15 *The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice.*

Proverbs 1:5 *let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance-*

Proverbs 19:20 *Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.*

- We are to listen to godly counsel
 - It includes
 - Advice
 - Rebuke
 - Correction
 - Encouragement
- Solomon's words are the same as what Jesus says

Matthew 7:24 *Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 3:6, 13, 22 *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

- Result: full and blessed life
- Imitate me as I imitate Christ
 - Solomon tells his son to follow his way—copy what he is doing
 - Solomon is walking wisdom's way
 - His way is God's way and it is smooth

Hebrews 13:7 *Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.*

1 Corinthians 11:1 *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

- Complete freedom in Christ

Galatians 5:1 *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. (NIV: burdened; NKJ: entangled)*

- Walking on wisdom's way—no stumbling = freedom
- God is the one who give us this freedom
- He shows us the way and the way is very clear

Psalms 119:105 *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.*

- Examples: freedom in marriage; freedom in tithing; freedom in doing good things
- Hold on and guard it
 - Wisdom can be forgotten because it does not come naturally for us
 - We must practice the skill of living in fear of God
 - We must practice it regularly and make sure our life is glorifying God

II. Avoiding the Way of the Wicked (14-17)

- Avoid it
 - Best way to stop sin from ruining your life as a Christian—Avoid it!
 - Avoid contact with evil men
 - Cut off temptation
 - Temptation in itself is not sin

James 1:14-15

14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

- Reason we sin
 - We do not flee from temptation

1 Corinthians 6:18 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.

- We do not resist temptation

James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- Example: Cain

Genesis 4:6-7

6 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?"

7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

- Depravity of men
 - Cannot sleep until do evil
 - They are committed to sin
 - They do sin wholeheartedly
 - They are nourished by sin(v 17)
 - They look forward to doing evil
 - Why?
 - They are slave to sin

John 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."

- They love darkness

John 3:19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

- Sin's influence is so strong
 - In this side of heaven, we are easily corrupted
 - By hanging around wicked people, we will be influenced by them

1 Corinthians 15:33 *Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."*

III. Choosing Which Way (18-19)

- Path of righteousness
 - Beautiful picture of the growth of each believer
 - We will continue to grow until we are before God
 - The path starts with Christ Jesus, Wisdom Incarnate

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."*

John 8:12 *When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

- When we believe, we will always be in the light of Christ
- Path of darkness
 - Deep darkness—think inside the cave darkness
 - Danger and constant bewilderment
 - No knowledge or understanding to why they fail or fall

1 John 2:11 *But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.*

- Darkness = judgment and they bring it upon themselves

Coram Deo

In Hebrew, the sentences are short and rapid. There is urgency in Solomon's plea with his son. He is urging his son to pursue wisdom with all of his being so that he would have life. His warnings are urgent and graphic as to show his son the reality of being on a path away from God. The two highways lay before us, which one do we choose? Down one way, we find blessedness, and down the other way, we find ruin.

Joshua 24:15 *And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*