

Flattery

by Chuck Smith

Pastor Chuck Smith's sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, trust in God, and the dangers of pride and the fear of man in spiritual life.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: Proverbs 29:18

Topics: "Flattery"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith focuses on the concept of vision and the consequences of lacking it. He emphasizes that vision comes from the Word of the Lord and when God is not speaking, people perish. Pastor Chuck also discusses the snare of the fear of man, explaining how many individuals have been trapped by wanting to please others and fearing their opinions. He contrasts this with the safety and prosperity that comes from putting trust in the Lord. Additionally, Pastor Chuck shares a prayer from the book of Proverbs where the author asks God to remove vanity and lies from his life and to provide him with moderation in wealth, so as not to forget God or be tempted to steal.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that mold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
Verse 18, and now with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Where there is no vision, the people perish. Now this vision is the word of the Lord, really, and in that day there was no vision.

It says that God was not speaking. Where God is not really speaking to hearts, the people perish. Where there is no working of the Spirit of God in speaking to people, they perish.

But He that keeps the law of God happy is He. The word blessed in the Hebrew is literally how happy. How happy is the man who keeps the law of God.

Happy is He. The servant will not be corrected by words. For though he understand, he will not answer.

So Solomon had problems, I guess, with some of his servants. Words weren't sufficient. He had to take more stern measures for correction.

Do you see a man that is hasty in his words? This is what I told you sort of fits with the fool uttering all of his mind. You see a man who is hasty with his words. Again, there's more hope for a fool than there is for

him.

So there's a couple of things that are worse than being a fool. One is a man who is hasty in his own words and a man who is wise in his own conceit. More hope for a fool than a man who just spouts off hasty in his words, hasty in his judgment.

He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become a son at the length. In the Hebrew, this gives a little more, a little different slant than what you get here in our translation. Solomon sort of speaking to the intent that you keep a servant in his place.

If you allow him or grant him too many privileges, he will begin to take liberties as a son. So you've got to keep the servant in his place. You've got to be severe keeping him in his place lest he take liberties as a son.

An angry man stirs up strife and a furious man abounds in transgression. Those stand by themselves. They need no exposition.

We've seen plenty of illustrations of this. How furious, unbridled kind of emotional outbursts. A man abounds with transgressions.

A man's pride shall bring him low, but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit. This is so similar to so many passages of Scripture. Pride goeth before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

He that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up. And so a man's pride will bring him down, it'll bring him low.

Whereas honor shall uphold the humble in spirit. The man who is humble in spirit, he'll be honored. He will be lifted up where the man who is proud will be brought down.

Whoever is a partner with a thief hates his own soul. You hate yourself if you become a partner with a thief. You hear the cursing and bereath it not.

The fear of man brings a snare. Now, there are several snares mentioned here in this chapter. He speaks of spreading a net for your neighbor's feet.

In verse 5 and verse 6, the transgression of an evil man is a snare. Verse 8, scornful man brings the city into a snare. Now the fear of man bringeth a snare.

And how many people have been snared or trapped because of the fear of man? The fear of people's opinion, wanting to please people, wanting them to think well of you. And this fear of man can be a snare. It can be a trap.

It can cause you to do things that you know you should not do. A lot of people by peer pressure, which is nothing more than the fear of man, have gotten into activities that they knew they shouldn't be involved with. But they were afraid to say no.

And the fear of man has brought them into a snare. They've been trapped because they didn't have the courage to say no. But whoso puts his trust in the Lord, in contrast, he'll be safe.

Safe from the snares of the enemy, safe from the power of the enemy, safe from the destruction of the enemy, safe from the consequence of our sins. Putting your trust in the Lord. Many seek the ruler's favor, but every man's judgment cometh from the Lord.

People seek the favor of man who is in rule, but really you should be seeking God's favor on your life. But the judgment ultimately will come from Him. An unjust man is an abomination to the just.

Now, you see here the way that it sort of turns around. To a righteous man, to the just man, a man who is unjust is an abomination. You can't stand them.

You hate the person who is unjust. If you are fair, if you are just, the unjust is an abomination. But on the other hand, if you're upright in your way, then you're an abomination to the wicked.

So it goes both ways. The righteous man is an abomination to the wicked man, whereas the wicked man is an abomination to the righteous man. So you see how the camps are divided.

There's this definite division between the righteous and the wicked. And if you're truly a righteous person, then the wicked and those that do wickedly are an abomination to you, but you in turn are an abomination to them. That is why the Bible says, Beware when all men speak well of you, and be careful about trying to please all men.

Paul said, For if I please all men, then I am not the servant of Christ. If you stand up for righteousness, if you stand up for Jesus Christ, the world is going to hate you. You'll be an abomination to them.

You'll be an offense to them. It isn't the popular path with the world to stand up for righteousness. You become an abomination to the ungodly.

But it is better to be an abomination to the ungodly than to be an abomination to the Lord. I can handle whatever the ungodly want to throw at me, but I'll tell you what, I wouldn't want to be an abomination to God. I wouldn't be able to handle his judgment.

So you have to sort of choose. Do you want to displease the Lord, or do you want to displease the worldly person around you? If you please the Lord, you will displease the worldly person. If you please the worldly person, you will displease the Lord.

So it's your choice. It brings us to the words of Augur. He is speaking through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, even the prophecy.

The man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Uchol. So this is a prophecy given by this man Augur, who is the son of Jaka, unto these two men, Ithiel and Uchol. And he begins by confessing his own sin and nothingness.

Surely I am a man, or I am more brutish than any man. I have not the understanding of a man. Paul the Apostle, speaking of himself, said that he was the chief of sinners.

This man begins by saying, I was a brutish man, more than any other. Sort of, again, the idea of the chief of sinners. I have not the understanding of a man.

That is, the understanding that I have isn't learning, it isn't education. The understanding that I will be sharing with you is really from the Lord. He's not taking credit himself for these things, but really declaring

that this is something that was given to me by the Lord.

It isn't human wisdom that I am parting, because I'm not a wise man. I do not have the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.

I don't achieve, or I don't claim to have the same knowledge. I haven't learned these things. For who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in his fist? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all of the ends of the earth? I'm not achieved or attained to the knowledge of the holy.

I don't really fully understand God. God, who has ascended up into heaven, or descended from heaven. God who has gathered the winds in his fist.

Who has bound the waters in a garment. Who has established all of the ends of the earth. And then this is interesting to me, concerning God, he said, what is his name? And what is his son's name? If you can tell.

Interesting, isn't it? That he talks about the name of the son of God. Now we know that his name is the I am. I am that I am, God said.

When Moses said, who shall I say sent me? I am that I am have sent thee. What is the name of his son? At that time the name of the son of God was not revealed. But later to Mary, the angel, and informing her of the fact that she was going to have a son, said, and thou shall call his name Yahshua.

And so we know the name of the son. Who, what is his son's name? If you can tell. And then goes on, every word of God is pure.

Now, having gone from the opening of the declaration that the things that I am sharing with you are not from man's wisdom. They're not from me. I'm nobody.

But these things really come from God. It's a prophecy and every word of God is pure. For he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

All throughout the scripture, we are encouraged to put our trust in the Lord. Throughout the scripture we are told that he will be our defense. He will be our strong tower.

As you put your trust in the Lord, he will be a shield. That is your defense. Now we are told that Satan is casting his fiery darts at the believer.

But the fiery darts of Satan are quenched by the shield of defense. It's glorious that the Bible talking about those that are born of God, the wicked one toucheth him not. Because the Lord is our defense.

I always like to keep the Lord between me and Satan. I don't like to deal with Satan. I know a lot of people get all excited about dealing with demon-possessed people and dealing with Satan and all.

Not me. In fact, I always make sure that I keep the Lord between me and the devil. Now, the word of God is pure.

And then he tells us in the next verse, Don't add unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar. We read in Deuteronomy after God had given the law to Moses, he warned against adding to the words of the law. Don't add to what God has said.

It is interesting that as John was finishing the book of Revelation, which was the final book of the Bible, the complete revelation of God is now given to man. And at the end of the book, John says, If any man adds to the word of this prophecy, to him will be added all of the plagues that are in this book. And if any man takes away from the words of this prophecy, his name will be taken out of the book of life.

I mean, that's heavy duty. Don't add to the word of God. God has given to us all that we need.

We don't have to add to it. The revelation of God is complete. And we don't have to add to God's revelation.

There are people that say, well, I have a new revelation from God. Look out. Don't add to the word of God.

Don't take away from the word of God. Just seek to understand it. Now, there are a lot of issues that are questions in the minds of people about what about God and why did God and what about this? And they are issues in which the Bible is silent.

So many of the questions we are asked are questions that demand speculation on our part because you do not have any clear revelation of the scriptures. But I have sought to make it a practice that when the word of God is silent, to remain silent myself. I figure that's safe.

When the word of God speaks, then I can speak with authority because I'm speaking what God has declared in His word. But where the word of God is silent, I think that my speculation is just as worthless as anybody else's. And I don't like to speculate on the word of God.

I don't like to speculate about God. I just seek to understand what God has said. Don't add to His words, lest He reprove you and you be found a liar.

Now, having the introduction, he offers his prayer unto the Lord. And he says, there are two things I desire. And I ask that you not deny them me before I die.

Remove far from me vanity and lies. God, I don't want to live in emptiness or in a lie. Give me neither poverty nor riches, but just the food that's convenient for me.

So, Lord, I don't want to be rich. I don't want to be poor. Let me just be somewhere in between.

And he had a reason for asking that. He said, lest I be full and deny thee. Now, he no doubt observed, as we have observed, how that prosperity has ruined many people spiritually.

They were serving the Lord. They were doing great. But suddenly they began to increase.

They began to prosper. And they soon, being full, got so involved in so many things that they forgot the Lord. And having observed that, he said, Lord, I don't want to be so rich that I forget you and I say, who is God? Nor do I want to be so poor that I'm tempted to steal and just take the name of God in vain.

Curse God because of your conditions. Because of your misfortunes and all. So, moderation.

Always a good place to be. My dad used to have two mottos that he had on his desk. The one was all things.

And that was to remind him when things went bad at work, all things work together for good. My father was a salesman, worked on commission. And so around our house it was often feast and sometimes it was

sort of famine.

And that disappointment, you'd see all of these thousands of dollars just floating away, you know. And he would look at that little motto, all things work together for good to those who love God. And it's important that we remind ourselves of that.

He had another motto and it was, Lord, never bless me beyond my capacity to love you. Sort of like the prayer of Augur here. Lord, I don't want to be rich and I don't want to be poor.

I don't want to be rich so that I would forget you and say, who is God? Neither do I want to be poor so that I'd be tempted to steal and take the name of God in vain. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse venture through the Bible in our next broadcast, as Pastor Chuck continues his study through the book of Proverbs. And we do hope you'll make plans to join us.

But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you'd like to secure a copy of today's message, simply order Proverbs 29, verse 18 when visiting the thewordfortoday.org. And while you're there, we encourage you to browse the many additional biblical resources by Pastor Chuck. You can also subscribe to the Word for Today podcast or sign up for our email subscription. Once again, all this can be found at thewordfortoday.org. If you wish to call, our toll-free number is 1-800-272-WORD.

And our office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Once again, that's 1-800-272-9673. For those of you preferring to write, our mailing address is The Word for Today, PO Box 8000, Costa Mesa, California, 92628.

And now, on behalf of The Word for Today, we'd like to thank all of you who share in supporting this ministry with your prayers and financial support. And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck continues his verse-by-verse study through the Bible. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today.

And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck with today's closing prayer. Father, we thank you again for the wisdom and the instruction that you give to us and that has been handed down to us through these Proverbs. Help us, Lord, that we might give heed to them, that we might be wise and do justly and do that which pleases you.

In Jesus' name, amen. We'd like to draw your attention to a couple of very special resources by Pastor Chuck Smith that answer some of the many questions about the third person of the Trinity. The first of these two resources is entitled The Person of the Holy Spirit and contains 12 messages that explain the baptism of the Holy Spirit in detail as well as how the Holy Spirit works in the life of the believer.

Now, the second resource is called The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and consists of 19 messages covering such subjects as healing, prophecy, and faith. Pastor Chuck not only explains how and why the gifts of the Holy Spirit are available to the church today, but he also encourages believers to fully understand the working of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life. Once again, you'll be asking for The Person of the Holy Spirit and The Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

For those of you wishing to call, our toll-free number is 1-800-272-9673. Once again, that's 1-800-272-WORD. This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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