

Integrity

by Chuck Smith

Pastor Chuck Smith emphasizes the importance of integrity in personal and community life, drawing on biblical principles and practical applications.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: Proverbs 20:1-23, Matthew 6:33, 1 Timothy 5:23

Topics: "Integrity"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith focuses on the topic of integrity, as he teaches through the book of Proverbs. He emphasizes the value of knowledge and the importance of being cautious when lending to others. Pastor Chuck also highlights the significance of mercy and truth for a king, as they preserve and uphold his throne. He concludes by discussing the characteristics of children and the need to be diligent and avoid laziness.

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 hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life and make you whole
Now, with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Now, the subject of drinking wine is a subject that has been argued, discussed, debated within the church for years.

There are those that say, well, Jesus at the marriage feast turned the water into wine. Jesus was accused of being a wine-bibber, that Paul told Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach problem. On the other hand, and now the other side of the coin, wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

Solomon has something else to say about wine. It's in 23rd chapter. Quite a bit to say about wine, drinking wine.

Who has woe, who has sorrow, who has contentions, who has babbling, who has wounds without cause, who has redness of eyes? Those that tarry long at the wine, seek the mixed wine. Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it gives its color in the cup, when it moves itself aright. For at the last it will bite like a serpent, it will sting like an adder.

Your eyes will behold strange women, your heart will utter perverse things. Yea, you will be as he that lies down in the midst of the sea or he who tries to lie on the top of a mast. They have stricken me, thou shalt say.

I was not sick. They have beaten me, and I didn't feel it. When shall I awake? And I will seek it yet again.

Wine is a mocker. Strong drink is raging. Now, in the vow of the Nazarite, which was the vow of complete consecration to God, then that's the vow of the Nazarite.

You're not to drink wine. Jesus was known as a Nazarene. That is the vow of complete commitment.

So I believe that the accusations that he was a wine-biver were false. I do believe that he did go into the house and eat with sinners, which he was accused of doing, and they probably had wine, but there is nothing to indicate that Jesus himself ever drank. It was just that he was accused of being a wine-biver.

But I think it was a false accusation. Because of being a Nazarite, the vow of the Nazarite was not to drink wine. Paul the Apostle, as he is talking about the leadership within the church and those men who are to oversee the affairs of the church, are not to drink wine.

They're not to be given to wine. And thus, as the minister, the pastor, the overseer of the church, I believe it would be wrong for me to drink wine or any alcoholic beverage. Just wisdom dictates that.

I know enough about alcohol and its effect upon the human body. I know how that alcohol is something that your liver has to process, and you can overwork your liver in seeking to process the alcohol that you're ingesting into your system. I also know that alcohol works against the nervous system of the body.

It destroys some of your brain cells, and it can have an effect upon you physically and mentally. And you can come under the influence of alcohol. And though all things may be lawful for me, I will not come under the power of anything.

I will not do that which can bring me under its power. And so I definitely believe that you're better off not to drink wine, not to take anything into your body that can influence, can bring you under its influence. Though it may be lawful, and you may argue, you know, Paul said to Timothy, take wine.

And I don't enter into all those arguments. I just know what's good for me and what's best for me. And I know what is God's best for me, and I want God's best for my life.

And I do want a life that's completely consecrated and committed to God, sort of the vow of the Nazarite, if you please, and a life of total commitment to him. And thus, I don't believe in drinking wine. And I have not drunk wine, nor will I drink wine.

It is a mocker. Strong drink is raging. And whosoever is deceived by it is not wise.

Now, he dealt with the fear of the king in the last chapter. He speaks about it again. Now he says, the fear of the king is as a roaring of a lion.

And whoever provokes him to anger, man, you're bringing trouble upon yourself. You know, leave the kings alone. Don't provoke them.

The fear of the king is like the roaring of a lion. A lion's roar creates tremendous fear. He rules by fear, the jungles.

It is an honor for a man to cease from strife, to not get involved in strife. It's honor for a man. But every fool will be meddling.

I mean, it's so foolish to meddle in things that you have no business getting involved in. And yet so many people do that. But every fool will be meddling.

It's an honor for a man to cease from strife. My mother used to tell me, son, I never want you to start a fight. And I never want you to run from a fight.

Just don't start them. So don't meddle around. Don't create the problems.

And it's better to just cease from strife. The sluggard, the lazy man, here he is again. He'll not plow by reason of the cold.

Well, it's too cold to go out and work today. I'll wait until a warmer day. And so he will not plow.

Now, the farmer has to begin right at the beginning of spring. And some of the days are pretty cold. They're not pleasant to be out in.

But yet you've got to get to the ground, get the seed in as soon as possible. But the lazy man, the sluggard, will not plow because it's too cold. Therefore, he will be begging in harvest and have nothing.

Counsel in the heart of the man is like deep water. But a man of understanding will draw it out. So you come to a wise person and you're seeking their wisdom and their counsel.

But it takes really sometimes the drawing out from that person. You draw out what is there, the deep water counsel in the heart of man. Most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness.

Isn't that the truth? Everyone is ready to brag about how good they are, how smart they are, what they did. Most men will proclaim his own goodness. But a faithful man who can find bragging and boasting about it.

But is it really true? The just man walks in his integrity. And his children follow after him. You set the pattern.

Your children are looking at you as a role model. That's an awesome thing that they watch you to learn what husbands should be like. To learn what fathers should be like.

To learn what mothers should be like and wives should be like. They only know the role model that they see in you. So the just man who walks in integrity, honesty and all, his children are blessed after him.

The king that sits in the throne of judgment scatters away all evil with his eyes. We used to have a dean in college that did that too. We swore that that guy could look right through you.

When he would talk to you, he'd sort of squint his eyes and look. And I realize now he probably had eye trouble and just couldn't see too well. But man, I thought he was looking right through me.

So the king that sits on the throne of judgment scatters away evil with his eyes. He looks around and knows what I'm thinking. Who can say I have made my heart clean? I am pure from my sin.

No one can say I have made my heart clean. None of us can clean our own hearts. My heart has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

But I didn't do that. That's the work of the Lord in my life. He is the one who has washed me from my sins.

He is the one who has made me pure from my sin. It is only Jesus and the blood of Jesus that can cleanse you from your sin. So the question, who can say I have made my heart clean? The answer is no one.

Because you can't cleanse your own heart of evil. That takes a work of God's Spirit. Diverse weights and diverse measures.

Now we get into a little bit of commerce. Diverse weights and diverse measures. Now, the crooked people had two bags of weights.

Everything was done with balances. They sold and bought with balances. And they had one bag of weights for when they were selling stuff.

And another bag of weights when they were buying stuff. Diverse weights. They're an abomination to the Lord.

And diverse measures. Even a child is known by his doings. You can observe a child and you can know what the character flaws are.

What needs to be dealt with. What needs to be worked with. Even in a child, you can begin to see traits very early.

We have one little granddaughter. We're spending a little time up in the mountains with some of the grandkids. And we have two little ones with us.

13-month-old little granddaughter and our 18-month-old little grandson. And it's interesting, as you observe them, you can see different characteristics already at this early age. Our little granddaughter, 13 months, I mean, she is something special.

She's just a delight and a doll. But she's got a determination and a will that just won't quit. I mean, you just don't stop her.

Even a child is known by its doings. Whether his work be pure or whether it be right, you can begin to see traits very early. And you need to start dealing according to the observations that you see.

The hearing ear. He that hath an ear to hear. The seeing eye.

The Lord has made both of them. He has given us the capacity to hear His truth, to see and to know His truth. They are both of them from the Lord.

And again, laziness. Love not sleep, lest you come to poverty. Open up your eyes, and you'll be satisfied with bread.

Get up, wake up, go out and go to work. You'll be satisfied with bread. Now again, in commerce, in this one, oh my.

It is nothing, it is nothing, says the buyer. But when he has gone his way, he boasts. In that culture over there, it's sort of like Tijuana.

You don't pay the first price. Usually you pay about 50% of the first asking price. But you have to haggle.

You have to bargain. And you go through all of these things. You walk away.

You start walking up the street. Come on back, come on back. Will you give me? And they'll throw out some ridiculous price.

Way low. And you say, yeah. And then they'll say, well, no, no, I can't do it for that.

And they keep you going, keep you arguing, keep you haggling. And so you learn to deprecate the goods. You say, well, look at that little scratch there.

And look it over here. This clasp doesn't work quite right. It's got a little bit of dirt over here.

And you say, it's not really worth it. It's nothing, it's nothing. And then when you walk away, you say, man, what a deal I got.

Ah, people. There is gold. There's a multitude of rubies.

But the lips of knowledge, they're like a precious jewel. Such value in the words of knowledge, the lips of knowledge. Like a precious jewel.

Take his garment that is surety for a stranger. Now, if you're going to help someone, lend to someone, if that person is prone to be surety for a stranger, or if he's prone to run around with women, then you better get a good pledge from them. Take their garment or get something worthwhile.

Because they're apt not to repay you. So make sure you've got plenty of collateral when you make a loan to a person who is prone to be a guaranteeer for strangers or runs around with strange women. Bread of deceit is sweet to a man.

But afterwards, his mouth will be filled with gravel. You may get by with deceiving for a while. You may think you're clever and you might enjoy your gains that you've gained by deceit.

But in the end, it's going to be like a mouthful of gravel. Every purpose is established by counsel. And with good advice, make war.

Jesus said you don't go to war until you first of all make sure that you have sufficient troops. You don't want to lose in a battle. And so you take careful consideration.

Purposes are established with counsel. He that goes about as a tell-bearer, revealing secrets, don't meddle with him that flatters with his lips. Two people you want to avoid, those who are tell-bearers, those who reveal secrets.

You want to avoid those people. And then you want to avoid those that flatter, constantly flattering you with their lips. Whoso curses his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out into obscure darkness.

When a child becomes so rebellious that he begins to curse his parents who have sought to instruct him, he turns against them and curses them. They're a lost cause. Their lamp will be put out in obscure

darkness.

An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed. That is quick gains, ill-gotten gains. You may profit in the beginning.

I think of people who are in the drug traffic. It seems like such an easy way to make so much money, hastily, hasty money. But in the end, the house, the Mercedes will all be confiscated and you'll not be blessed.

Say not thou I will recompense evil. I'm going to get even with you, man. Don't say that.

But wait on the Lord. He'll take care of it. The Lord said, Vengeance is mine.

I will repay, saith the Lord. So don't go around threatening to get even or determining to get even, to return evil for evil, but just commit it to the Lord. Let the Lord take care of it.

Wait on the Lord and He'll take care of you. He'll deliver you. Now, again with commerce, diverse weights, we had that earlier, are an abomination to the Lord and a false balance is not good.

Man's goings are of the Lord. God's sovereign over my life and He is in control and He's guiding and directing my life. Therefore, how can I understand my own way? And often I don't.

I don't know what God is doing. I don't know what the purpose of God is. I just have to trust in the Lord.

God has a purpose and a plan in this. He's working out His will and His way and so man's goings are of the Lord. How important it is that you just commit your way to the Lord and know that He will direct your path but you won't always understand it.

How can you understand your own way? It is a snare to the man who devours that which is holy. There are a lot of people that have nothing really to do with things that are holy. They devour those things.

Jesus said, don't take that which is holy and cast it to the dogs. And after vows to make inquiry. You promise to do something and then you start hedging on it.

You say, well, now what did you really mean by? And you start asking questions and trying to hedge on the promise or the vow that you made. That's a trap. A wise king scatters the wicked and he brings the wheel of justice over them.

That is the wheels of justice slow but exceedingly fine. So a wise king will bring this wheel of justice over the wicked. And the spirit of the man, that deep, deep innermost part of your being is the candle of the Lord searching all of the inward parts of the belly.

The spirit of God within searching out the things that are in your deepest part of your being candle of the Lord, revealing, showing. Mercy and truth preserve the king and his throne is upheld by mercy. Two things are important for a king.

Mercy, truth. They will preserve and they will uphold his throne. The glory of the young men is their strength.

The beauty of the old men is their gray head. Now the blueness of a wound cleanses away evil, the bruise. So do stripes, the inward parts of the belly.

So the cleansing away of evil, the bruise indicates that things are starting to heal up. The stripes cleanse away the evil from the inward part of a person's life. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study through the book of Proverbs in our next lesson as Pastor Chuck Smith examines the rich and the poor.

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 chapter 20, verse 1 when visiting 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.

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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 wisdom.

Let our hearts be inclined to wisdom. That we might, Lord, walk in your path, obey your commands, that we might, Lord, walk in the path of wisdom and understanding, that we might walk, Lord, in integrity, slow to anger, patient, merciful, kind. Lord, we thank you for that work that you have done in our lives in cleansing our hearts and purifying our lives.

Let us walk, Lord, in that purity through the strength of your Spirit. And Lord, with the Spirit, search out the inward part of our lives. Reveal, Lord, that which is not pleasing to you, that we, Lord, might be freed from those things that would hurt and destroy.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Listen to Pastor Chuck as he teaches Hebrew and Greek word origins, biblical dates and history, archaeological information, church history, and, of course, practical applications to apply to your life on a day-to-day basis.

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