

Moral Virtue's Part 1

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of integrity, the dangers of wealth, the consequences of false witness, and the importance of wisdom and understanding in our lives.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: Proverbs 19:1-19

Topics: "Morality"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith focuses on moral virtues as he delves into Proverbs 19 verse 1. He emphasizes the importance of honesty and integrity, stating that it is better to be poor but honest than to gain wealth through deceit. Solomon's wisdom is highlighted as he warns against making hasty decisions and the consequences of speaking lies. Pastor Chuck also discusses the societal absence of truth and accountability, emphasizing the need for a moral foundation rooted in God's commandments.

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
And now with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. As again, we receive instruction of wisdom, of justice, of judgment, of fairness. As Solomon talks about life and the various aspects of life.

And he puts truths into the form of a proverb. In order to instruct and teach us in the way of righteousness and judgment and truth. And integrity and the various subjects that he broaches in the proverbs.

Solomon was the wealthiest man in the world of his day. The scriptures speak of the tremendous wealth that Solomon had amassed. Where silver became as common as rocks in Jerusalem.

His wealth and glory of his kingdom was world renowned. And yet Solomon had an interest and a concern for the poor. Because he knew that God had an interest and a concern for the poor.

And poverty isn't the worst thing that can happen to you. There are a lot of things that are worse than poverty. And so he makes a lot of different and interesting comparisons.

Of things that you might have that would be worse than being poor. So the first proverb of chapter 19 deals with this kind of a contrast. Better is the poor who walks in his integrity.

A man who is honest and yet he is poor. He is better off than the fellow who is perverse with his lips. Or the man who is conniving, scheming, lying, cheating.

For he is a fool. Because the riches that are gotten by crooked methods. Will be lost as a general rule by the same way.

As I shared a while back there was this fellow who was part of the mafia. Who had come to Calvary Chapel for a time. Who opened his safe and showed me this big wad of hundred dollar bills.

He said there was a hundred thousand dollars there. And I had no reason to question that. And he said I'm holding it right now.

He said I just had a scam and I ripped off this guy. And so he said I get to hold this money for a while. But he said they all know that I have it now.

He said it just passes in a circle. And he said the guys are just all of them figuring out some scam. And they're going to try and rip me off for it.

And one of them will make it and it will pass to him for a while. And then we'll all be after him because we know he's got the wad. And he said we just sort of pass this around in a circle.

And so you can create a scam. You can get money by ill gains, by perverseness of lips. But you'd be better off to be an honest person and be poor.

Than to have those kind of riches. Also, the soul that is without knowledge is not good. If you are lacking in an understanding of God, the things of God.

And really this would be the knowledge of God. It's just not good. And he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.

Solomon says a lot about the person who hurries into situations. How that we so often make a mistake. And have you ever noticed that one of the tricks of salesmanship is to put you under pressure.

You've got to decide by 5 o'clock because there's another fellow that wants this house. And he's coming back this evening with a deposit. And so if you want it, you better take some action right now.

And what they're trying to do is provoke you to a quick decision. Without really thinking all of the aspects through. And so that kind of pressure is never good.

Whenever any salesman, and if you're a salesman, don't try that one on me. Because I'll walk away. Because I have a philosophy, if the Lord wants me to have it, it'll be there.

And if someone else comes along and buys it, then the Lord didn't want me to have it. So I'm better off anyhow. And I don't get suckered in with that kind of a pressure.

In fact, I move away when they... I figure, well, I'll just wait and see if they come this evening and buy it. If they do, then the Lord didn't want me to have it. And thus, you know, it helps me to make up my decision in the opposite way.

He that hasteth with his feet sinneth. It can get you into trouble if you're in a hurry to get things going, you know. The foolishness of a man perverteth his way.

And his heart frets against the Lord. It is really foolish for a man, in what Solomon is saying, to become perverse in his way. Because it will turn your heart ultimately against the Lord.

If you become perverse in your ways, in your practices, your heart will soon be turning against God. Against the things of God. Solomon probably knew this by first-hand experience.

Wealth makes many friends. Being the wealthiest man in the world, he had all of those that were, you know, around, being so friendly, nice, and entreating him. And so he just observed, you know, wealth makes many friends.

But the poor is separated from his neighbor. The person who doesn't have anything, no one wants or seeks his company that much. Which sort of shows the emptiness of man's favors.

I mean, if a person, if you're wealthy and people keep courting you and wanting to be around you, you don't really know how true that kind of friendship or love is. Best way to find out is to lose your money. And then you'll find out who your real friends are.

Poverty separates from the neighbor. Solomon has a lot to say about false witnesses. And we'll get many Proverbs.

But a false witness shall not be unpunished. And he that speaketh lies shall not escape. So a false witness is a man who, under oath, will bear a false witness.

Perjures himself while under oath. Solomon says he will not go unpunished. God hates lying lips.

And he that speaks lies shall not escape. There is a, and we need to recognize and realize this, there is a true justice that shall ultimately prevail. Now, I am prone to agree with the man who cries concerning the world around us, there ain't no justice.

I see such a twisting of judgment and justice that I am prone to almost despair of justice in the courts. The one who is able to conceive the cleverest lie is usually the one that comes out on top. But I really don't have much confidence in our judicial system.

And less all the time. Because, you see, the base for morality has been removed from our society. What is the real base for honesty? Our belief in God.

Our belief in God as a final judge. The belief that one day every man shall stand before God and give an account of his life, of himself. Now, the moment you take God out of the national consciousness, as has happened in the United States, and you seek to replace God with blind chance, you subscribe to that illogical idiocy that matter acting on matter over a given period of time can produce anything mechanical.

Now, that is so illogical. It just doesn't make sense. I was talking with some people at lunch today, and this subject came up, because their lives have been influenced in the public school system by this illogical premise.

Matter acting on matter over a given period of time can create anything. And I said, okay, here's the salt shaker right here on the table, a little cap on it that you can screw and unscrew and pour the salt in. So here's the salt shaker here on the table, glass salt shaker, the little silver top.

Now, are you trying to tell me that over a period of time that could just come into existence with threads on the glass and threads on the metal so that you can unscrew and screw this cap on here? You know, it's sort of a mechanical thing. You screw it on and unscrew it. So matter acting upon matter, if enough time went by, why is it that we don't have a lot of salt shakers down on the beach? Because glass is made with sand.

And so why isn't the beach just covered with salt shakers? Because if the earth has been here for several billions of years, and now they're saying 15 billion, and if matter has been acting on matter there on the beach, and of course you have that, the action of the waves. Is matter acting on matter? And that's been going on, the surge of the surf, year after year after year after year. It's amazing that we don't have all kinds of mechanical things running up and down the beach.

You see how illogical it is? Now what is more simple than a little glass salt shaker with a cap that screws on top? I mean, that is so profoundly simple. But you see, with this illogical premise, replacing this idea that we exist as the result of matter reacting to matter over a period of 15 billion years, it has brought us because we are mechanical. Biology is a mechanics.

And so here we exist as a result of matter acting on matter. There is no God, and thus there is no accountability to God. Well, if there be no God, then the law of God, the Ten Commandments are really just man's ideas, and why should I accept them? Everything is open to challenge.

There is no base for morality. And thus, who said it's wrong to lie? And we have all kinds of suppositional cases made in the classrooms where it would be really perhaps better to lie than to tell the truth. And the children are taught sort of the situational ethic kind of a thing, or values clarification.

Is there a time when it would be proper to tell a lie? Better to tell the lie than to tell the truth. And you see, then I am the one to determine at this particular situation, would it be better for me to lie or would it be better for me to tell the truth? And I might think, well, it's better for me to lie. And the fact that there is no God, there is no real moral absolutes within our universe, who's to say I'm wrong? Now, because this idea has prevailed in our society, it has nullified the value of our judicial system because a person is not opposed to getting on the witness stand and to just lying about the incidents because there's no base for morality.

There's no base for truth. And thus, the ultimate result is a total breakdown of your society, an anarchy. And you have the conditions that existed at the time of Noah when every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

And God saw that the imagination and thoughts of men and men's hearts was evil continually. And thus, God judged. And we are approaching that time again.

And as Jesus said, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man. And surely we are approaching that same state and it has been brought upon us by this whole false premise that we have been taught in our public school systems. And a society without any moral foundation is corrupt.

It's going to fall. It cannot stand. And so a false witness, one who will lie on the witness stand, perjure himself while under oath, and he that speaks lies, they'll not escape.

You see, they will stand one day before God. They will be judged. They're not going to escape.

You think that you're getting by with it? You think you're going to escape? No way. One day, you'll stand before God. And that is the truth that is absent in our society today.

Now, going back to wealth makes many friends, verse 6 is similar. Many will entreat the favor of the prince. You know that he has power to grant blessings or rewards, and so many entreat the favor, and every man is a friend to him who giveth gifts.

So you want to get a lot of friends, just give away a lot of stuff. However, you won't be sure that they are true friends. That's the problem.

Now, again, he said that concerning the poor, he is separated from his neighbor. All of the brothers of the poor do hate him. How much more do his friends go far from him? He pursues them with words, and yet they fail him.

So a man who is brought to poverty, who has once been a position of strength. Remember Jesus told us the story of the prodigal son, who took his inheritance, went to a far country, wasted the inheritance, imparting the good life. Everybody was, hey, this guy's buying, you know, and everybody was there, until he ran out of money.

Then he found that there were no real friends. He ended up feeding the pigs and eating the food that was for the pigs. So when you are no longer able to buy the treats, to grant the favors, you find how quickly people will desert you.

Those kind of what they call fair-weather friends. Now, he that getteth wisdom loves his own soul. Back in verse 2, the soul that is without knowledge is not good.

He that gets wisdom loves his own soul. And he that keeps understanding shall find good. And so sort of parallel thoughts.

Getting wisdom, you love your own soul. Keeping understanding will bring you good. But again, the false witness, and jumping back and forth through these different subjects, but again, the false witness shall not be unpunished.

Basically, that's what he said up above. And he that speaketh lies shall perish. Now, up above he said shall not escape.

Same proverb, only this time he said shall perish. He's not going to escape, but in reality, he will perish. Delight is not seemly for a fool.

It isn't a proper thing. It's sort of for the fool, delight just isn't the natural thing. Much less for a servant to have rule over princes.

Historically, the worst tyrants who have ever ruled over others were those who rose out of the common class, the servants, and became rulers. They became the worst tyrants. For a servant to have rule over princes is indeed a tragic affair.

The discretion of a man defers his anger. Plato said to one of his servants, he said, I would beat you, but I'm angry. Deferring anger.

I have found as a parent, and more even as a grandparent, it's never good to punish your children when you're angry. If you're angry, you're better off just say, I'm going to talk with you later. I'll deal with this later.

But don't mete out the punishment in anger because we are always so often overdoing it. We react according to our own anger and emotion. Many times what the child has done frightens us.

We're fearful for their safety. And we are so frightened by what they have done that we grab them and we, in anger, have a tendency to over-punish the child. So the deferring of the anger, it's the discretion of a man to defer his anger.

Put it off. And it is his glory to pass over a transgression. Love covers a multitude of sins.

Don't respond or react in anger to a situation. Defer that action until the anger is subsided. And then many times, once it's subsided, well, what difference does it make? After you've thought the thing through and you realize, hey, nobody was hurt.

So you just sort of pass over the transgression. Good rule for driving the freeways also. We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study through the book of Proverbs in our next lesson, as Pastor Chuck Smith continues to focus on moral virtues.

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 19, 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.

Once again, that's thewordfortoday.org. For those of you wishing 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. Again, that's 1-800-272-9673.

If you prefer to write, our mailing address is The Word for Today, P.O. 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 comments. May the Lord be with you and watch over and bless and give you a wonderful week as He ministers to you by His Spirit.

May the love of Jesus Christ just fill and flood your soul. And may your steps be guided of the Lord. And may your life be pleasing unto Him.

Amen. where Pastor Chuck discusses basic biblical principles to keep a family's love alive. Each member of the family has a different set of needs and responsibilities.

And when you know and apply God's principles, everyone in the family can experience real peace, real joy, and an agape love. To order your copy of The Marriage and Family MP3 by Chuck Smith, call The Word for Today at 800-272-WORD or visit us online at thewordfortoday.org. This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today in Costa Mesa, California.

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