

The Rich and the Poor Part 1

by Chuck Smith

Pastor Chuck Smith explores the themes of wisdom, justice, and God's sovereignty in the lives of the rich and poor as presented in Proverbs 21.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: 1 Samuel 15:22, Proverbs 3:5-6, Proverbs 14:12, Proverbs 16:2, Proverbs 17:9, Proverbs 21:1, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Poor"

Description

The video is a sermon by Pastor Chuck Smith on the book of Proverbs, specifically focusing on Proverbs 21:1. Pastor Chuck explains that the purpose of Proverbs is to impart wisdom and instruction. He emphasizes that God is sovereign and in control, even over the hearts of kings. He encourages listeners to live in a way that honors God, knowing that He sees everything we do. The video also mentions a DVD called 'The Power of Forgiveness' which tells the story of Charles Tex Watson and his search for fulfillment, ultimately leading him to Charles Manson.

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
Proverbs chapter 21, verse 1. And now, with today's message, here's Pastor Chuck. Solomon in the beginning of Proverbs tells us the purpose of the Proverbs are for instruction, for wisdom, to really help plant truth in your heart. Now so much of our education, our early training, was by Proverbs.

If you stop to think of it, your mother or your dad probably quoted many Proverbs to you as you were growing up. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. We all remember that.

They're telling you, and the wisdom in that is that if you have something at hand, it's really better than the hoping for something that you don't have. A stitch in time saves nine. If you delay and put things off, you're going to have a bigger job by the time it comes around.

And so we learn by Proverbs. They're just little bits of wisdom that are put in a nugget form that help in the instruction. And so Solomon's kids, man, he wrote over 3,000 Proverbs, so they probably had new Proverbs every day being tossed at him by their dad.

And so the book of Proverbs is for the purpose of imparting instruction, giving wisdom, putting the wisdom in subtle forms that make it easier to remember. So as we begin chapter 21, he talks about the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord. As the rivers of water, he turneth it, whethersoever he wills.

God is sovereign. God is in control, even over the king's heart. God turns it however he wills.

You remember when Nebuchadnezzar was sort of glorying in the greatness of Babylon. Is this not the great Babylon that I have built? And according to the dream interpreted by Daniel, he did have the greatest kingdom that the world has ever seen. Thou, O Nebuchadnezzar, are the head of gold.

And so this golden empire, it was replaced by the silver, which is inferior, even as silver is inferior to gold, so your kingdom will fall to an inferior kingdom. But yours is the greatest, the head of gold. And because of this great kingdom, he had a lot of pride.

And he was sort of glorying in the greatness of the kingdom, and the Lord gave him a dream in which the Lord warned him that his pride was going to lead to abasement. And so Daniel said, be careful, walk carefully, O Nebuchadnezzar, you know, because, man, you're due for a fall. And he behaved himself for a while, but then he said, well, you know, this great Babylon that I have built, and he went insane.

And until seven seasons passed over, he lived like a wild beast, out with the cattle in the field, the dew of heaven falling on him, his nails growing like claws, until he knew, until he recognized that it is the Lord who reigns. The king's heart is really in the hand of the Lord. And like rivers of water, God turns it wherever he wills.

And so God is in control, God is sovereign, and God allows things to happen that we often do not understand. And sometimes the only comfort that I can get in circumstances is to know that God is on the throne and God is in control. And though this seems like a hard, heavy thing, yet all things are working together for good.

And God is working out his purpose in my heart and in my life. Even through, and oftentimes through, extremely difficult circumstances. Because God knows my temperament and my stubborn nature that it takes difficult things to get me to pay attention.

The second proverb is, every way of a man is right in his own eyes. How true that is. This past week with my grandkids up in the mountains, I would go into their room and there would be junk on the floor.

And I'd say, who put this on the floor? Not a one of them did. And I'd say, well, I guess it isn't here. I'm just seeing things.

And I'd pick it up and put it in the trash can. I thought I saw something on the floor. Isn't that amazing? You know, no one put it there.

To hear a person tell their side of the story, you would say, my, that's terrible. You were really wrong. But then when you hear someone else tell their side, two different stories.

But whoever tells the story, he was right. It was the other one that was wrong. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes.

We can justify anything we do. There was a reason for it. Oh, I know it looks bad, but really, you know.

But God ponders the hearts. The Lord knows the motives. The Bible tells us that there is a day coming when the secrets of the heart shall be revealed.

For everything is naked and open before Him whom we all must stand. And so we judge according to the outward appearances so many times. But God judges the heart.

To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. Now, the purpose of sacrifice was to bring alienated man back into fellowship with God. You see, when God created man, the purpose of creating man was fellowship.

God wanted to fellowship with His creation. And so He created man for that purpose of fellowship. But He wanted it to be a loving, meaningful fellowship, and thus He gave to man power and capacity of choice, self-determination.

So I can love God or I can hate God. I can fellowship with God or I can just forget God. So that when I do love God and fellowship with Him, it is meaningful fellowship because I don't have to.

It's my choice. And thus I choose to have a relationship with God. But man chose to rebel against God, and the fellowship was broken.

But God provided a way to restore broken fellowship, and that way of restoration was through sacrifice. For God had said, the soul that sinneth shall surely die. And so there was that substitutionary death of the animal who took the guilt of the sin and died in the person's place so that fellowship with God could be restored.

And thus sacrifice was one of the most important steps of the restoring of a man's relationship with God who had become alienated by his sin. But God, over a period of time, said that He abhorred their sacrifices. They had become an abomination unto Him because they were just deliberately rebelling against God, saying, well, we'll just offer a sacrifice.

And they would disobey deliberately and thinking, well, you know, we'll just make up for it. We'll give another sacrifice. And God said, no, no, no.

You've got things all kittywampus. It's not the way it is. When Samuel the prophet came to King Saul and said, when Israel came from Egypt to the promised land being led by Moses, the Amalekites made a dastardly attack against Israel, trying to destroy them.

And I promised that we would get even with the Amalekites. We'd wipe them out. Now that the nation is strong and powerful, God wants you, Saul, to take the army and go down and utterly destroy the Amalekites because of the evil of their attacking of Israel in those early years.

And so Saul went down, you remember, and he brought back the king as a hostage, Agag. And he also brought the best of the sheep and the oxen, the sickly ones he just destroyed. They hacked them up good.

But the good ones they brought back. And old Samuel, the prophet, eyes are now blind because of age, came out to meet Saul as he returned with the armies. And Saul said, as the Lord liveth, I've done everything God commanded me to do.

And Samuel answered, as the Lord liveth, if you have done everything God has told you to do, how is it that I hear the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle? Blind, but, man, I can still hear. Oh, he

said, they were so good. Remember, every man's ways are right in his own eyes.

They were so wonderful that I thought I would bring them back and sacrifice them to the Lord. We'd use them for sacrifices. And the old prophet said, to obey is better than to sacrifice.

And to hearken to God is better than the fat of rams. That rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. And in that you have done this, you have done foolishly, and because you have rejected God from ruling over you, God has rejected you from ruling over the people.

Now, to do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice. Better that you are just than to offer sacrifices. Now, the high look, the proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is sin.

Now, the plowing, the word plowing is the Hebrew word ner, and there is another translation of the Hebrew word ner that the lamp of the wicked, even the light of the wicked, is sin. But proud look, or a high look, I guess that's sort of a proud look, a proud heart, the high look comes out of the proud heart. And even the light of the wickedness, everything they do is sin.

The thoughts of the diligent tend only towards plentuousness. Again, there is the constant commending of a person being diligent, and there is that constant condemning of a person being slothful. And so here the thoughts of the diligent tend only to plentuousness.

That is, a person who is diligent in his business gives careful thought to his actions and activities and plans things out. He's going to prosper. But those that are hasty, hasty decisions, or in a hurry to get rich, they're going to end up with want.

You know, it's an amazing thing to me how so many people prey on the poor, and they prey upon them with all kinds of schemes whereby they give hope that that person can get money quick. Now, there are people that are in difficult circumstances. They need money.

They can't really go out in the marketplace. Things are such that they have to be on their own. So there's all kinds of gimmicks of earn money while at home.

And all you have to do is invest about \$5,000, and you can buy this loom and get material, and you can start making rugs. And there's a tremendous demand for handmade rugs, you know. And these poor people that, you know, I've got five kids to watch.

I can't go out and get a job. It costs me as much to get a babysitter as I'm going to make. Oh, I can sit at home, you know.

And so they are preyed upon by these charlatans. And it's tragic that a person would prey upon a person who is in dire circumstances. You're going to get some kind of a scheme to rip people off.

Figure out something to rip off the rich. But the problem is they're too smart. But this hasty, it's going to bring you to want.

It's better to plod along, to plan things out, to be diligent. It'll bring you into prosperity. But in a hurry to get rich, it's going to leave you in poverty.

I'm amazed at how many people take the change of their food stamps with lottery tickets. The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity that is tossed to and fro of those that seek death. Enriching yourself

by lies, by fraud, fraudulent methods, and emptiness, and when they catch up with you, they're going to kill you.

The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them because they refuse to do judgment. So a man will ultimately be destroyed by his own actions. The way of a man is perverse and strange.

But as for the pure, his work is right. So the contrast here of a perverse man with a pure man. Better to, this is, no comment on this one.

Better to dwell in the corner of a housetop than with a brawling woman in a wide house. Now as I said, and I must comment on this one or I'll be in trouble. Solomon, you remember, was notorious for the number of wives that he had.

So with all of the wives that he had, he had every type and variety, no doubt, of woman that ever existed. And among those women were brawlers. And so it's better to just dwell in the little corner of the housetop.

Man, just have you a little shack out there where there's peace than in a broad house, a big house with a brawling woman. The soul of the wicked desireth evil. His neighbor findeth no favor in his eyes.

So down deep inside the wicked, there's the desire for evil. That's the perverseness of the heart. Down in his soul, there's that desire for evil.

Even his neighbor, he's ready to take advantage of, finds no favor in his eyes. When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise. We had one that's similar to this over in the 19th chapter.

And when the wise is instructed, he receives knowledge. The righteous man wisely considers the house of the wicked, but God overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness. Now, whoso stops his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.

Again, how that in so many of the Proverbs, Solomon takes up the cause of the poor. The Lord takes up the cause of the poor. Here's another proverb that is encouraging us to help the poor.

If you stop your ears at the cry of the poor, then when you are in need and are crying, there will be no one to listen to you. A gift in secret pacifieth anger, and a reward in the bosom strong wrath. And so the way to appease, and I think that most husbands have found this out, take some flowers home, you know.

Pacifieth anger. Bring home a gift. Show that you, you know, one of the major problems that wives have is, does he love me? And sometimes by our actions we don't show loving, tender concern, and that's what they need.

They're made of a finer temperament than we are. We are coarse, rough, tough, macho. They're fine and weak and tender.

And they need to feel that they are loved. And sometimes in our coarseness we don't show it, and we hurt them, not meaning to. Then they get angry with us.

Time for a box of candy. A gift in secret will pacify anger, and a reward in the bosom strong wrath. We 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.

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 21, verse 1 when visiting thewordfortoday.org. 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. And 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. Again, that's 1-800-272-9673.

For those of you preferring 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. Now once again, here's Pastor Chuck with today's closing comments. May the Lord speak to us and may our hearts be open that we might walk in His way, that we might seek His will at all times, that we might be conscious of the fact that God knows us and we are living in His presence.

And may we not do things that we would be embarrassed to do with Him watching us. For indeed, the eyes of the Lord are everywhere beholding the good and the evil. Life was easy for Charles Tex Watson.

But it didn't feel complete. Something or someone was missing. So Tex looked to fill his emptiness and his search led him right into the arms of Charles Manson, forever linking him with one of the most gruesome and cold-blooded crimes in history.

The Word for Today presents the DVD The Power of Forgiveness, The Tex Watson Story. Watch and listen to Pastor Chuck as he interviews Susan LaBerge, the daughter of murdered victim Rosemary LaBianca, who was killed by Tex Watson. And when Susan came to Christ, she knew she had to forgive everyone in her life and that included Tex.

See how this dramatic story of God's mercy and forgiveness will challenge you to forgive the unforgivable. For more information on how you can order The Power of Forgiveness DVD, please call The Word for Today at 1-800-272-9673 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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