

The Voice of Darkness

by Steve Gallagher

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking wisdom from God while avoiding the deceptive voice of darkness that leads to sin.

Duration: 37:57

Topics: "Darkness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the themes of wisdom and sin, particularly sexual sin. The first nine chapters of Proverbs are highlighted, emphasizing the value of wisdom as God's perspectives on life. The preacher also discusses the allure and price of sin, cautioning against the influence of media and the company of troublemakers. The sermon encourages listeners to acquire wisdom and understanding, reminding them of the health and benefits it brings to their lives.

Transcript

The following sermon was recorded during a Pure Life Ministries chapel service in Dry Ridge, Kentucky. Please feel free to make and distribute complimentary copies to your friends. Other resources are available by visiting our website at purelifeministries.org or by calling 1-888-PURELIFE.

I want to share some thoughts out of Proverbs 4. In Proverbs, the first nine chapters of Proverbs, there's a basic two-fold theme, and that theme is wisdom and the value, the great value of wisdom. And can I, how about if I define wisdom as God's perspectives on life? Would you be okay with that? Does that sound pretty good? God's perspectives on life or eternal perspectives on life, wisdom. And then the other kind of contrast to that in those first nine chapters is the price of sin, the allurements and the price of sin.

And just, you know, just, I'm just going to blow through this real quick. Chapter one, verse eight, hear my son, hear my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. And he goes on in that way.

Verse 20, wisdom shouts in the street. Chapter two, verse one, my son, if you will receive my words and treasure my commandments within you, et cetera. Chapter three, verse one, my son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments.

I'll skip chapter four. Chapter five, my son, give attention to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding. Chapter six, my son, if you have become, oh wait a minute, that's not right.

Well, I can go to verse 20. My son, observe the commandment of your father and do not forsake the teaching of your mother, bind them continually in your heart, tie them around your neck, et cetera. Chapter seven, verse one, my son, keep my words and treasure my commandments within you.

Chapter eight, does not wisdom call and understanding lift up her voice? Chapter nine, wisdom has built her house. She has hewn out her seven pillars, you know, so it's just through there. This strong message about wisdom, wisdom, but also another message is about sin, and especially sexual sin is really talked about a lot.

But here, and let's just look at chapter four. There's 27 verses in chapter four, and basically 20 of them are talking about wisdom and the benefits of wisdom. And then there's a few verses that talk about darkness, and there's a few verses that talk about, you know, basically the situation, the battle between the two.

You guys remember the cartoons where it would be the little devil on one shoulder and the little angel on the other? I think that's more true than we even realize. You know, there is just a reality to that. There is a voice of darkness, and this voice, let me just go through some of these verses, just kind of, we'll just set the stage, and then I'll share some things, and we'll let the meeting unfold.

Verse five, acquire wisdom, acquire understanding, do not forget. Don't forget. Don't forget.

There's some things we need to forget, but there's other things we can't afford to forget, to let slip out of our consciousness. Don't forget and don't turn away from the words of my mouth. Don't forsake her, meaning wisdom, and she will guard you.

Love her. Love God's thinking. Love God's thinking.

Can I say it, man? Love God's thinking more than your own thinking? Love God's thinking, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is acquire wisdom. Go after God's thinking, and with all your acquiring, get understanding.

Prize her, and she will exalt you. She will honor you if you embrace her. I mean, it's just, you know, these are just spiritual facts.

All right, then in verse 14, it starts taking a little, you know, kind of looking at the negative side. Do not enter the path of the wicked. Don't even enter that path.

Don't proceed in the way of evil men. In the Living Bible, it says, avoid their haunts, you know, where they hang out. Avoid where they hang out.

Avoid where that voice of darkness tends to be. Now, for us, you know, things were simpler in a certain way back in these days, you know. Society wasn't complex like it is now.

We have a very complex, complicated life. We have all kinds of different people groups that live around us. We're thrust together.

We have the media that comes at us from all kinds of different forms, from all kinds of different people. You know, it's just much more complex now than it was back then. But let me just ask you, where, what are some of the ways or places that evil thoughts reside? Huh? Well, yeah, I know.

But I mean, I'm saying more of a, you know, I'm leaving it too vague for you. The media, yeah, that's it. The media, right? The things like television, the internet, you know, whatever.

I mean, all the different forms of media, newspapers, magazines, just radio, all of it. Music, movies, all of it, right? That's, you know, there's some good that can be in some of these places, but there's also evil. And I want to say verse 16, they see now in his simple little world, they is just the evil men, the troublemakers, the guys who are always, you know, in trouble and they're hanging out at down at the 7-Eleven store or whatever, you know, I mean, there's a place where those guys hung out in their city, in Jerusalem in that day.

There were just, there were, you know, rebels tend to attract each other and they kind of, they hang out and people would understand. Don't go down to Jaffa Street, you know, or whatever. I mean, they just understood.

That's where the troublemakers hang out. But it says they cannot sleep unless they do evil and they are robbed of sleep unless they make someone stumble. And I want to change that around and say that the evil that is residing in the internet is there 24 and 7. The evil that is in coming over the airwaves through satellite is there 24-7.

It's there. Are you all just like half asleep? Did they like keep you up till midnight last night or something? Should we, should I just stop and sing some songs and wake you up first? I don't know what's, you know, you guys look pretty lethargic out there. Well, what's he say? He says, avoid it.

Don't pass by it. Don't go around where, you know, those places are. Well, anyway, um, verse 18, but the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn that shines brighter and brighter until the full day.

And then he goes right back to the negative. The way of the wicked is like darkness. They do not know over what they stumble.

Another translation says the way of sinners is dark and they don't see the cause of their fall. You know, there's something about being involved in sin that blinds you. It blinds you to the realities of life.

It just does. It has a blinding effect. And this is the, the problem with sin and dealing with sin issues and so on is that it blinds you, but you think you're seeing it deceives you.

And I'm going to get back to that in a minute here. Um, so he's saying there's a way of the wicked folks. We're in a Proverbs four.

He's saying, you know, that there's this way, the path of the wicked, the way of evil men, the way of the wicked. And he's saying, avoid that place. And then he goes back verse 20, back to come.

My son, give attention to my words, incline your ear to my sayings. Don't let them depart from your sight. In other words, back to where we were saying before, don't forget, don't let these, these spiritual realities slip out of your mind.

Keep them in the midst of your heart. Uh, the living Bible says, keep these thoughts ever in mind, let them penetrate deep within your heart. I like that.

Let them penetrate deep within your heart. And then verse 22, the benefits of it for they, they, what the words of God, the words of wisdom, the words of life for they are life. To those who find them and health to

all their body.

I, I don't remember what it was. I played some Nintendo game or something sometime back whenever, I don't know when it was, but I remember you went around, there was some thing you had to accomplish, you know, and whatever. And you fought different things and stuff.

I mean, you guys probably know far more than I do about this stuff, but I remember that there were little things of life and you would find, you would, you know, go to a certain place. And if you now can, if you wanted me to, you know, quit talking, you know what they usually do, they just turn the volume down. They get tired.

So they just, they, they get back there, you know, and I'm tired of listening. I'm just turn the volume off. That was really messed up.

I just want you to know what was I talking about? Right. Well, I think it's good. I don't care what you think about it.

I think well, anyway, I remember these games where you'd go along and you would, you know, find some little shiny gold thing or something. And it would all of a sudden give you more life. And then you could go fight more battles.

And, and every time you would get hit by whatever, then you would kind of lose some life and you would go find. Does anyone know what I'm talking about? What is it? Zelda, Zelda, right. So, but anyway, and it's kind of that way, you know, in life that we are being diminished spiritually.

And the life is just by virtue of living in this world. That's devil infested. There's a draining effect of it, you know? And so we have to go back to the source where we can get lifed for their life, to those who find them in health, to all their body.

Living Bible says real life and radiant health. I like that. And then here's the, the real crux verse.

Watch over your heart with all diligence for from it flows. This translation says the springs of life. The King James says the issues of life.

What's the NIV? Who's got an NIV? Wellsprings of life. Yeah, that's pretty good. Anything else? Source of life, spring and issues of life.

They couldn't decide which it was, so they just threw them both in there, I guess. But watch over or guard your heart. Well, you know what? The living Bible says above all else, everything I've said, this is the, this is it.

Above all else, guard your affections for they influence everything else in your life. Now, in verse 24 is interesting, and it just came to me. I was sitting here reading this at home this morning, put away from you a deceitful mouth and put devious speech far from you.

Let your eyes look directly ahead and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. And, you know, and I always just took that to mean, don't lie. Make sure you tell the truth.

That's the way I always took it. But it just occurred to me this, this morning, that that's not what he's saying, because the whole context here is what you're listening to. And what I think he's talking about here

is keep the, the liar away from you.

You know, and I mean, what I wrote, my Bible is the lies of the devil. Put away the lies of the devil. Stop up the mouth of that voice of darkness that speaks in your ear a lot more than you may realize.

Shut him up, shut him up. And then he talks about the single eyed mentality. Let your eyes look directly ahead of you.

Let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you. Watch the path of your feet. Don't let your, don't turn to the right nor to the left.

Turn your foot from evil, etc. You know, in other words, stay on course. Okay, now let me just share a couple thoughts and then we're going to worship and stuff.

The thing that really came out of this to me, I just poured water all over myself. I might as well just tell you. And so when you see drool stains, you'll understand that that's what it was.

What came to me was, um, guys, you have been lied to every one of you have been lied to in on a, on numerous levels. Obviously sexual sin has lied to you. Didn't sexual sin promise fulfillment and did not deliver.

Did it, did it deliver? No, it didn't deliver. You know, there was a lie there. In fact, the next chapter talks about, um, the lips of an adulterous drip honey.

I mean, that's exactly what it was. It was the devil in the face that behind that luscious fantasy and those images and all of it behind it was this foul devil lying to you and promising you dangling a carrot in front of you and trying to draw you in with its lies. And you listened to those lies for years, didn't you? And I did, but that's, you know, that's the obvious and that's clear.

And you understand that now. And even though there's an attraction, even though you, you still have a propensity towards wanting to hear that. You understand that.

I think we have paid the price, haven't we? And I don't know about you, but I got to a point where I am just, that's it. I am not listening to this anymore. I'm sick of paying the price, but there's other ways.

This voice of darkness comes in and starts whispering in your ear, you know, that little voice, the voice of darkness. I remember we had a guy here who went through the live-in program and, um, became an intern and, um, he had a struggle. Now, I, all the senior staff of this ministry felt like God called him to this ministry, called him to be a counselor here.

He had been through Bible college and, uh, he had friends, I won't say where, but he had friends at a different place and his friends were in ministry and were kind of living the good life. They had fat salaries, they, they got wives, they got all the things that the world offers. They had homes and cars and stuff.

And they kept saying to him, why are you there on the, you know, in Kentucky? Why are you in that place? Why don't you come out and get a life for yourself? And he kept, you know, talking to them. You ever, did you guys see the, um, what's that third, the return of the King? You see the return? Did you see the extended version? Well, there's one scene as towards the end of the movie, it's when the voice of Sauron, the mouth, yeah, the mouth of Sauron comes out, remember? And he's talking, I love that scene. I wish I could put him up right up here so you'd remember.

But I mean, that is a, such a depiction of the voice of darkness and he just starts spewing out his stuff, you know? And what's Eric Aragorn, right? Eragon. What is it? Aragorn. And how does he handle him? He comes right up and just waxes head off.

I thought that was great. You know, there was no talking. There was no reasoning with this foul thing.

He just comes up and cuts his head right off. He just waxes it off. But you know something, guys? You have shown an unwillingness to do that.

Let me put it, let me give you an example of this. I wrote an article for our magazine some time back called Fascination with Evil. I don't know if I can remember it very well, but I started, it was a website article, that's right.

And I started it with the tease, you know, was I told about this scene, I kind of painted the scene in like two or three sentences of this girl is tied up and there's this beast that's got her tied up and he's taunting her and she's pleading for her life. He's been torturing her and she's pleading for, I'll do anything, she says. Now then, you know, I painted it in two or three sentences and then to read the article you had to click on the link, you know.

That's good writing there. I mean, just, and so people clicked on that link and I got an email from some guy in ministry that I know, he's a friend of mine, he said, you got me, you know. Because I said, as soon as, you know, I paint that whole picture and I said, all right, now be honest, didn't you click on that link because that story that I was painting there, wasn't it fascinating to you? You know, and I hit him right off the bat with that.

And he's, you know, my friend wrote me back later and said, yep, you got me, you know, that's exactly what happened. You start painting some evil picture and there's something in us that is just drawn to it, isn't it? It's our flesh, that's all it is, it's the flesh. Paul said, make no provision for the flesh.

And when I think of that, I think of an army, you know, when I think of the word provision, I think of an army because an army, when it goes to battle, it's not just, you know, the movies always make it look like it's just nothing but fighting and it all happens. But there is a whole logistics side of the army that's behind that fighting squad. Any soldiers in here? A couple of you guys, you know what I'm talking about, right? There's logistics.

They're the ones who have all the food, the gasoline, the oil, you know, all the things that aren't very exciting for movies. But you have to have those things to keep your army going. And so when I think of providing for, that's what comes to me, is you have to provide for.

And that's what we do with the flesh, is we provide for its sustenance, we keep it alive and well by feeding it the kind of garbage like I just described. And, you know, I was telling on myself when I wrote that article, and what I said in the article was where I found that story, I was in a bookstore, Walden Books, I was waiting for her, she was doing something, and I saw this book, this big coffee table-sized book that said something about murderers, something or other, you know, that sounds like real edifying reading, right? And, you know, and so I just, I don't know, I was drawn to it, I picked it up. I mean, the truth is, part of it was that sexual sin is my business to know about it, you know.

So, I mean, there was that excuse I told myself, you know. So I picked this book up and I started looking at it, and that's where I read that foul story at, and I, you know, it just came to me, what am I doing, you

know? And I slammed the book down and people started looking and stuff. But, you know, I kind of walked out of there.

But that's why I wrote that article, because it came to me what just happened to me, that there's something inside me that's drawn to evil, that likes it. I like to hear the voice of darkness. There's something in me that likes those words.

And that's what gets me in trouble. But what's Solomon say? He says, do not enter the path of the wicked. Don't proceed in the way of evil men.

Avoid it. Don't pass by it. Turn away from it and pass on.

Stay completely away from those places that are going to lie to you. Those places that are going to influence you. Now, I've talked about the heart with you guys, but I'll say it again because there's new guys.

Our heart is the seat of our affections. And out of our heart comes our thinking, our thoughts. And those thoughts establish what we end up doing.

You know, when you start thinking on stuff, that's where you are going to end up going. And then when you start doing things, then that becomes habit. And a habit becomes a lifestyle.

And if you don't stop and turn things around, that lifestyle will determine your destiny. Right? Okay. And that's why you guys are here, because you're sick and tired of going that path and you're trying to turn it around.

You want to hear the voice of wisdom and so on. So you came to this place to get away from all the lies and to hear truth. And so you're here and we're trying to just fill you, pack your head full as much light and truth and God's thoughts as we possibly can during your stay here.

You know, but I talked to a guy a couple months ago. He graduated a few months ago and he came for a visit at one of our meetings. And I just said, Hey, how you doing? And well, not so good.

Oh, wow. What's the matter? I said, well, how's your devotional life going? And I felt like just grabbing him and just, what's wrong with you, man? You were here six months. We six months, we got it in you to keep plugged into the wisdom of God.

Why would you throw it away? You don't understand weak, wimpy, no fight. Just I don't want to be self-righteous, but some people just make me sick. I don't mean him.

I'm just saying that kind of an attitude that just weak, sloppy, whatever. I better just stop there. But you know, no fight, you have fight in you, man.

You know, you get sick and tired of the enemy lying to you. Look at what he has done to your lives. I know some stories, not many, but I know enough stories here to know what the devil has done to you because you've listened to his lies.

Well, so stop the stop the voice of the liar, you know, OK, I won't look at any more pornography. Well, that all sounds nice. But the truth is, when you leave out of here in a few months or whenever it is, when you leave out of here, you go back out into that world of lies and that voice of darkness that permeates the

airwaves out there.

Then the temptation, the madness comes upon you. And when the madness comes upon you, it's easier to listen to the voice of darkness than to listen to the voice of light. And you have to fight, man, you have to fight your natural inclinations to let your flesh have its way.

I mean, it becomes a lifestyle to do right and to listen to the right things. Once it becomes a lifestyle, once that habit pattern gets established in your heart, then you eventually becomes easier to do right. It really does.

It's this battle is not unwinnable, guys. It's not unwinnable. The Lord lives within you.

If you're if you're have been converted, God lives within you and he will help you. But if you're going to just keep giving over to the liar. Well, but I like listening to the lies.

I like reading Internet. I like the stuff I read in there. I like television.

You know, I know that there's some bad commercials and and I try to look away, but I like tell it's reasonable, isn't it? Doesn't don't all Christians watch television? OK, have it your way. Have it your way. Go back when you leave here, go back out, get the satellite, tell yourself, well, I'm not going to watch any R-rated stuff.

I won't. I'll be very careful with what I watch and let the enemy just lie to you over a matter of time and just break down all your resistance until you are once again fully back in the way of darkness. And then what are you going to do? You've already been through pure life.

Then what are you going to do? You've thrown it all away. God is for six months built something in you. Hopefully a love for the truth has been built in you while you're here.

And if you throw it away because of sloppiness, because you want to keep providing for your flesh, because you just don't have the fight in you, then what are you going to do? There is no other pure life, man. You know, I'm not saying we're the only answer. I'm just telling you, there is not anything else like this.

As far as I know in the world, there is nothing else like this. So what are you going to do if you throw away what God painstakingly builds inside you while you're here? Where are you going to turn then? Right. So you have to fight for it.

You have a liar and you have the Holy Spirit. Pulling you to the wisdom of God and the thinking of God, the thoughts and the mindset of God. And men, I'm telling you, you know, you're still in this.

You're very, very vulnerable. You're vulnerable. Some of you, of course, are new here and you're not even on the page yet.

But you will be, you know, if you keep if you keep following the Lord and and humbling yourself, God's going to get truth inside you. He will do it. But some of you have you know, you've come a long ways.

God's done a great work inside you already. And by the time you leave here, you're going to be in pretty good shape, but you're still extremely vulnerable. Because for many years you listen to the liar and you know, the temptation is going to be overwhelming out there to turn that voice back on.

Well, Brother Steve, you know, I understand why you guys do what you do, you know, and I, you know, I respect you for it. But I mean, it's you know, it's OK. I can listen to a little.

I can listen to the liar a little. You know, it's not going to hurt to listen to the liar for an hour or two a day. Better think about it, man.

Because your life is on the line. When you leave here, it's no longer my responsibility or Pastor Jeff's. I mean, we can't carry you the rest of your life.

You understand that, right? We're doing the best we can to try to get truth into you, to tell you what's worked for us and many, many others. But when you leave here, these convictions have they have to be lodged within you. God has freedom for you.

But if you're going to throw it away, it's not his fault. It's not his fault. He's trying.

I don't want to say it in the wrong way. He's trying so hard, but he is. The Holy Spirit is fighting for you.

He's fighting for you. And he's just I just see this just keep planting truth inside you. Truth, truth, because he doesn't want you to forget it.

He doesn't want you to lose it. Lord, I thank you for every single man here who has come to the point where they're tired of being lied to in a certain way. If I could use street jargon, they're tired of being punked by the enemy, by this devil that's been harassing them and lying to them and luring them into sin, going around the same mountain time after time after time after time, stripping them and robbing them of everything decent and good.

These men are tired of it, Lord, and I know that you are you're capitalizing on that and you're you're bringing them into something real and you're breathing life into them and and you're preparing them for when they leave this place and they go out and face the foe. You're preparing them for that. You're putting a love for the truth in their hearts and in a desire to meet with you and to hear from you and hear the pure words of God from heaven every day and just just building up their souls and infusing their hearts, that seat of affections, just infusing their hearts with light.

You're doing that, Lord. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Lord. And we just pray, God, that you will just have your way and just continue to build inside each man, Lord, from your vast resources, storehouses of truth and wisdom and knowledge. Oh, God, just give us all a great love for your ways and your thinking and your wisdom.

Hallelujah.

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