

HOW THE WISE MAN DEALS WITH SIN

Marks of True Repentance in Proverbs

Marc Graham, Asst. Pastor, Calvary Bible Church

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF DEALING WITH SIN CORRECTLY.

Prov. 28:13---*He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

[Mercy and forgiveness are only received when sin is dealt with Biblically.]

Prov. 28:1---*The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.*

[When sin is not dealt with Biblically one has a guilty conscience and fears, even when there is no reason to do so.]

Prov. 28:9---*If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable.*

[When sin is not dealt with Biblically, it impacts our prayer life and spiritual walk. Even if we do pray, it will be selfish and vindictive.]

Prov. 28:14---*Blessed is the man who always fears the Lord, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble.*

[When sin is not dealt with Biblically, we move from problem to problem and end up piling sin upon sin.]

Prov. 28:18---*He whose walk is blameless is kept safe, but he whose ways are perverse will suddenly fall.*

[“Perverse” means to have “crooked ways.” A person who does not deal with sin is headed for a fall. It is just a matter of time and place. Their sin will take them down suddenly, without warning.]

Prov. 21:8---*The way of the guilty is devious, but the conduct of the innocent is upright.*

[One who does not deal with sin will begin to develop a deceitful heart and deceptive ways. You cannot trust people who refuse to deal with sin.]

Prov. 21:10---*The wicked man craves evil; his neighbor gets no mercy from him.*

[When sin is not dealt with, the heart becomes more corrupt. Such a person becomes more and more selfish and grows to enjoy sin. Sin not dealt with just leads to more sin.]

Prov. 21:15---*When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers.*

[When sin is not dealt with, one fears justice being done for he knows his sin will be exposed and he will be in trouble.]

Prov. 15:8---*The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases Him.*

[Sin not dealt with disqualifies us from worship.]

Prov. 15:29---*The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayers of the righteous.*

[There is no fellowship with God, no sense of His closeness and presence when sin is not being dealt with.]

Prov. 14:2---*He whose walk is upright fears the Lord, but he whose ways are devious despises Him.*

[When sin is allowed to remain in the heart, eventually one will grow cold and indifferent to the things of God. Ultimately, he may even come to despise God, His Word, His people, His Church.]

We can see from the above that Proverbs warns us in many places of the great danger of refusing to deal with sin Biblically.

II. THE PROVERBS FORMULA FOR DEALING WITH SIN.

Prov. 28:13---*He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

A. We must first recognize the tendency of the flesh to want to conceal, deceive, deny when it comes to our sins.

1. “Conceal”---Hebrew word is *kacah* which originally meant to “fill up hollow places.” In other words, you are filling up hollow place for the purpose of covering or concealing them, so that no one knows they were there.

2. Examples of the tendency to deceive, deny, conceal in Scripture:

a. Adam and Eve---they hid from God (Genesis 3:8-10). (Note that they hid because they were “afraid.” People tend to conceal sin out of fear.

b. David's deadly cover up after his sin with Bathsheeba. (2 Samuel 11---the cover up lasted about a year---note the terrible lengths he was willing to go to conceal his sin. Concealing sin leads to more sin, piling sin upon sin.)

B. Reject the temptation to conceal and realize the great value of a right heart. This is gained through "confessing and renouncing" our sin.

1. "Confesses" in Hebrew is the word *yadah* which meant "to hold out the hand, as in throwing a stone." It was also used to mean "bemoaning" as in the wringing of the hands over something. This gives us a flavor of what true confession is---a heart attitude of sorrow over our sin that drives us to want to throw it out of our lives.

a. Beware of playing I John 1:9 games with God. We might try to play them, but God does not play such games.

b. Note the right heart attitude of dealing with sin---Matt. 5:4.

2. "Renounces" in Hebrew is the word *'azab* which meant "to loosen or relinquish" something.

3. Note that true repentance involves both confession and forsaking sin. If you don't desire change and aren't taking steps to change, you have not truly confessed your sin, Biblically.

III. THE DOCTRINE OF REPENTANCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A. Greek word most commonly used for "repentance" in the New Testament is *metanoia*. This comes from a root word which means "to think differently" about something---to change our minds with a view to changing direction.

B. The classic passage defining repentance---1 Corinthians 7:9-11.

1. The issue of worldly sorrow versus Godly sorrow.

a. Worldly sorrow---"I'm sorry I got caught." "I'm sorry for what my sin is going to cost me." "I'm sorry of have to give this up." "I'm sorry this is causing me such embarrassment." Note the emphasis of worldly sorrow----"I, me, my!"

b. Godly sorrow produces true repentance. It is that brokenness and mourning over sin we spoke about (see David in Psalm 51).

2. The definition of repentance that is produced by Godly sorrow (what true repentance looks like, how to spot it). ---2 Corinthians 7:11.
- a. Earnestness: *spoude* in the Greek text which means “speed, haste”, the idea being a focus in paying serious attention to what needs to be done and getting it accomplished right now.
 - b. Eagerness to clear yourself: *apologia* in the Greek text which means “a plea, an answer, a defense.” There is an eagerness to deal with your sin and put it behind you so that you might be clear of it and your reputation restored.
 - c. Indignation: *aganaktesis* which means “to be greatly afflicted, sorely displeased, moved with indignation.” This is the idea that you hate your sin and anything that led you into it. You want this terrible thing out of your life once and for all.
 - d. Alarm: *phobos* which is the word we get “phobia” from--- “to be frightened.” A repentant heart is frightened at the wickedness of sin and the damage it does. It wants no part of it.
 - e. Longing: *epithesis* from root word which means “to yearn, to dote upon, to crave.” *Epi* is a preposition on the front of the word which intensifies it. What is it that this intense craving is focused on? Righteousness. A right heart. A restored testimony!
 - f. Concern: *zelos* from the root word *zeo* which meant to “be hot.” Have you ever heard of being “on fire” for something? That is what this word is speaking of. A truly repentant person is on fire to change and be conformed to God’s will. He is passionate.
 - e. Readiness to see justice done: The meaning of the phrase is obvious. The truly repentant person asks: “What do I need to do to make this situation right, no matter what it costs me?”

C. It is clear from all of the above that a truly repentant heart is not worried about “covering its tail” (concealing sin).

D. Note what awaits a repentant person---“they will find MERCY!

1. Mercy---the withholding from us of what we deserve.

2. Reflect on the following passage—Psalm 86:15 (abounding in mercy).

E. The mark of a true believer is that the deal with sin Biblically---(1 John 1:9;

1 John 3:7-10).