

# Words of Wisdom

By David Phillips

## Introduction

1. We struggle with many things.
2. God often makes things so simple that anyone can understand.
3. In this lesson we will consider a few words of wisdom that discuss things that are very simply and yet very profound.

## Discussion

### I. **Gen. 4:7: “If you do well, will you not be accepted?”**

- A. Many people do not appreciate correction or instruction.
  1. Self-willed children.
  2. Self-willed Christians.
- B. It is difficult to correct them because of the intensity of their emotions.
  1. Prov. 9:8: “Do not correct a scoffer lest he hate you.”
  2. People who do not like correction do not receive it well.
  3. They often become angry, some even become violent.
  4. At all costs, they try to avoid the thought that what they want isn’t the right thing.
  5. Cain had this problem when his sacrifice was not accepted by God.
- C. God gave Cain great wisdom when placed in this situation.
  1. If we “do well”—do what we are supposed to—then we won’t need the kind of correction Cain received.
  2. If we do it right the first time, rather than doing it our own way, then we won’t need to be told.
  3. Even if we do receive correction, when our goal is to “do well,” then we will be able to gladly receive any correction that is offered, because we know that such correction will help us to do well.

### II. **Prov. 11:3: “The integrity of the upright will guide them.”**

- A. There are many people who do not have integrity.
  1. Integrity is moral stability—consistency in upholding God’s righteousness.
  2. There are many who do not have a sense of commitment; therefore they are unstable in all their ways.
  3. They are often willing to compromise God’s moral standard when it suits them.
- B. Integrity removes the hardship of constant guilt.
  1. Prov. 9:10: Others know whether or not we have integrity by our actions.
  2. If we apply integrity to our lives then it can help us avoid the ridicule, mistrust, and resentment that others would otherwise have toward us.
  3. Titus 2:6-7: Integrity will help us to avoid the condemnation of others—and ultimately the condemnation of God.
- C. Learn to have integrity:

1. When we say we will do something, do it—keep our commitments.
2. Speak only the truth—don't change things when it best suits us—be careful of exaggerating the fact.
3. Fulfill righteousness, even when it is difficult.

**III. Prov 13:7: “*There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing...*”:**

- A. Riches are not measured in the abundance of wealth or possessions.
  1. This is one of the most difficult lessons for men to learn.
  2. All we know is what we can see and feel—like money.
  3. But we must learn that there are things far more valuable than wealth.
  4. Luke 12:15: “*Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.*”
  
- B. Some of the wealthiest people in the world are also the most miserable, while some of the poorest people in the world are also the happiest.
  
- C. If we learn the value of righteousness then we will have greater riches than this world can provide.
  1. The richness of the love of God: 1 John 4:7-11
  2. The richness of true, eternal joy: Matt. 25:21
  3. The richness of eternal life: Matt. 6:19; 1 Tim. 6:17-19

**IV. Prov. 29:4: “*A man who has friends must himself be friendly.*”**

- A. Many people feel alone because others do not like them or don't give them the attention they want.
  
- B. Many times, the reason for this is that people merely treat us the way we treat them.
  1. If we wait for people to come give us attention, they will never come because we have never showed an interest in them.
  2. If we want friends, we must first be friendly toward others.
  3. We must get rid of the security bubble that prevents us from reaching out and associating with other people.
  
- C. This is an essential lesson for Christians to learn.
  1. 2 Pet. 1:7: We are commanded to add to our faith brotherly kindness.
  2. We cannot show brotherly kindness when we are waiting for others to come show us that kindness.
  3. We must learn to take the initiative to be kind to others.
  4. Matt. 7:12: “*Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them.*”
  5. If we want friends, then we must take the initiative to be friendly to others, even when it makes us uncomfortable.

**V. Matt. 9:16: “*No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment...*”**

- A. This was spoken concerning the mixing of old and new laws.
  1. When a new piece of cloth is sewed to an old garment, the new cloth will shrink and cause greater damage.
  2. Jesus was teaching that it was impossible for Him and His disciples to follow the traditions of the elders while seeking the way of the kingdom, for in doing so only destruction would result.

3. Likewise, it is impossible for one to mix the old law with the new, for they are not compatible.
- B. We can apply this same principle on an individual level.
1. Col. 3:9-10: When one is converted he/she puts off the old and puts on the new.
  2. They must put away their former way of life in order to begin a new.
- C. Many have difficulty making this transition.
1. Why is this so difficult for some?
  2. They have a desire for the new (obedience to God), which is mixing with their love for the old (their former practices).
  3. What happens? The garment begins to tear because of the constant struggle between trying to do what is right and longing to do what they have always done.
  4. The mixing of the old and the new tears that person apart.
  5. To avoid this, we must learn to be fully committed to one or the other; we cannot have both.
  6. Until we learn to devote all of our love to either the old or the new, our lives will continue to be torn apart.

**VI. 2 Cor. 9:6: “He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly...”**

- A. Many people try to get away with doing as little as possible.
1. They serve in the church just enough to keep people off their backs.
  2. They apply just enough energy to their marriage to keep the other person from wanting a divorce or to keep them from nagging.
  3. They work just hard enough to keep their employers off their backs.
  4. They never share or only share when it is in their best interest.
  5. They put not effort into their spiritual growth.
- B. God teaches us throughout the Scriptures that we only get out what we put in.
1. We must be willing to make sacrifices if we are to attain riches.
  2. Our success at being a Christian is the direct result of the energy and effort we put into being faithful.
  3. If we want to succeed; if we want to have the hope of heaven, then we must be willing to give all in order to go there.
  4. Remember, Jesus gave all in order to provide a way for us.
  5. Let us, therefore, learn to be imitators of Christ.

**Conclusion**

1. God’s word contains great wisdom.
2. Only when we seek to apply that wisdom to our lives will we actually benefit from it.
3. Let us learn from God’s words of wisdom so that we can become better servants for Him.

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