

# Practical Advice for Today

By Dee Bowman

“The desire of the righteous is only good, but the expectation of the wicked is wrath. There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself. The people will curse him who withholds grain, but blessing will be on the head of him who sells it. He who earnestly seeks good finds favor, but trouble will come to him who seeks evil. He who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like foliage” (Prov. 11:23-28).

Wisdom demands adherence to truth; and truth runs through all areas of life. It takes truth to have a truly happy life, to maintain a sweet spirit, to entertain the highest hope. Wisdom and truth are connected so that what is true may be wisely used.

“The desire of the righteous is only good” is saying that righteous people seek only good. “The expectation of the wicked is wrath” speaks to the destiny of one devoted to evil. Notice that both “desire” and “expectation” are cited. Together, they form hope. The righteous person has the hope of good to come, the wicked may expect only wrath.

Solomon says the person who distributes to those who have needs will be made full himself, while those who withhold from the needy will be cursed by the people on account of his stinginess. Those who put confidence in riches are apt to fall into a snare, for “riches make themselves wings” (Proverbs 23:5). On the other hand, the person who trusts in righteousness will be paid a dividend far above this world’s riches.

Finally, the wise man states who is really wise; wise above the wisest. Says he, “he that winneth souls is wise.” It is a superior thing to win those to the Lord who might not have come otherwise. A wise man will not withhold from them that choicest of all blessings. Think about these things today: wisdom, riches, and souls.

## Trash Lessons

By Kent Heaton

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

During my early morning walks I cannot help but notice the amount of trash that is on the side of the road. My three-mile walk takes me through neighborhoods and along a major road mostly with sidewalks. Dotting the landscape are cups, wrappers, cigarette cartons, cans, bottles, paper in many forms and some items from an alien planet. It does not seem as obvious driving by in an automobile. Walking reveals the trash tucked within the grass or lying in the gutters along the roads. How does this trash wind up alongside the road? There could be a 1% chance some of this is by accident but the sad reality is the trash is left on the side of the road by people. I have witnessed drivers throw their trash out the windows of automobiles in a flippant uncaring act. The Oscar Madison mentality that pervades our society is a lack of respect for life and disrespect for themselves. But there is a deeper problem.

Life is not defined by trash on the side of the road but it becomes a tell. A man will go into the store and buy an Icee. When he finishes he throws the plastic cup out the window. Finishing a quick family lunch from McDonalds the driver gathers all the trash and drops it on the road as they wait for the light to change. Cigarettes are flipped out the window by the thousands along with wrappers of every description. Companies spend millions every year cleaning up the trash we leave behind. The deeper problem is the selfish nature of man. He cares for no one but himself. Life is about his needs and his needs alone. No one can tell him

what to do and how to do it. He is his own master, his own god serving to his end alone. Man worships man.

Jesus told the multitudes in His sermon on the mountain that most people will take the broad and easy way of life. This popular way is about man serving himself and finding no barriers to what he can do and no consequences to what he has done. Life is care-free and easy. Without the restrictions of a higher law, life becomes a fun filled frolic experience of seeing who can go the fastest and have the most pleasure. Casting life out the window there is no responsibility. What they fail to realize is the trash must be picked up one day. There is a day of reckoning. Sadly most people do not believe there is a day coming when an accounting is required.

Most people will spend eternity in Hell because they spent their lives 'throwing trash out the window' ... in other words (not in a literal sense) they lived for the moment. Life is not about the moment but about the eternity. Only few will find joy in death. The narrow way is difficult now but it will bring the blessings of life in death for those who pursue it. Don't throw your life away seeking the things of this world.

### **Five Senses**

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations" (Psalm 100:4-5). In Robins Reader, Frank W. Mann Jr. writes: "An enlightening pastime is to make a list of favorite things that impact the senses. It sharpens our appreciation of these golden moments in time. For example, one person's list of ten favorite sounds are: 'A distant train whistle; a mother talking to her new baby; the scrunch of leaves on a bright autumn day; seagulls crying; a hound baying in the woods at night; the absolute silence of a mountain lake at sunset; a cracking fire on a bitter cold day; a stadium crowd singing the national anthem; the screech of an airplane's tires as they touch down; his wife's voice at morning.'" God gave us our five senses and filled His creation with pleasures for each sense. Our God is good. Let us praise His name and be thankful to Him.

### **A Moments Wisdom**

- We judge ourselves by what we think we are capable of doing; others judge us by what we do.
- There are four things you can do with your hands: 1) put them in our pockets for self-keeping, 2) fold them in apathy, 3) wring them in despair, or 4) lay them on a job that needs doing
- The people who make a difference is not the ones with the credentials, but the ones with the concern.
- Every speaker has a mouth, and arrangement rather neat; sometimes it's filled with wisdom, sometimes it's filled with feet.
- If you fail to prepare, prepare to fail.
- Not a day passes on this earth, but men and women of no note do great deeds, speak great words, and suffer noble sorrows.
- The truly happy man is the one who can enjoy the scenery when he has to take a detour.
- The imagery of the heavens as being two thousand millions light-years in diameter is awesome when compare to the tiny earth, but trivial when compared to the imagery of the "hand that measured the heavens."
- Faith is to pray without doubting, without weariness, without faintness; entertaining no jealousies or suspicions of God, but being confident of God's hearing us, and of His return to us.