

Deliverance for the Righteous

Proverbs 11:1-14

Proverbs 11:1-14 - *“Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is His delight.*

When pride comes, then comes shame, but with the humble is wisdom.

The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.

Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.

The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.

When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, and the hope of the unjust perishes.

The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead.

The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.

When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his peace. A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.

Where there is no counsel, the people fall, but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

Background Notes

1 Kings 4:32 tells us that Solomon wrote some 3,000 proverbs and composed 1005 songs. We have only a fraction of his proverbs - about 500 at most, because Solomon may not have written all the proverbs in Proverbs 22-24.

Remember, the proverbs are more than just popular sayings. They were wisdom sayings. They teach moral principles and provide common sense advice, given in general terms. They are very practical for living life in this chaotic world.

Doctrinal Point

The Proverbs are wise advice for everyday living.

Verse 1: *“Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is His delight.”* An entire Talk about business ethics could be given on this just one verse! Before coins were used, scales and weights were used for buying and selling everyday merchandise. Dishonest merchants had **two different sets of untrue weights** to use for their

unethical advantage, depending on whether they were buying or selling!

This proverb not only applies to business practices today, but it applies to honest dealings in other areas as well. Do we use “just weights” with our children, or with people in our church fellowships? Or do we have favorites? The Lord delights in just weights.

Verse 2: *“When pride comes, then comes shame, but with the humble is wisdom.”* Here we have two package deals - a good one and a bad one. Pride and disgrace go together, and humility and wisdom go together. Which package do you want? You cannot gain honor if you’re proud - in fact, you’ll be disgraced and brought down. And you cannot gain wisdom if you refuse to be humble.

Verse 3: *“The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.”* Here’s a great principle for determining God’s will for your life. Since life is a long string of little and big decisions, you can be sure you’re following God’s will for your life if you always seek to do the right thing, and if you make decisions with no hidden agendas or “what’s in it for me” schemes. If not, you are double-minded, unfaithful, and headed for shipwreck.

Verse 4: *“Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.”* We can certainly preach the gospel from this proverb. You can’t take your possessions with you, and money certainly cannot buy salvation. Only through faith in Christ do we receive righteousness and eternal life.

Verses 5-6: *“The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.”* Do you want to live a stress-free life - a life that’s not filled with obstacles and problems? Then live your life based on **biblical** principles!

Verse 7: *“When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, and the hope of the unjust perishes.”* Can you think of a worse scenario than getting old and facing death, and realizing too late that you invested all your life, strength, and money for your earthly life only? How tragic! Can you think of anything worse?

Verse 8: *“The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead.”*

I love the truth of this proverb. God has built this truth into His moral universe! So often we see the evil someone plans to do to others backfire on himself or herself. Haman, in the Book of Esther, is a well-known example.

Verse 9: *“The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered.”* We know that godless people can do great damage to a person’s reputation with their poisonous tongues. The basic idea of this proverb is: knowing how to steer clear of slanderous people is a means of deliverance.

Verses 10-11: *“When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation. By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.”* What a blessing it is if we are able to live in a town that has good and godly leadership - leaders who recognize and get rid of the bad guys. Watch

out for your town if greedy politicians or criminal elements gain control. That could be extended beyond the city to the nation as well. What a blessing it is to live under godly leadership! And what a blessing it is when bad leaders are thrown out!

Verses 12-13: *“He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his peace. A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.”* Whether it’s a next-door neighbor, or a person we work with, or a local official who’s not perfect, it is usually better to keep quiet than to bad-mouth, belittle, or slander them. This doesn’t mean that we should sweep sin under the rug, or refuse to bring wrongdoing to light, or to do away with justice. No. But it does mean that it’s wise not to gossip, or play up people’s faults - or belittle others, as if we ourselves have no faults! We all need to take this proverb to heart.

Proverbs are wise advice for everyday living.

Practical Applications

1. Surround yourself with godly counselors.

Verse 14: *“Where there is no counsel, the people fall, but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”*

In our comments on verse 3 we mentioned that making right decisions in life is not only important, but it’s a way of following God’s will for your life. Why? Think about it. Life is really a string of decisions - some big decisions and many little decisions. Everything you did today - from choosing what to wear and eat, or the activities you did all day - was done by a series of decisions. Some decisions were small and subconscious and automatic - but some involved important and conscious choices.

A committed believer with sanctified common sense will generally make the right subconscious automatic decisions. You don’t have to go through a long decision-making process to decide whether you should brush your teeth each day. And you don’t have to have a long prayer session to determine whether you should read the Bible each day. We know what the will of God is in these matters.

But there are big decisions in this life that require a serious decision-making process, and at those times a number of biblical principles for God’s guidance become very important.

One of these principles is right here in Proverbs 11:14: *“Where there is no counsel, the people fall, but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”* When facing a major decision about your career, your education, your marriage, a job change, an employment opportunity, a relocation of the family - surround yourself with a number of godly counselors! Consult with **many** counselors - not just one counselor who might have a selfish agenda. And not just counselors who will tell you

what you want to hear, but **godly** counselors who aren't afraid to tell you what you may not want to hear. Godly counselors will want the best for you in the long run. They'll pray for you. They'll want to see God's will fulfilled in your life.

When you have a big decision to make, don't just talk it over with a friend who will tell you what you **want** to hear. Surround yourself with **godly** counselors.

2. Use your words as CDs - not as IEDs.

What's an "IED"? It's short for "Improvised Explosive Device." Enemy forces use IEDs very effectively to injure, maim and kill American troops - either as roadside bombs or hidden explosives. And in this practical application, the term "CDs" refers to Certificates of Deposit (not compact discs). CDs are used for making wise investments.

So what to CDs and IEDs have to do with Proverbs 11? Verse 9: *"The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered."* Here's how this verse reads in other translations and versions:

- The New American Standard: *"With his mouth the godless man destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous will be delivered."*

- The New International Version: *"With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous escape."*

- The Living Bible: *"Evil words destroy. Godly skill rebuilds."*

In other words, your **words can either tear down or build up!** Words are powerful. They can be deadly. They can maim and destroy, like IEDs. The weapon of untrue words has ruined reputations and careers, and destroyed the lives of many people.

On the other hand, words can be like good Certificates of Deposit. They can be a wise and long-term investment in people's lives. Godly words can build them up, increase their potential to serve the Lord, and bring glory to God.

So be careful with your words. Use your words as CDs - not as IEDs!