

PEARLS FROM PROVERBS – Lesson 11

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

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I. INTRODUCTION - The Righteous Man Defined

- A. The word "righteous" appears 195 times in the Old Testament and 43 times in the New Testament.
1. It describes those who are just and lawful in the Old Testament.
 2. In the New Testament, the word "righteous", in all but one instance, refers to the character and actions of a person being just, innocent, holy, and appropriate.
 3. In our present society, proper understanding and application of Biblical terminology is often seriously limited in the vocabularies of most (even some who are Christians).
 4. When compared to the world-at-large, knowledge of Bible terminology is virtually nonexistent
 5. This study regarding "The Righteous Man" in Proverbs will hopefully benefit those who currently are Christians, and could as well benefit those who will one day obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - a. Perhaps the most common reference in our age that uses the word "righteous" is when it is preceded by the prefix "self", (self-righteous)
 - b. In mainstream society, anyone who holds to (or even makes the claim to hold to) any standards of morality is labeled as self-righteous.
- B. Those who are socially and religiously liberal will often watch and wait, hoping to witness a righteous person stumble in order to show that even one who attempts to maintain a moral lifestyle is, in fact, a hypocrite (self-righteous).
1. In our study of the righteous man, we will use the objectivity of the Scriptures to identify a righteous person.
 2. The righteous person possesses numerous virtues, however they certainly do not place him on a pedestal of sinless perfection.
 3. Instead, these virtues place him in the favor of the Lord based upon his consistently making wise choices because of his love and respect for God and His Word.
 4. **Proverbs 12:2** – *"A good man obtains favor from the LORD, But a man of wicked intentions He will condemn."*

II. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

- A. The word "providence" comes from a Latin word meaning to make provision beforehand or foresight regarding what will be needed in the future.
1. When we apply this to God, the idea takes on a vastly larger dimension because God can look ahead and makes provision for His goals and infallibly accomplishes what he set out to do.

2. Because God is the creator, His plans include everything in the universe, from the creation of the world to its destruction at the end of time.
 3. The inclusive definition of "the providence of God" is the sovereign, divine and benevolent control of all things, while maintaining the limitations of the natural laws He put in place at creation.
- B. Underlying any discussion of providence are these fundamental principles,
1. God is sovereign in the universe and as creator and is in complete control of all things. (See I Chronicles 29:11-12; Psalm 24:1; Psalm 115:3, Psalm 135:6)
 - a. No one is able to do anything that will defeat God or prevent His will from being done.
 - b. God may even use the evil done by the wicked to accomplish His will.
 2. The God who alone is God and who made and governs this world has an eternal plan for it.
 - a. **Isaiah 14:24** – *"The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, 'Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand.'"*
 - b. **Isaiah 46:10b** – *"Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it."*
 3. God's will and purpose are realized in and through Jesus Christ.
 - a. **Ephesians 1:9-10** -- *"...having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him."*
 - b. **Ephesians 3:11** – *"...according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,"*
 - c. God's will is not an abstract principle, but the personal, saving will of a heavenly Father
 - d. God is involved directly in our affairs and we have learned through His revealed word that He became one with us through the incarnation of His son for our redemption.
 - e. This was part of an eternal purpose that existed before the world began and was implemented at the time of God's choosing.
 4. Since the mind of man is very limited compared to the mind of God, we will never understand the depths of God.
 - a. Because of this, we must accept on faith, whether we understand or not, and obey His will to the best of our ability.
 - b. We must trust that His plan is for our good as promised.

Jeremiah 29:11 – *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*

5. Inspired writers throughout the Bible reinforce the idea of God's care for the righteous.
 - a. David wrote **Psalm 37:25** – *"I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread."*
 - b. David's son, Solomon wrote:
 - 1) **Proverbs 10:3** – *"The Lord will not allow the righteous soul to famish, but He casts away the desire of the wicked."*
 - 2) **Proverbs 13:25** – *"The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul, but the stomach of the wicked shall be in want."*
 - c. Jesus said that God cares about the needs of our lives and will ensure that we have the necessities: **Matthew 6: 31-33** – ³¹ *"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"* ³² *For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."*
 - d. James confirms God's care and provision in **James 1:17** – *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."*
6. Indeed, God's people have many reasons to have confidence because God has promised that we will never be left alone to fend for ourselves in an evil world.

Hebrews 13:5 – *"Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'"*
- C. As we have seen in previous lessons, it is Solomon's style to contrast opposite things in the same proverb.
 1. As it pertains to providence, we learn that those who are righteous value spiritual things, and those who are wicked will find no eternal gain even if they have acquired material riches on this earth.

Proverbs 10:2 – *"Treasures of wickedness profit nothing, but righteousness delivers from death."*
 2. These excellent qualities of the righteous are seen in their dealings with the church and with those in the world
 - a. However, they are merely a complementary by-product of their primary focus on spiritual labors that dominate their lives and lead to eternal life.
 - b. **1 Timothy 6:17-19** – ¹⁷ *Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."*

3. The opposite is true of the wicked person:
- a. **Proverbs 10:16** – “*The labor of the righteous leads to life, the wages of the wicked to sin.*”
 - b. In Solomon’s old age He had learned that working just for material gain and pleasure will never satisfy the soul.
 - 1) In **Ecclesiastes 2:4-8** – Solomon listed all of his accomplishments:
 - a) He built himself houses.
 - b) He planted himself vineyards.
 - c) He made himself gardens and orchards with all kinds of fruit trees in them,
 - d) He made himself water pools from which to water the growing trees.
 - e) He acquired male and female servants and had servants born in his house.
 - f) He had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before him.
 - g) He gathered for himself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces,
 - h) He acquired male and female singers, who delighted their audience, along with musical instruments of all kinds
 - 2) Then Solomon summed up all these accomplishments with this statement:

Ecclesiastes 2:9-11 – “⁹ *So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. ¹⁰ Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart rejoiced in all my labor; and this was my reward from all my labor. ¹¹ Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; and indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.”*

- D. While we cannot predict the providence of God before it occurs, we may look back when reviewing opportunities and choices and see that the providence of God was apparent in your life.
1. This was true in the life of Joseph
 - a. After many years in Egypt his ten brothers came seeking food to keep their family through the famine .
 - b. Joseph was so grateful to see them and to learn that his father was still alive that he arranged to move the whole family to Goshen, the best land in Egypt.
 - c. Even after years of living there, when their father Jacob died, the brother still feared that Joseph would want to repay them for the evil they did to him. **Genesis 20:15**
 - 1) They sent a messenger to Joseph begging him to forgive his brothers for their sin against him.

- 2) Joseph wept when he heard this because he had already realized that God had used these events for good, so he said to his brothers:
Genesis 50:20 – “*Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God?
²⁰ But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.”*
2. Do you have one or more times in your life you could see that God’s hand had been involved in your life? I do:
- a. During my preschool years, my parents attended church services of a Pentecostal church because my grandfather was the preacher there.
 - b. Later my grandparents moved to another city and my parents never attended any church again.
 - c. I enjoyed spending time with my grandparents as a child in the summer and they had great influence on the fact that I believed that God existed and they encouraged me by providing me with a beautifully bound copy of the Bible.
 - d. As I grew, however, I was never able to accept the extremes of their religious practice, but my interest in the Bible increased.
 - e. I began going to a Baptist church with my best friend and for years my father took me to church and was faithfully there to pick me up afterward.
 - f. When I was sixteen, Jerry and I started dating and very quickly he invited me to attend church services with his family.
 - g. They picked me up every Sunday morning and Sunday night for a year before I learned enough to be certain what I should do to become a Christian.
 - h. I have and will always believe that Jerry became part of my life because of the providence of God.
 - i. If I had never met him, I would likely still be lost.
 - j. He was the perfect person at the perfect time in my life to expose me to the truth of God’s word.
 - k. It is like when Cornelius was trying to worship God in Acts 10, but he didn’t know how to do it properly, so God sent Peter to explain it to him. That is what Jerry did for me.
- E. This providence is not an assurance that we will never suffer in this life, but it gives us hope that our suffering may later bring something good.
1. Many in the world confuse providence with “protection”.
 - a. The events in the life of Job are clear examples that God’s people are still susceptible to hardships and even disasters in this life.
 - b. This is why the teaching of Jesus tells us we must build a strong foundation of faith in order to be able to weather these storms.
 - 1) **Matthew 7:24-27** – “²⁴ “*Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and*

the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶ *"But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."*

- 2) Jesus is that rock (foundation) upon whom the righteous are to established and we are part of His kingdom.

Hebrews 12:28 – *"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."*

- 3) We must then "dig deep: to establish a spiritual foundation which will enable us to weather the passing storms of this life.

F. Is the length of our days subject to the providence of God?

1. Solomon had something to say about this:

Proverbs 10:27 – *"The fear of the LORD prolongs days, but the years of the wicked will be shortened."*

2. This principle of providence is not some type of earthly guarantee.

a. It is this kind of flawed thinking that causes people to be disillusioned and bitter when the righteous person suffers calamities or perhaps dies young.

b. We cannot know the mind of God nor can we know what He sees in the future of anyone.

c. We have seen in the life Joseph that tragedy and hardship may well be part of the providence of a loving God

d. It is a fleshly desire that wants to avoid calamity and to live a long life, and we wish the same for our loved ones and friends.

- 1) David said in **Psalm 116:15** – *"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."*

- 2) However, it is difficult for us to accept that even death might sometimes be considered the providence of God when it involves our Christian loved ones, even though they have been freed from the tribulation of this life and exchanged their mortal body for an eternal spiritual body.

III. THE PRAYERS OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

A. Solomon was quite clear on this subject:

1. **Proverbs 15:8-9** – *"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is His delight."*

2. **Proverbs 15:29** – *"The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous."*

B. It is difficult for many people to accept that God hears only the prayers of the righteous, especially those who have little exposure to the Bible.

1. Peter quoted Psalm 34:15-16 in **1 Peter 3:12** – *“For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”*
 2. Please understand that the phrase *“those who do evil”* is not limited to those who fit the description of the “Wicked (Evil) Man” in last week’s lesson.
 - a. Strictly speaking, *“those who do evil”* includes every person who has not obeyed the gospel according to the New Testament requirements.
 - b. It also includes those who once were Christians but have turned their back on the church and returned to worldly living.
 - c. **2 Thessalonians 1:7-9** – *“...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,”*
- C. With so many religious denominations, all teaching different doctrines, many may consider themselves righteous, but with closer examination of the New Testament, find that they have not yet submitted to God’s true plan for salvation, and therefore, find themselves outside the blessings of prayer. For example:
1. Many denominations teach that in order to be saved one must only “say the sinners prayer” and invite Jesus into your heart. Where exactly is that teaching found in the New or Old Testament? It isn’t!
 2. Some believe that baptizing infants cleanses the “original sin of Adam” (which they have inherited) and saves their soul. Where exactly is that teaching found in the New or Old Testament? It isn’t!
 3. Some believe that if one only has faith in God and in Jesus Christ they have attained salvation. Church attendance is not necessary, living righteously is not necessary, just belief in God. Where exactly is that teaching found in the Bible anywhere? It isn’t
 - a. This is called “salvation by faith only”. Wait, I think there is something in the Bible about this.
 - b. Oh yeah, it is found in the book of James:
 - 1) **James 2:19** – *“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!²⁰ But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?”*
 - 2) **James 2:24** – *“You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.”*
 - 3) This is glaringly clear – no one is saved by “faith only”.
- D. Many will argue that God does hear the prayers of non-Christians by pointing to Cornelius, the Centurion in Acts 10, which I briefly mentioned earlier.

1. The difference in Cornelius and others like him is that he was diligently seeking God.
 2. The writer of Hebrews confirms that God rewards those who "*diligently seek Him*"
 3. **Hebrews 11:6** – "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*"
 - a. We know that "seeking God" is not all that is required for salvation, so what reward is he speaking of?
 - b. The reward for one who diligently seeks God is that God will be found and the truth about salvation will be available.
1 Chronicles 28:9 – "*...for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, **He will be found by you**; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.*"
 - c. Whether the "seeker" accepts only the truth and obeys that truth is his choice – some will follow truth to find salvation and others will not.
- E. Clearly, prayer is a privilege and a right granted to the children of God who have come to Him through faith and obedience to the gospel.
1. **John 1:12-13** – "¹² *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*"
 2. **1 John 3:1** – "*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called **children of God!** Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.*"
 3. The righteous man can have confidence that his prayers are heard and answered according to the will of God.

IV. THE PROMISES OF GOD TO THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

- A. The most important promise we have are related to Jesus and the reward we can expect at the end of time.
1. **Acts 1:9-11** – "⁹ *Now when He (Jesus) had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, ¹¹ who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.*"
 2. Before his death on the cross, Jesus made this promise himself:
John 14:1-3 – "*Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*"

- B. The promises of God are soothing comforts to those who walk in the paths of righteousness and are harsh realities to those who shun the straight and narrow for their own devices
1. **Romans 11:22** – “ *Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.*”
 2. Those who obediently follow God and remain faithfully dedicated and motivated will realize the promise of God through His Son that we have a home prepared for us, “*not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*”.
 3. **2 Corinthians 5:1** – “*For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*”
 4. All of the suffering we have experienced in our lives, no matter how bad will never take us off course if we remember this:
 - a. **Romans 8:18** – “*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*”
 - b. **Revelation 2:10b** – “*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*”

V. THE FRUIT OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

- A. Solomon wrote that the righteous and the wicked sow seeds after their own kind and they receive a harvest in keeping with the seed they sow.
- Proverbs 11:18-19** – “¹⁸ *The wicked man does deceptive work, but he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward. ¹⁹ As righteousness leads to life, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death.*”
- B. The Biblical principle of reaping what one sows is an indisputable teaching.
1. **Galatians 6:7-9** – “⁷ *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*”
 2. While the wicked spend much of their time generating that which is empty and worthless, the righteous man is busy planting and watering the seeds of godliness in the lives of those with whom he comes in contact.
 3. The child of God is expected to bear fruit.
 - a. The fact is all seeds reproduce after their own kind.
 - 1) A tree produces fruit according to the type of tree it is: apple trees produce only apples, peach trees produce only peaches.
 - 2) The same applies to the Christian.
 - b. When a Christian teaches a lost person the truth of God’s word (plants the seed) it may result in fruit, a new Christian.
 - 1) However, not every seed planted will germinate or survive, according to the parable of the “farmer who went out to sow seeds” in **Matthew chapter 13**.

- 2) However, when a Christian sows the seed of "the **truth** of God's word" and fruit is the result, he will not harvest a Catholic or a Jew or a Muslim or a Baptist or a Methodist or a Presbyterian – he can only produce Christians.
- d. Even so, the Christian knows that he could never win one soul by himself.
Paul taught this in **1 Corinthians 3:6-8** – "⁶ *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.* ⁷ *So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.* ⁸ *Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor.*"

VI. THE PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN

- A. The Bible is filled with examples of righteous people who chose the path that leads to "life, righteousness and honor".

Proverbs 21:21 – "*He who follows righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness, and honor.*"

1. The Hebrew writer described these heroes of the faith in Hebrews chapter 11
 - a. These people were heroes because of the path of righteousness they chose for their lives.
 - b. Jesus explained this choice in a way that leaves a visual image in our minds during his sermon on the mount.
 - 1) **Matthew 7:13-14** – "*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.*"
 - 2) No one finds the narrow way accidentally. This path is only for those who have used the "map" correctly to find it; that map is the New Testament
2. For the righteous it is a pleasure and a privilege to follow this path and to lead a life pleasing unto God.
 - a. On the other hand, the majority will not choose the narrow way.
 - b. They are lured down the broad path that leads to destruction because they are seeking worldly things hoping to satisfy the empty space in their souls.
 - c. **Proverbs 16:17** – "*The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; he who keeps his way preserves his soul.*"
 - d. The righteous man shuns the path of least resistance (giving in to temptations of the world) because he knows the path is choked with "thorns and snares" and will only lead to heartache.
Proverbs 22:5 – "*Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards his soul will be far from them.*"
3. In Proverbs 4 Solomon begins encouraging his son to listen to his teaching and then the years of his life would be many. **Vs. 10**

- a. Solomon reminded his son that he had taught him the way of wisdom, lead him in the right paths and now he should *"take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her for she is your life."* **Vs. 11-13**
- b. **Vs. 14-17** warn him to avoid the path of the wicked:

"¹⁴ Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. ¹⁵ Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on. ¹⁶ For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. ¹⁷ For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence."
- c. Solomon knew that when raising children, it cannot be done by *"forbidding inappropriate behavior"* alone. So, he followed these verses by giving the contrast of choosing righteousness.

Vs. 18 – *"¹⁸ But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day."*

B. The path of the wicked leads to destruction. Solomon repeated this teaching over and over to encourage everyone to choose the right path.

1. **Proverbs 11:3** – *"The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them."*
2. **Proverbs 11:5-8** – *"⁵ The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. ⁶ The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful will be caught by their lust. ⁷ When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, and the hope of the unjust perishes. ⁸ The righteous is delivered from trouble, and it comes to the wicked instead."*
3. **Proverbs 11:10** – *"When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation."*
4. **Proverbs 11:19** – *"As righteousness leads to life, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death."*
5. **Proverbs 11:21** – *"Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished; but the posterity of the righteous will be delivered."*
6. **Proverbs 11:27** – *"He who earnestly seeks good finds favor, but trouble will come to him who seeks evil."*

VII. OTHER VIRTUES OF THE RIGHTEOUS

A. Courage

1. One of the great blessings of obedience to the will of God is knowing that God cares for us in this life and will transport us to eternal life in Heaven when this life is over.
2. This knowledge gives us courage or boldness to live fearlessly in this world, even when it brings persecution.

Hebrews 13:5-6 – *"⁵ Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."⁶ So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

3. The evil do not have this confidence or courage.
 - a. While they have rejected God and His offer of salvation, they still know what society considers acceptable behavior.
 - b. They are never quite certain that God does not exist, so they fear death because they fear what is waiting for them on the other side.

B. Wisdom

1. The righteous person exercises sound judgment and is careful to meditate and apply the scriptures before he speaks.
 - a. **Proverbs 2:10-12** – “¹⁰ *When wisdom enters your heart, ¹¹ discretion will preserve you; and understanding will keep you, ¹² to deliver you from the way of evil.*”
 - b. **Psalm 37:30** – “*The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice.*”
 - c. **Psalm 49:3** – “*My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart shall give understanding.*”
 - d. Of course no one is perfect, so we make mistakes, but we have confidence that we are totally forgiven when we repent and learn from our mistakes.
 - e. **Proverbs 15:28** – “*The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.*”
 - f. **1 Peter 3:15** – “¹⁵ *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;*”
2. The righteous person is so thoughtful that he actually spends time considering how he may reach the evil in order to save them from the wickedness of their way.

C. Persistent

1. Today's society, the famous entertainers , the movie and music industries and the politicians with a wicked agenda have influenced society to accept more and more abominable causes in the United States.
2. The time is over for Christians to tolerate the evil standards now imposed upon society and in the government.
 - a. Solomon taught that when justice is perverted, the righteous must get involved:
Proverbs 28:4-5 – “⁴ *Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but such as keep the law contend with them.*⁵ *Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand all.*”
 - b. Remember, there is a modern proverb that still holds true, “*All it takes for evil to abound is for good people to do nothing.*”.
3. Christians have an obligation to persistently speak the truth in love, and yet “boldly”.
 - a. Paul is an excellent example of persistently speaking the truth boldly, even in the face of personal danger.

- b. **Acts 10:29** – “*And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him.*”
- c. **Acts 19:8** – “⁸ *And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.*”
- d. **Romans 15:15** – “*Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God,*”
- e. After encouraging the Ephesians to put on the whole armor of God, Paul even requested that Christians pray for him to continue speaking boldly:
Ephesians 6:18-20 – “¹⁸ *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*”
- f. Christians today must constantly pray that our elders, preachers, teachers and ourselves will have the courage to speak the truth boldly.
- g. Too often we refrain from speaking about the gospel for fear of offending someone. I don’t think Paul was worried about who might be offended.
- h. Paul had a fire inside him for preaching the word of God that caused him face all kinds of life threatening dangers because of his bold preaching.
- i. We don’t have to fear death from standing firm for the truth – so what is holding us back – keeping our churches from growth?
- j. Could it be that we are satisfied with keeping ourselves walking in the light in order to reach the goal when we die, but we have no passion for offering that same benefit to the lost?

VII. CONCLUSION

- A. The study of the righteous person offers us so many insights that encourage us and challenge us in our Christian lives.
- B. To be righteous is to prefer the precepts of God over the concepts of man.
- C. To be righteous is to:
 1. pray fervently
 2. study diligently
 3. live contentedly
 4. reach out consistently and
 5. set a good example so that others will ultimately follow on the path of righteousness also.