

PROVERBS – Lesson 6

Pride vs. Humility

By Beverly McKey

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The study of contrasting attitudes is very interesting, especially when it concerns Bible study.
1. Attitude is defined as “a way of thinking or feeling that affects a person’s behavior”.
 2. Attitudes in general are formed by:
 - a. Experience, whether our own personal experience or observation of the experiences of others.
 - 1) Some experiences are pleasant or rewarding which cause us to form positive attitudes.
 - 2) Other experience have painful or disappointing results which leave us with negative attitudes.
 - b. Social factors, such as how people are expected to behave in a particular society.
 - 1) Unfortunately, how people are expected to behave is different in many societies.
 - 2) For example, attitudes regarding behavior in Muslim ruled countries are vastly different from attitudes in the United States.
 - c. Learning – we learn certain attitudes from the barrage of information we are exposed to every day.
 - 1) We learn many attitudes through the education system we go through from childhood to adulthood.
 - 2) We are bombarded with advertisements every day of our lives that are made specifically to encourage a positive attitude toward their product, service, political view, charitable organization or social issue.
 - 3) We learn attitudes from exposure to others with strong prejudices.
 3. How is it then, that two people may experience the same kind of circumstances and yet immerse with opposite attitudes about life?
 - a. For example: Two children grow up in separate homes where their parents are alcoholics and drug users. The children are abused and neglected by their selfish parents. Life is a nightmare for them both.
 - b. One child grows up bitter, full of hate and rage; he is cruel to others himself and ends up an alcoholic who also abuses his own family, recreating the same nightmare for another generation.
 - c. Yet, the other child is so repulsed by the behavior of his parents that he is determined that he will never be like his parents. He throws all of his energy into being a good student and he works at many small jobs in an effort to get out of the nightmare he is experiencing.

- B. Obviously, what we need is a standard for living that will result in the best possible attitudes for everyone in order to improve societies all over the world . Oh yeah, we already have that – it’s called the Bible.
1. Since the whole world doesn’t follow the teaching of the Bible, isn’t it wonderful that God created us so that no matter what bad attitudes we may have developed, we have the ability to change our attitudes when it is needed.
 - a. One who has a negative attitude about life doesn’t have to stay that way – change is possible.
 - b. One who has been selfish and ignored the needs of others doesn’t have to remain in that state – change is possible.
 - c. One who worries about the future so much that she can’t enjoy life today doesn’t have to be crippled by that fear – change is possible.
 - d. Libraries are full of multitudes of “self-help” books written by men using man’s logic and standards in an attempt to help people improve their lives but they don’t have the answers we need.
 2. The reason the wisest and best answers to all of life’s problems, fears and failures are found in the pages of the inspired word of God is that He created us and He knows what makes us happy and productive.
 3. Listen to the words of encouragement God gave to the Israelites who were captive in Babylon through Jeremiah, the prophet:
 - a. **Deuteronomy 29:11-13** – 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.* ¹² *Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.* ¹³ *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*
 - b. I believe we can still claim this promise from God today. His thoughts for us are always for peace and not evil when we search for Him with all of our hearts.

II. The Book of Proverbs Is A Great Source of Answers For Learning To Develop The Attitudes That Are Approved By God.

- A. Many of Solomon’s proverbs contain the positive and the negative side of an issue as in our study today on Pride and Humility. For example:
1. **Proverbs 11:2** – *“When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom.”*
 2. **Proverbs 16:19** – *“Better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.”*
 3. **Proverbs 18:12** – *“Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, and before honor is humility.”*
 4. **Proverbs 29:23** – *“A man’s pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor.”*

- B. The book of Proverbs is a confirmation that God has given His creation the gift of “free will” (the ability to make choices).
1. Unfortunately, our fleshly natures are prone to making bad choices, as in the example of Eve in the Garden of Eden.
 2. However, God has not left us alone to try to figure out right and wrong on our own with no guidance.
 3. God has always communicated with His people to let them know what is good and acceptable to Him and what is wrong and unacceptable.
 - a. At first, God spoke to His creation personally, as with Adam and Eve. **Genesis 2:8-18, Genesis 28:10-17**
 - b. Then God spoke to the Patriarchs (the fathers of the family line of Abraham) such as Abraham (**Genesis 17**), Isaac (**Genesis 26:23-25**) and Jacob. (**Genesis 28:10-17**)
 - c. When the Israelites were in bondage in Egypt, God raised up an extraordinary prophet, Moses, who led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. **Numbers 12:6-8**
 - d. Prophets were chosen for every generation, but Moses was told by God that a “*prophet like him*” would come, referring to Jesus Christ, who would free people from the bondage of sin.
 - 1) **Deuteronomy 18:17** – “¹⁷ *And the LORD said to me (Moses): ‘What they have spoken is good. ¹⁸ I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. ¹⁹ And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.’*”
 - 2) **Hebrews 1:1-2** – “*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;”*
 - e. The Old Testament gives us the history of the God’s development of the nation of Israel and the very nature of God.
 - 1) This information is necessary to help us understand God as fully as man’s mind is capable.
 - 2) Otherwise, we would just have to guess what God expects from mankind.
 - 3) Many who are uninformed about the Bible already guess what they think God is like and what He expects (if anything).
 - 4) It is dangerous to apply man’s limited methods of understanding to an eternal, all powerful God.
 4. The New Testament is the instruction book for Christians:
 - a. It starts by introducing Jesus, as the son of God.
 - b. It relates the story of God’s love for mankind and His plan of redemption through the sacrifice of His only begotten Son.
 - c. It gives us the history of the establishment of the church.

- d. It gives us the commandments regarding eternal salvation.
 - e. It gives us the commandments that will help us lead a life that will be pleasing to God.
 - f. It gives us the information regarding the reward awaiting God's faithful in heaven.
5. Therefore, since God has provided an abundance of information to us, we are without excuse for our bad attitudes and stubborn disobedience; also those in the world are without excuse for their lost condition.
- C. Let's see what we can learn from Proverbs as well as the New Testament regarding the contrast between pride and humility.
- 2. Part of gaining wisdom is the ability to think ahead of what the result of our choices may bring.
 - 3. Sometimes it is a choice between good and evil, while at other times it may be a choice between good and better.
 - 4. God has never used the standard answer that many parents use: "Because I said so!"
 - 5. God has always clearly defined the benefits to choosing right and the consequences of making the wrong choices, even with Adam and Eve.
 - 6. There is no greater contrasted in the Bible than that between God and Satan:
 - a. God is all powerful while Satan's power and influence are limited.
 - b. God is truth and love while Satan is deceit and flattery.
 - c. God is the light that illuminates the way to the narrow path toward heaven and eternal life, while Satan is the prince of darkness who lures the unsuspecting toward the broad highway of destruction and eternal death in hell.
 - 7. Satan, it seems, is the very inventor of pride and it preceded his fall.
 - a. **1 Timothy 3:6** – Paul lists the qualifications of an elder, warning that he should not be a novice (new Christian) because he might become "*puffed up with pride and fall into the same condemnation as the devil.*"
 - b. Jesus sent seventy of his disciples out on a mission to go ahead to every city where Jesus was about to go with this message: "*the kingdom of God has come near to you.*" **Luke 10:1 & 9**
 - 1) The seventy returned with joy saying, **Luke 10:17-18** – "¹⁷Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.' ¹⁸*And He (Jesus) said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."*
 - c. No doubt reflecting on this, Augustine said, "*It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels.*" (Although, we know that people do not become angels in fact.)

III. The Contrasts Between Pride And Humility

- A. Pride in this study is NOT about the simple pride you feel in an accomplishment or in the fact that you are a Christian blessed by God.

1. This pride is an egotistical feeling that you are not only better than others, but you are also more valuable to society and perhaps even to God.
 2. I looked up synonyms for “pride” and I found a list of forty-one words like “pompous”, “conceited”, and “arrogant”.
 3. Of course, we prefer to use the word “pride” because it is not nearly so negative sounding which causes us to underestimate its destructive power.
- B. Solomon described pride as in an extremely negative light.
1. Pride is describe as evil.
 - a. **Proverbs 8:13** – “*The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.*”
 - b. Too often we have diminished the serious nature of “pride” in our lives, but when we see that it is plainly labeled as evil we must take it seriously. It isn’t simply a character flaw.
 2. A “proud look” is listed among the seven things God hates:
 - a. **Proverbs 6:16-19** – “*These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷ A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸ a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, ¹⁹ a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren*”
 - b. Even though these seven thing are listed, there are other things that God hates.
 - 1) **Deuteronomy 16:22** – “*You shall not set up a sacred pillar, which the Lord your God hates.*”
 - 2) **Malachi 2:16** – “*For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce...*”
 - c. When we consider that pride is listed as one of the things that the Lord hates, it must be considered very seriously.
 3. **Proverbs 21:4** describes pride as “sin”: “*A haughty look, a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked are sin.*”
 - a. Sin separates us from God.
 - b. Those who are unrepentant for this sin or any other sin will forfeit the benefit of the sacrifice made by Jesus Christ on the cross:

Hebrews 10:26-27 – “²⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. ”
 4. **Proverbs 16:5** calls the prideful person an “*abomination to the Lord*”: “*Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; though they join forces, none will go unpunished.*”
 - a. Abomination is defined as a “a disgraceful, detestable or loathsome thing; a foul stench as of decaying flesh”.

- b. The sacrifices of the Israelites were described as a *"sweet aroma before the Lord."* (**Exodus 20:25**)
 - c. The abominable acts of some were said to cause a "foul odor" to rise because of the *"monstrous things"* that they did. **Joel 2:20**
 - d. Pride, then, is an abomination to the Lord, which is a stench in the nostrils of God, as are many other sins.
- C. Let's look at what Solomon had to say about pride:
1. **Proverbs 11:2** – *"When pride comes, then comes shame..."*
 - a. When pride takes hold of a person, its power increases with time.
 - b. When pride is in control even the truth is often sacrificed.
 - c. When the exaggerations and lies are revealed, then what the prideful person is left with is shame.
 2. **Proverbs 13:10** – *"By pride comes nothing but strife..."* and **Proverbs 28:25** – *"He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife..."*
 - a. Pride is often coupled with a "competitive spirit", which can cause conflict with other people who are seen as competition.
 - b. Often hard feelings develop because pride is never satisfied with "second place".
 3. **Proverbs 21:24** – *"A proud and haughty man— "Scoffer" is his name; He acts with arrogant pride."*
 - a. The word scoff means to *"openly express contemptuous disapproval, to regard with derision, to openly mock"*
 - b. One who speaks to or about others in this fashion believes that he is better than those he mocks so easily.
 - c. One whose pride leads him to treat other people in this way is hardly the kind who makes a trustworthy friend.
 4. **Proverbs 14:3** – *"In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride..."*
 - a. I found this proverb a bit puzzling so I looked at a number of commentaries to help me understand it.
 - 1) Consider how the word "rod" is used in other Proverbs:
 - a) **Proverbs 10:13** – "Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding, but a rod is for the back of him who is devoid of understanding."
 - b) **Proverbs 22:15** – "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him."
 - 2) These are examples of a rod being a tool of punishment or discipline.
 - d. With that in mind, the phrase *"In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride"* can be interpreted two ways:
 - 1) Notice that this "rod" is found in the mouth of a fool.
 - a) Foolish people often make careless remarks that hurt other people.

- b) When foolishness is combined with pride their words can be very harmful, so their “rod” is used to punish or hurt others.
 - 2) Eventually, however, the foolish, prideful person will say enough hurtful things that they actually have a “boomerang” effect.
 - a) When one’s reputation is defined by foolish, cruel remarks then he begins to suffer the consequences of not only alienating those he considers inferior to him, but also his friends and family.
 - b) At that time, he is also “beaten with the rod of pride”. He is responsible for his own punishment as if he has beaten himself with a rod.
- 5. Solomon also warns what will happen to the proud.
 - a. **Proverbs 16:18** – *“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”*
 - 1) The consequences of a “proud heart” are not good.
 - 2) Pride never leads one to the success they crave so much.
 - 3) Pride leads one down a path to destruction, and usually it is too late by the time the proud recognize the problem.
 - b. **Proverbs 15:25** – *“The Lord will destroy the house of the proud, but He will establish the boundary of the widow.”*
 - 1) The proud will not be seeking God because they think they are self-sufficient.
 - 2) Since the “proud look” is one of the seven things God hates, in **Proverbs 6:17**, we should expect that God would not tolerate that attitude without eventually dispensing His discipline on the proud person.

D. What does Solomon say about humility?

- 1. Let’s look at the second part of some of the same scriptures Solomon used to describe pride:
 - a. **Proverbs 11:2** – *“When pride comes, then comes shame; **but** with the humble is wisdom.”*
 - b. **Proverbs 13:10** – *“By pride comes nothing but strife, **but** with the well-advised is wisdom.”*
 - c. **Proverbs 14:3** – *“In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, **but** the lips of the wise will preserve them.”*
 - d. **Proverbs 29:23** – *“A man’s pride will bring him low, **but** the humble in spirit will retain honor.”*
 - e. **Proverbs 18:12** – *“Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, **and** before honor is humility.”*
- 2. In these passages, Solomon emphasized that pride and humility are opposites and their effect is also opposite in our lives.

- a. While the proud are seeking honor and fame, they end up receiving shame, strife and rejection.

Proverbs 16:18 – *“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”*

- b. On the other hand, the humble do not seek honor and yet they end up receiving it anyway.

Proverbs 15:33 – *“The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility.”*

IV. Our Attitude About God Determines Whether We Pursue The Path Of Pride or Humility.

A. Solomon understood that one’s relationship with God was the key to humility.

1. **Proverbs 3:5-7** – *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. ⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and depart from evil.”*

2. Jeremiah, the prophet, admitted that mankind is not capable of successfully directing his own path.

Jeremiah 10:23 – *“O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.”*

3. Solomon made a similar charge: **Proverbs 14:12** – *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”*

B. God loved mankind first, enough to send His only begotten Son to die for the sins of the world.

1. **Romans 5:8** – *“God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

2. **John 3:16** – *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

3. **I John 4:10** – *“¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”*

4. Since God loved us first, it is the responsibility of each person to decide how he will respond to God’s love.

C. God’s love for us then obligates us to respond to His love.

1. Some refuse to believe that God even exists. **Psalms 14:1** – *“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”*

2. Some believe in God and profess to be obedient at the same time they are disobeying God’s commandments. For example:

- a. Saul, the first king of Israel, was such a man.

- b. In **I Samuel 15** Saul was instructed to “utterly destroy” the Amalekites and everything they had. Saul was told not to spare anyone or anything. **Vs. 2-3**

- 1) The next morning Samuel went to meet Saul on his way home from the battle.
 - 2) Saul boasted to Samuel saying, *"I have performed the commandment of the Lord."* **Vs. 13**
 - 3) Samuel replied, *"What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Samuel knew that none of these should have survived.* **Vs. 14**
 - 4) Saul said, *"They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and the oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."* **Vs. 15**
 - 5) Samuel reminded Saul that God's commandment was to *"utterly destroy the Amalekites until they were consumed"* so Samuel asked: *"Why then did you not obeyed the voice of the Lord?"*
 - 6) Saul still did not understand and he said, *"But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and brought back Agag, king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal."* **Vs. 21**
- c. The answer to Samuel's question may be found in Saul's own words in verses 15 and 21: *"...to sacrifice to the Lord **your** God."* Why didn't he say *"the Lord **my** God"*?
- d. The fact is, Saul understood the commandment from God perfectly. But while he was in the heat of the battle, he thought he had a better idea than God's.
- 1) He would spare King Agag so he could bring him home as a trophy to demonstrate to the people his great skill as a warrior.
 - 2) Saul let his own ego and the desire for praise from the people overrule his obligation to obey God completely.
- e. Samuel was not impressed with Saul's argument and he said: **Vs 22-23** *"Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."*
- f. We should look at this as a foreshadow of how God still feels about obedience under the New Covenant (the Law of Christ).
- 1) The New Testament is the final revelation of God to all believers (both Jew and Gentile) and God expects the same total obedience now as He did with Saul and the Israelites.
 - 2) Saul paid a stiff penalty for "partial obedience" by being rejected as King of Israel
 - 3) Partial obedience equals disobedience in the eyes of God.

- 4) That is why we should be very careful to understand and obey all of the commandments of the New Testament.
- 5) We do not have the authority to change, amend, update, simplify, enhance, modify, adapt, adjust, transform, remodel, evolve, tweak, doctor, refashion, refine or revise the commandments of God – no matter how great our own ideas are.

D. Submitting to God is a choice we each have to make.

1. **Proverbs 18:11** – *“The rich man’s wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall in his own esteem.”*
 - a. It has always been a temptation for people to trust in wealth, even above God.
 - b. Perhaps this is why Jesus said in **Mark 10:25** – *“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”*
2. **Proverbs 10:27** – *“The fear of the Lord prolongs days, but the years of the wicked will be shortened.”*
 - a. **Proverbs 8:13** also tells us that *“The fear of the Lord is to hate evil”*
 - b. Evil often leads to danger, so it is understandable that the wicked will have shortened life.
 - c. Those who fear the Lord and hate evil will have the Lord as their strength and their protector, so they will have lengthened lives.
 - d. Of course, we must admit that this is a general rule – not a promise that those who fear (respect and honor) the Lord will have long lives, since we all have known faithful Christians who have not enjoyed long life.
3. **Proverbs 22:4** – *“By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life.”*
 - a. In the New Testament we find a similar teaching. **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.”*
 - b. These scriptures do not promise wealth to all Christians as some Televangelists like to preach.
 - c. Christians still have the responsibility of working to earn money to take care of their families.
 - 1) **2 Thessalonians 3:10** – *“For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: if anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.”*
 - 2) **1 Timothy 5:8** – *“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”*

d. However, God has promised to give us what we need.

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.”

4. The conclusion to the subject of choosing to submit oneself to the Lord is this:
 - a. Those who revere themselves leave little room for reverence for the Lord.
 - b. On the other hand, the humble man realizes his need for God and knows he cannot direct his own life in the right way.
 - c. So, either pride or humility will determine our attitude toward the Lord.

- E. The perfect example of humble submission to God is Christ. **Phil. 2:3-8**
 1. Paul wrote by inspiration how Christ left heaven and humbled Himself by coming to earth in fleshly form to die for the sins of everyone.
 2. Paul also calls upon us to have the same mind as Christ; the mind of humility:

“³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”

 - a. In **John 6:38** Jesus made this statement: “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”
 - b. As He faced death, He prayed: **Matthew 26:39** – “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”
 3. James has strong words to warn us against having a reverence for the things of the world instead of reverence for Jesus Christ and the sacrifice He made on our behalf.
 - a. **James 4:4** – “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”
 - b. In view of the submissive sacrifice of Jesus Christ, surely we should commit ourselves to humbly submitting to God and serving the cause of Christ every day of our lives.
 - 1) **James 4:7** – “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

2) **James 4:10** – *“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”*

V. The Beauty Of Christianity Is That It Is Never Too Late For One To Change.

A. **Proverbs 28:13** – *“He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”*

1. In the **Ezekiel 18** the people of God were apparently not happy that God was so merciful (as strange as that sounds).
2. God reminded them that the sons would not bear the guilt of their father, and the wicked who turned from his sins would not die in his sin.

Vs. 19-23

3. The same applied to the righteous who abandoned God and turned to wickedness – his past righteousness would not save him from the punishment that his sins deserved. **Vs. 24**
4. Because of this, the people charged God with being “unfair”. **Vs. 25**

B. There are people today who accuse God of unfairness as well.

1. They say: *“Why would a loving God create a place like Hell where He would send people to be punished for eternity?”*
2. The answer to this is: God did not create Hell for people. He created it for “the devil and his angels”.
 - a. Jesus told how the righteous and the wicked will be judged in **Matthew 25**
 - b. **Vs. 34** – *“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”*
 - c. **Vs. 41** – *“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”*
 - d. Heaven was created for the righteous of mankind. God would be unjust to give that blessing to the disobedient unbelievers as well.
 - e. Mankind chooses his eternal destiny when he chooses whether he will serve God or not.
3. Since God is just, He has made known through His inspired word how anyone can avoid being cast into the *“fire prepared for the devil and his angels”*.

C. God responds to us based upon the needs, attitudes, and actions of each person.

1. In His response to man, He unfailingly rewards each man according to that man’s true heart and life.
 - a. **2 Corinthians 5:10** – *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

- b. However, God is more than fair since we have the opportunity to be forgiven for our wickedness when we repent and put on Christ in baptism. **Galatians 3:27** – *“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”*
- 2. The fact is, every single person must make the choice between “obeying the gospel” and serving God for a lifetime OR choosing to keep company with the Devil and his angels.
 - a. Obeying the gospel and serving God faithfully until death will take you to Heaven for eternity.
 - b. Serving the Devil will take you to Hell, which was prepared for the Devil and his angels – since every person who chooses the world lifestyle will be lured toward that broad path of destruction.