

Conquering Truths

Lesson 10 – Prudence & Pride

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***Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,
Proverbs 12:3 A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the
righteous shall not be moved.***

Where some would thoughtless rush, with skip and dance, See Prudence there with cautious steps advance: Behind, the faithful mirror brings to view The roaring lion, that would her pursue; Before, she knows, by telescopic glass, How many things will shortly come to pass; Betimes, concealed where fragrant roses hang, She sees the serpent with his poisoned fang: Arid thus she learns, what youth should always know, That pleasures oft with fatal snares may grow.

Related verses:

Proverbs 4:15; Proverbs 13:16; Hosea 14:9; Psalm 110:5; Proverbs 1:4; 1 Peter 5:3; Mark 13:37; Ephesians 6:18

Prudence is seen here proceeding with slow and cautious steps. She has in her right hand a telescope, by means of which she is enabled to bring things that are far off nigh to view; thus she sees things that would otherwise be hidden entirely from her sight; while other things are magnified in their

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proportions, so that she can discern their nature more truly, and thus adapt her conduct to the circumstances of the case. In this manner she applies her wisdom to practice. She carries also, in her left hand, a mirror, by which she is enabled to detect objects that are behind her. A lion is discovered descending from the mountains, hungry, and ravening for its prey. Not in her attention are dangers of those nigh at hand; she espies concealed behind a rosebush a serpent; it is of the dangerous kind. By her timely discovery, she saves herself from its poisonous fangs.

This is an emblem of Prudence; for what is prudence but wisdom applied to practice. Wisdom enables us to determine what are the best ends to a situation and what are the best tools to be used in order to attain those ends. But prudence applies all this to practice suiting words and actions to time, place, circumstance, and manner. O how necessary is prudence for the purposes of the present life. Without prudence, the mighty become weakened, the wise become foolish, and the wealthy, inhabitants of the poor-house.

There are duties to be done, pleasures to be enjoyed, dangers to be guarded against, all of which cannot be effected unless prudence guides the helm. Pleasures and dangers are so artfully mingled together, as the serpent among the roses, that the prudent can possibly detect the snare. The youth cannot be rich in experience; still, he can cultivate prudence, which will beget a habitual presence of mind, ever-watchful and awake. Misfortunes are common to all; the prudent, considering that he is not exempt from the common lot of mortals will guard against them; and, as if they were sure to come, he will prepare himself to endure them.

Like the mariner, who, when sailing in windy latitudes, sweeps the horizon with his telescope to see if there are signs of squalls; toward evening he shortens sail, sets his watch, keeping a good look-out.

Now, if prudence is so necessary and profitable when applied to the things of this life, it is much more when applied to the life which is to come, because the soul is of more value than the body, and eternity of more importance than time.

Events not contingent but certain will come upon us, against which, if we are prudent, we shall provide the event solemn, momentous, and deeply interesting. What more solemn than death what more momentous than the judgment to come? What more interesting to an immortal spirit than the final issues of that judgment? Shall I my everlasting days with friends and angels spend? The Bible confirms twice with the same words, meaning it is very important - Proverbs 22:3; Proverbs 27:12 *A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.*

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SPIRITUAL PRIDE.

John 12:43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

See where the Pharisee inflated stands, sounding his praise abroad to distant lands;
Himself his trumpeter, he blows, not faint, That all may hear, and own him for a saint;
His lengthened notes in sonorous accents say, I do - I think - I give - I fast - I pray!

No bankrupt he, for lo! to feed his pride,
See bale on bale, close packed, stand by his side.

The beggar comes, worn down with grief, and old; he is soon discharged, for Pride has little gold.
He distributes his pittance into misery's hat, And loud applause he asks, in full for that.

The gaudy peacock strutting in the rear, Is but a figure of this trumpeter;
he struts, swells, and spreads its plumes abroad: So he, absorbed in self, forgets his God.

Related verses:

Luke 18:11-12; Matthew 6:2; Matthew 6:16; 1 Timothy 3:6; Obadiah 1:3; Revelation 3:17; Daniel 4:30; 1 Corinthians 8:1

This picture represents a man who appears to be on very respectable terms with himself. He is sounding a trumpet before him; he is very anxious that everybody should know when he performs what he conceives to be a good

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deed. A poor man is asking charity; the prideful man never refuses to give a smidgen, provided he has his trumpet with him. Up it goes, and with a long blast, he calls the distant travelers to behold him. At the side of the trumpeter are seen several trunks filled with goods; these are his stock in trade; Behind, is seen the peacock, strutting, swelling, displaying its brilliant train. A proper emblem of this proud trumpeter, his mantra attached to the cross is an emblem of spiritual pride.

The trumpeter, giving a little small change to the beggar, and telling everybody of the fact, denotes one who loves to make a parade of his religious performances. Does he give to benevolent causes? It is that he may receive the praises of men. Does he fast, pray, or worship? It is that he may be seen of men. On the house-top, through the newspapers, and other sources of circulation, he proclaims his good deeds. He conjugates all his verbs in the first person only: "I visited," "I preached," "I prayed," "I gave," etc. Thus the praise of worms becomes necessary to his existence; on this food he grows fat. Deprive him of it, and he will pine away, and die wasting away. He sacrifices to his own take-home; he burns incense to his own strain. Self is the god he adores. The "trunks of goods" denote that he is well-stocked with self-righteousness. In his own opinion, he is "rich and increased in goods, and has need of nothing." The peacock, after all, has just as much religion as he has.

The hypocritical Pharisees of the Saviour's time were men of this cast. They sounded a trumpet before them under pretense of calling the poor together, but in reality it was to say, Look at me. They had "their reward."

In the East the practice varies, it is said that the Dervishes a kind of religious beggars, carry with them a horn, which when receiving alms, they blow in honor of the giver.

All pride is pretty much alike in its nature and effects. It is produced in some people by noble birth, and great natural abilities, in others, by wealth and learning. In others again, by certain ecclesiastical endowments, such as an office in the church, the gift of praying, or of preaching, etc. These things are all alike good in themselves, but when hearts of the possessors, are unsanctified, the gifts are abused, and the giver elevated.

He who possesses true religion will be humble, Humility is the only proper antidote for pride. When humility enters, pride departs, as flies the darkness from the sun. To slay pride man must learn humility from our blessed Saviour who took upon himself the form of a servant. He made himself of no reputation; he humbled himself unto death, yea, even the death of the cross.(Philippians 3:8) what wonderful humility, what boundless grace.

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Pride renders its possessor truly miserable in this life. The Father of spirits alone can fill an immortal spirit. The man of pride rejects the blessed God, and depends for happiness on the applause of man. This is uncertain, unsatisfying, can be seen in the life of Haman, (Esther 3) who, notwithstanding *“the glory of his riches,”* (Esther 5:11) *“the multitude of his children,”* and his princely preferment, was truly wretched. All this availed him nothing," so long as his voracious pride went without its accustomed fee-so long as one man refused to bring his tribute of homage. But pride will render its possessor miserable to all eternity. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?* John 5:44

Notes

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Name _____

1. What is it that drives a man to be always looking for self recognition?
2. How can you compare the mariner to your walk with the Lord?
3. What was one of the biggest problems with the Pharisee's in Jesus' day?
4. Explain John 5:44.
5. Explain Haman's life.
6. Why is it so important for us to live a prudent and humble life?
7. Explain Spiritual Pride.

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8. Give us an example of how an individual or church would be displaying spiritual pride in the 21st Century?
9. Define prudence.
10. What does the bible teach us about a fool?
11. Explain the differences between a fool and a prudent man?
12. Is being rich a sin?

True/false

- The prudent does not go into debt.
- The prudent consults the Bible and others older in the faith, before making any major decisions in their life.
- The proud person lets his friends know that He/she supports missionaries.
- The proud only gives when he/she has abundance.

Scripture memorization, write out these verses on the back on this page:
Luke 18:11-12; Obadiah 1:3; Proverbs 13:15-16
(Must be in KJV)

Any questions?