

Content

The Proverbs are all about human flourishing or shalom in the kingdom of God. They are not a set of ethical principles that say if you do such and such this will happen to you. They are not to be read in a formulaic fashion as if to say if I live right then God will give me long life, a life of comfort and ease and success. No, they are about the biblical worldview, about a life of faith and trust in the covenant God, the One who is sovereign and who is writing our life story. Which is why our chief battle comes right at the center of the passage we are looking at today, v.5 which says to trust in the Lord with all our heart and to lean not on our own understanding. Our lives can be quite complicated as God gives and God takes away as He sees fit. And faith and trust is not the absence of questioning or doubting, but it is living with all our doubts and fears and questions about God and still lamenting and pursuing Him. How do we fight our chief battle? By remembering two things. First, God's covenant design. And God's covenant design is shalom. Shalom is wholeness in every area of life. It is both physical and spiritual. It involves body and soul. And second, God's covenant demand, which is whole hearted trust.

Gospel Connections

Verse 7 of the text we are exploring says "Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil." The first phrase warns us against a spirit of self-assurance. This is not a spirit we cultivate on our own. But it is the spirit of Jesus. When Jesus was going through some of the most agonizing anticipation of His suffering, He prayed to His Father in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will (Mark 14:36). What a spirit of submission, of surrender and all for us. This is part of Jesus' active righteousness for us. And in Psalm 130 we read, "If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared." The only way we are going to fear the Lord and turn away from evil is to have our hearts consumed with the gospel.

Application and Discussion Questions

1. What did you learn from this sermon? Specifically
 - a. What insights did you learn?
 - b. What questions do you have? Are there any areas you don't understand?
 - c. What areas of your life (be specific) do you sense God wants to

change as a result of this passage of Scripture?

2. Discuss this quote from the commentary by Ray Ortlund. *When was the last time you took a risk to obey Christ? Or really sacrificed to obey Christ? When was the last time you diminished your future - socially, financially, professionally - for His sake? When was the last time your life looked obviously different from the life of someone who does not trust Jesus at all? If you never surprise an unbelieving friend by your sacrifices for Christ, it is probably because what you are living for is the same earthly payoff he is living for."*

3. Read the account of Jesus' travail in the Garden of Gethsemane in Mark 14:34-36. How does Jesus demonstrate wholehearted trust in His Father? What does this say that He did this for you? How does this empower you to trust the Lord with all your heart?