

Message #31**Proverbs 10:23-32**

As we come to this text of Proverbs, Solomon is contrasting righteousness and wickedness. The choice of lifestyle comes down to each individual. You choose to pursue righteousness or wickedness, and that choice affects everything about you.

CHOOSING TO LIVE A WISE LIFE OR CHOOSING NOT TO LIVE A WISE LIFE WILL MAKE A MAJOR DIFFERENCE IN ONE'S TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL EXISTENCE.

There are nine major differences in this passage:

DIFFERENCE #1 – There is a difference in moral mentality. **10:23**

The word “wickedness” or “mischief” is one that refers to wicked immorality. It was used to describe such sexual sins as rape, incest and fornication (Lev. 18:17; Judg. 20:6). When Solomon says it is “like sport,” he is saying that immorality is like a joyous game to a fool. The wise man, on the other hand, is pursuing a disciplined life of righteousness.

DIFFERENCE #2 – There is a difference in future hope. **10:24**

It is very interesting to observe that the inner anticipations of both the wise person and the foolish person will come true. The wicked person lives with a constant nagging fear—a terror that someday he will face God. The wise person also lives with a constant future hope; someday God will reward the faithfulness and give His blessings.

DIFFERENCE #3 – There is a difference in permanence. **10:25**

For a short time, a brief period of time, the godless makes a lot of noise, but in a very quick moment God will cause him to cease. The wise person, on the other hand, will stand forever.

Keil and Delitzsch make a significant point when they say that both the righteous and the unrighteous may die under the same circumstances, so permanence in the sense of escape from a trouble-free life is not the crucial point; however, when a righteous person dies, it is great gain, and when an unrighteous person dies, it is a judicial “thrusting of them away” (Vol. 6, p. 225).

DIFFERENCE #4 – There is a difference in work ethics. **10:26**

A lazy person is a pain in the neck to his employer—like vinegar to the teeth, which means he is very bitter and harmful to the company. A lazy person is like “smoke to the eyes,” which means he irritates his employer in everything and way. No matter what job he is given, he cannot be counted on for anything.

DIFFERENCE #5 – There is a difference in life prolongation. **10:27**

The one who “fears the LORD” can expect to live a long life. The one who doesn’t can expect his life will be short-lived.

DIFFERENCE #6 – There is a difference in happiness. **10:28**

The wise man is on the road to joy and gladness. The wicked man is on the road to sorrow. True emotional stability comes from being in right harmony with God.

DIFFERENCE #7 – There is a difference in safety. **10:29**

God becomes the fortress for one walking after Him. The person who does not walk in God’s ways, is one who walks in a direction of ruin.

DIFFERENCE #8 – There is a difference in security. **10:30**

Dr. Alden says, “God will not tolerate evildoers forever; eventually He will uproot them and cast them out of the land of the living” (Alden, p. 90).

DIFFERENCE #9 – There is a difference in speech. **10:31-32**

In **verse 31** the speech of the one trying to line up his life with the Word of God will bring forth wisdom. The speech of a wicked person will be stopped. One cannot help but get the impression that speech is a wonderful gift of God, and God intends to give stern judgment and close scrutiny as to how we utilized that gift. This is not only an O.T. theme, but N.T. too (Luke 6:43-45; James 3).

Verse 32 again stresses the important distinction between a wise person and a foolish one in their knowledge of what to communicate.

An unbeliever will always be distorted in his counsel. It doesn’t matter if the subject is psychology or theology; there is a major difference in counsel between one wise and one foolish.

George Lawson, a Hebrew and Greek scholar of the late 1800’s, observed that wise people “speak not thoughtlessly, but intelligently. Their lips are not devoted to flattery, nor do they slavishly comply with the sentiments and humors of men. But they know when it is fit to speak, and what is fit to be spoken” (Lawson, p. 190).