

Message #13

Proverbs 3:27-35

GOD WILL HONOR AND REWARD THOSE WHO HELP AND HE WILL HUMBLE AND PUNISH THOSE WHO HURT PEOPLE.

We may notice that there are five negative exhortations, each beginning with the prohibitive conjunction “not” (3:27-31). This particular conjunction was used when a writer wished or desired that something would not happen.

EXHORTATION #1 – Do not refrain from doing good for others. 3:27

The verb “withhold” is one that means to keep back or restrain. The word “good” includes all types of good things, including actions, attitudes, money, help, etc.

The problem of the verse surrounds the pronoun “those” or “them”—to whom does it refer? The actual word in the original Hebrew text is one that refers to owners, possessors, specifically people who have dominion over other people.

What Solomon seems to be saying is do not hold back doing good things for others who deserve it.

EXHORTATION #2 – Do not procrastinate in helping others. 3:28

This exhortation is closely connected to the previous one in **verse 27**; the exhortation is to help those who deserve to be helped and in **verse 28** we are to help those who ask for help.

Dr. Robert Alden has a favorite saying that is very appropriate for this verse: “If not now, when? If not here, where? If not me, who?”

EXHORTATION #3 – Do not devise harm or evil against others. 3:29

The word “devise” is one that means to cut, plow or inscribe. It was used of an engraver or farmer, or mason or carpenter. The engraver would inscribe some writing into metal. The farmer would cut a mark into the soil. The mason or carpenter would carve his inscription into his work.

The word “harm” or “evil” comes from an interesting Arabic root word that means to feed or tend a flock. It was used to speak of a shepherd whose job it was to see that the flock was well-nourished. What Solomon is saying to his son is don’t carve into your neighbor anything that is destructive, but that which is nourishing for the relationship.

EXHORTATION #4 – Do not instigate contention with others. 3:30

The word “contend” implies that which is raging, an uncontrolled verbal rambling and assault.

The second part of this verse indicates this verbal assault was certainly not deserved.

EXHORTATION #5 – Do not envy or follow those who harm others. **3:31-35**

Now Solomon gives eight reasons for helping and not hurting people:

(Reason #1) - The person who harms others is an abomination to Jehovah. **3:32a**

(Reason #2) - The person who helps others will have intimate fellowship with Jehovah. **3:32b**

(Reason #3) - The person who harms others will be cursed by Jehovah. **3:33a**

The word “curse” is a rare Hebrew word which speaks of a cursing which leads to bitter consequences.

(Reason #4) - The person who helps others will be blessed by Jehovah. **3:33b**

(Reason #5) - The person who mocks others will be mocked by Jehovah. **3:34a**

(Reason #6) - The person who is afflicted will be avored by Jehovah. **3:34b**

(Reason #7) - The person who is wise will inherit honor from Jehovah. **3:35a**

(Reason #8) - The person who is foolish will earn dishonor from Jehovah. **3:35b**

God calls every believer to be a people person and the way we react and relate to people determines how wise or foolish we really are.