

# Ensuring Success: Wisdom's Way of Doing Business

## Getting focused

God's way is the way of righteousness. The psalmist David defines righteousness in Psalms 119:172: "all your commandments are righteousness." The righteous are mentioned twenty times in our text. Simply stated, the righteous are those who listen and are obedient to God's word. The result of obtaining wisdom is righteous living. Righteousness is not merely possessing accurate information but the application of precepts and principles that produce a godly life. As we investigate those things relative to the righteous, let us consider a practical manner in which we may employ them in our lives.

The forthcoming lessons contain an incredible amount of information. We will not be able to address each precept but only highlight various thoughts within the text. Make notes of particular passages you find helpful and informative, and we will discuss them during our study period.

## Dedicated commitment with an everlasting foundation

*Read Proverbs 10*

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). The first step in our pursuit of happiness must be the desire to do what is right. The spiritual blessings received from God begin with our diligent attitude.

Terms such as "the hand of the diligent" (v. 4), "the labor" (v. 16), and "the desire" (v. 24) are associated with those who receive strength from the Lord. The promise that the Lord will not allow the righteous soul to famish is founded upon an industrious spirit (v. 3). This quality is critical in our walk with God. The apostle Paul encourages us to not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart (Galatians 6:9).

## 7 Pillars of Wisdom

1. Ethics
2. Humility
3. Instruction
4. Discipline
5. Knowledge
6. Integrity
7. Honesty

“There is one who **scatters**, and yet **increases all the more**, and there is one who **withholds** what is justly due, and yet it results only in **want**.”

- Proverbs 11:24

A clear contrast between two roads in life is drawn in chapter ten: one road is identified as the way of righteousness, the other is the way of the wicked. Below we have listed the distinction. Which road are you traveling?

	<b>The Way of Righteousness</b>	<b>The Way of the Wicked</b>
<b>Verse 3</b>	Provision	Starvation
<b>Verse 16</b>	Life	(Death) Sin
<b>Verse 21</b>	Abundance	Emptiness
<b>Verse 24</b>	Confidence	Fear
<b>Verse 25</b>	Eternal	Temporal
<b>Verse 28</b>	Gladness	Bleakness
<b>Verse 30</b>	Stability	Destitute
<b>Verse 32</b>	Knowledge	Ignorant

**Qualities that ensure success: grace, mercy, and generosity**

*Read Proverbs 11*

The way we interact with others has much to do with our future happiness and success. God promises prosperity. However, this prosperity is not accidental but calculated and premeditated. He who sows righteousness has a sure reward (v. 18b).

Integrity is defined as a steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code (American Heritage Dictionary). This quality enables us to remain focused on our purpose and future. Because of this, our decisions are based upon truth, and we are trusted by those with whom we come in contact.

These characteristics begin with humility (v. 2). Humility is that quality that allows God to guide you. This results in fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

True success is measured in honesty and uprightness. Though dishonesty can bring monetary gain, it leads to poverty (v. 24). But those who are concerned about the welfare of others become rich. Success is not measured by the size of your bank account or the number of your possessions.

Success is assured for:

- A gracious woman (v. 16)
- A merciful man (v. 17)
- The generous soul (v. 25)

There are many things that we may endeavor to gain in this life, but the fruit of righteousness is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise (v. 30).

### **Diligence is man's precious possession**

*Read Proverbs 12; note verse 27b*

As we stress the right way to engage in business, note the continued contrast between being industrious and being lazy. Righteousness, wisdom, and prosperity are not a matter of luck, but exercise of effort, will, and ability.

The key to enjoying the fruit of our labor is enjoying work. "He who tills the land is satisfied with bread" (v. 11). Joy and happiness are realized when we learn contentment (Ecclesiastes 9:9, 10). "Godliness with contentment is great gain...and having food and clothing, with these we shall be content" (1 Timothy 6:6-8).

Four important points need to be emphasized and adopted from this chapter:

1. Love instruction (v. 1)
2. Do not follow frivolity (v. 11)
3. Be satisfied with good (v. 14)
4. Choose your friends carefully (v. 26)

The real distinction between foolishness and wisdom is found in our attitude toward service. The hand of the diligent will rule, but the lazy man will be put to forced labor (v. 24). Diligence and laziness are both founded upon attitudes which translate into activity.

The despicable state of the lazy leads to discontent, while those who have a mind to work find contentment, joy, and blessing.

### **Identifying and obtaining true wealth**

*Read Proverbs 13*

A key maxim in unlocking the treasure of true wealth is found in the comprehension of two verses. "The soul of the lazy man desires and has nothing, but the soul of

### **Memorize and meditate**

"Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad."

- Proverbs 12:25

the diligent shall be made rich" (v. 4). "There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; and one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches" (v. 7).

Our pursuit of prosperity must be accompanied by instruction in righteousness. If all we obtain through our endeavors in life is an abundance of possessions, we have nothing. If we are destitute of material possessions but have fellowship with God, we are rich.

The apostle Paul expressed his ability to find happiness regardless of his financial circumstances (Philippians 4:12, 13). In Christ, even in poverty we are rich (Revelation 2:9-10). Examine in contrast Revelation 3:17. What determines wealth?

Prosperity, happiness, and contentment are states of mind that are produced by a heart that "hungers and thirsts after righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). In contrast, "those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition...and pierce themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6:9, 10).

The vault in which true wealth is secure is the heart of faith. Valuables kept in any other place are an easy target for the thief (John 10:10).

## Questions to consider

1. Examine and discuss the following passages concerning the importance of developing the ability and proper manner in which we communicate with others.

a. Proverbs 10:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Proverbs 11:9, 11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Proverbs 12:13, 17-22 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why is diligence your precious possession (12:27)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is the result of diligently seeking righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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