

What Do You Really Need?
Proverbs 11:1-13
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CONCLUSION

Much of maturity is just learning what matters. Young people are trained to sacrifice all their peace and joy, and even their future, to chase things that don't matter: physical thrills, "the right" clothes, "the popular" friends. But then we grow up and... do the same thing. We give ourselves chasing after whatever addiction excites our ever more callous soul, the way-too-expensive car that will impress everyone, and the lucrative job that will give us a place in the world.

We give ourselves to the World, living and dying for vanity. And all we get in is a bunch of old stuff we don't need, a bunch of "friends" who aren't really friends, and a bunch of wealth that gets less valuable every year.

That is why John warned us "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (1Jo 2:16-17).

The Doctrine of Life in Proverbs teaches us what truly matters:

Humbly learn to value what God values, cling to what brings you closer to Him, and learn to speak carefully.

Proverbs 11:1-2 What You Need To Value

Vs 1 "false balance" is a scale used in business that short-changes people; the scale reads 10 pounds, so you pay for 10 pounds, but it's really only 9 pounds.

The Bible repeatedly condemns dishonesty in business in light of God's character. In the end, you may gain a little money but also earn the wrath of God.

Le 19:36 "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt."

Don't sacrifice what is eternal to gain what is temporary! Value what God values!

Vs 2 On the path of life, pride is a signpost for shame. And humility is a signpost for wisdom.

Pride – this is one of a few Hebrew words translated as "pride" in Proverbs. This word emphasizes that a person is going their own way and doing their own thing. For example, it is used of disobedient people "who will not harken to the voice of the priest (Deut 17:12)." And the word is used for false prophets who have "spoken it presumptuously (Deut 18:22)" rather than say what God told them to say.

This kind of pride is all about going your own way and doing your own thing defying wisdom. That is why Prov 13:10 says "Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom."

Contention comes because the proud will not listen to people who know better or have authority over them, but the wise take advice.

lowly – this term's only other appearance is in Micah 6:8 with the idea of walking humbly. "He hath

shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Anyone who is too proud to learn this will be put to shame, and anyone humble enough to be taught will be honored. This is why the next verse teaches...

Proverbs 11:3-9 What You Need To Hold On To

Six times in these six verses the basic message is repeated: people with integrity will be preserved. Integrity delivers, directs, and guides. But the twisted destroy themselves.

Vs 5 and 6 But look of the pattern of self-destruction caused by wickedness/foolishness. The wicked fall by "his own wickedness," the transgressor will be "taken by their own" evil,

Vs 8 Righteousness delivers from trouble, but that troubled is saved up for the wicked.

Vs 4 This point is critical because people think they can buy their way out of a bad decision. At the end of all things, righteousness, not money, delivers you. In Luke 12:13-21 Jesus tells of a man who trusted his wealth to preserve him, and how God Himself said "YOU FOOL!" as the man died.

Cling to God by holding on to your integrity; no one but God will save you!

Proverbs 11:10-13 What You Need to Say

Vs 10 "when the wicked perish, there is shouting." This is shouting for joy, as in a celebration. Why are people so excited when the evil die?

Vs 11 "By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked." The upright lift up their community but the evil overthrow their community, and notice how they do it!

Know that your choices and words impact those around you. If you don't want people to celebrate your death, don't be wicked!

These verses go into detail showing how to use our words wisely; sometimes the best thing to say is nothing!

Vs 11-13 The righteous bless or hold their peace. The wicked destroy with their words. The fool despises their neighbor. And the talebearer tells secrets.

Certainly the good must do more than just bless with their words, but notice who does most of the talking in these three verses. The good speak only once, and only to bless; twice the good are silent. The evil speak two or three times!

Bless with your mouth, and be careful to speak!

Humbly learn to value what God values, cling to what brings you closer to Him, and learn to speak carefully.