THE APPROVAL OF MEN

Part 2

**DATE: 8/31/16 pm**

**TEXT: Proverbs**

**INTRODUCTION**

As we have been studying thru the Book of Proverbs by its different Topics …

Our last Topic was *Finding the Approval of God*

And what the Book of Proverbs said about that subject

Last time we started a New Thought

And that is; what Proverbs has to say about the Approval of Men

While it is best to Find the Approval of God

I also think that the Bible teaches that it isn’t a bad idea to have a good reputation among men

One of the driving forces in many people’s lives, is the great need for Approval

Children naturally long for the Approval of their parents

A husband or wife wants the Approval of their spouse

Many young adults crave the Approval of their peers

Pastors seek the Approval of their Churches

Church Members seek the Approval of their Pastor

A person’s appetite for Acceptance is a very strong one

According to the Bible, if we first seek the Approval of God on our lives

… Then the Approval of Men will follow

Eventually, every person must make a decision who’s Approval they will seek

**Joshua 24:15 –*“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD”***

If we will seek God’s Approval first, then …

All these things (Man’s Approval) will be added on

If so, then the book of Proverbs offers us some practical, important insights about the Approval of God & Men

So, let’s continue to look into the Book of Proverbs and what it has to say about the Approval of Man

I don’t know about you, but I what to be sure I have the Approval of God on my life

And I think we will see finding the Approval of Man is a part of that

**~~~Prayer~~~**

Last time specifically we look at the thought of having a Good Name found in **Proverbs 22:1**

Tonight we will be looking at a verity of thoughts

**I. THE WARNINGS IN LIFE – Proverbs 28:23**

***“He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue”***

Solomon tells us that people appreciate honest, loving correction far more than disingenuous, insincere flattery

What’s the difference between Flattery & Rebuke

**A. Flattery**

***“he that flattereth with the tongue”***

The motive behind flattery is to get or take, not to give

The Flatterer wants something from the person being flattered

It may be attention, friendship, money, business, etc

**Ill**. It’s said that **t**he Greece philosopher Aristippus had learned to get along with the tyrant King Denys by flattering him. Aristippus looked down on his fellow philosophers who did not do the same. One day he saw an older colleague named Diogenes washing some vegetables, and he said to him disdainfully, *“If you would only learn to flatter King Denys you would not have to be washing lentils.”* Diogenes looked up slowly and in the same tone replied, *“And you, if you had only learned to live on lentils, you would not have to flatter the King.”*

Men do not like disingenuous people

Flattery appeals to the vanity of a person

Flattery can be very dangerous because it may encourage someone to choose or continue on a course that will, or is, hurting them

**B. Rebuke**

***“He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour”***

We often associate Rebuke with harsh criticism or disapproval

But that is not the case here, rather it is talking about pleading or reasoning with someone

So what is Solomon talking about when he mentions this word ***“rebuketh”?***

Why is the rebuker favored over the flatterer?

This Hebrew word means *to reprove, to correct, to convince or convict, to chasten*

Why would a person do this in the first place?

One key reason is the person being corrected is doing something that is wrong, destructive, or potentially destructive to their life or to others

Wise people or people who really want to do what is right, appreciate loving correction …

… and people who are trying to steer them in the right direction and help them avoid costly mistakes

This is why they ***“favor”*** the people who rebuke or correct them

If we rail on someone it does nothing but offends that person and causes a wall to go up

**Proverbs 18:19 –** ***“A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle”***

On the other hand, genuine rebuke is for the good of the person

Encouraging someone has the motive of giving, not taking

The purpose of the rebuke is to build up the person with no motive of getting anything in return

A gentle Rebuke will appeal to the will of a person

You are encouraging them to think about the choices they are making

The word for ***“favor”,*** is used some 14 times in the Book of Proverbs, and means *acceptance, goodwill, or approval*

It comes from a verb which means *to be pleased with*

The rebuke may not be approved at first, but later it is accepted and embraced

In some situations, the favor may not come until the person has messed up their lives because they did not heed the correction or rebuke

They refused to listen

After they reap a bunch of problems, then they realize the rebuker was right and wise

The rebuker is favored because their warnings turned out to be valid and true

Loving correction actually supplies security for people

Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to make some choices or decisions, but you were not sure if it was the right one?

Perhaps, you did not know whom you should talk to about your decision

The indecisiveness creates insecurity and stress because you do not really know where your choice was going to lead you

The person who confronts you about your choices, whether it is a parent, pastor, teacher, coach, or a Christian friend, is doing you a huge favor by trying to help you correct bad decisions and make wise choices

Before things get out of control, once you begin something it is hard to stop the consequences

Their correction may also help you to avoid unwise choices

A person like this in your life will provide security for you by pointing out potential problems before they occur

The warning or correction can give you the opportunity to change your path before you mess up your life

If you are a young adult, don't despise those folks who are warning you of the consequences of bad behavior

They are not your enemies, but your true friends

Thank God for them and listen to what they have to say

**THE WARNINGS IN LIFE**

**II. THE WICKED AND STRIFE - Proverbs 18:5**

***“It is not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment”***

This verse is talking about Justice & Judgement

To be Just means to be Fair and Impartial

The warning is of accepting the testimony or witness of someone known as wicked in a judicial proceeding

Those who are known to lack good character are not reliable witnesses

Therefore, it is not wise to accept their accusations against a righteous person

The ultimate fulfillment of this was the false witnesses …

… who brought charges against Jesus when He stood before the Jewish authorities prior to His crucifixion

The persons of the wicked were certainly accepted above the righteous One in judgment

**A. Who is a Wicked person?**

The Wicked man is godless / he’s a Lost man

**Proverbs 15:29 – *“The LORD is far from the wicked”***

**Psalm 10:4 *– “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all (any) his thoughts”***

**Genesis 6:5 *– “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”***

Solomon instructs us that it is not good to ***“accept”*** the person of the wicked

What does that mean?

The word *“****accept”*** means *to support, favor, exalt, to be swept away, to acquit or show partiality*

When the wicked are found guilty, they are not to be acquitted

They are not to be supported, and we are not to be swept away by their influence or the prestige of their possible popularity, power, or even wealth

They are to be punished for their crimes

**B.** ***“to overthrow the righteous in judgment”***

Solomon continues to say that those who are innocent or righteous are not to be denied justice

This verse is so relevant for today because the tendency of the courts is to favor the criminal

Society is swept away by those who are wicked

Some criminals are given book contracts or movie deals to tell the story of their crimes

Other criminals are released over petty technicalities

Wickedness is being Glamorized

Meanwhile, these criminals run rampant in our streets, laughing at the police and the courts

They feel emboldened to continue their crimes because they feel they will get away with them

**Ecclesiastes 8:11 *– “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil”***

**THE WARNINGS IN LIFE**

**THE WICKED AND STRIFE**

**III. THE RICH AND WEALTH**

Let’s look at 2 verses here

**Proverbs 19:6 –** ***“Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts”***

**Proverbs 29:26 –** ***“Many seek the ruler's favour; but every man's judgment cometh from the LORD”***

People seek the favor of those in authority and of those who are generous with their wealth

Why? Hoping to find their Favor

The word ***“intreat”*** is interesting

It means *making the face of someone sweet or pleasant, as in stroking the face*

To ***“intreat the favor”*** of someone is to persuade them to show favor

The action is aimed at receiving gifts, benefits, or any other kind of success

The phrase ***“intreat the favor”*** is often used to express prayer when God is the one whose favor is being sought

Here, it is the prince who can grant requests

Both biblically and innately we know we are to love people and use things …

But practically, too often we do just the opposite

We love things and use people

People have a tendency to hang around those who can advance their career or enhance their social standing

Jesus, however, did just the opposite

Instead, He said we should give to those who can't return the favor

**Luke 14:13, 14 – “*But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:” “And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just”***

It has been said that you can judge a man's character by how he treats those who can do nothing for him

That's why Jesus is so remarkable

He chose to hang out with those who, in the world's eyes, were unimportant and forgotten

**THE WARNINGS IN LIFE**

**THE WICKED AND STRIFE**

**THE RICH AND WEALTH**

**IV. THE WAYWARD AND FAVOR – Proverbs 21:10**

***“The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes”***

The Wayward are selfish and do not focus on accepting or favoring others

Those folks who are evil desire that which is evil

The deep-seated craving and appetite are for sinful things

It is almost as if they were addicted to wickedness

The neighbor of the wicked finds no favor or mercy at all

Why? The answer is the fact that people who are wicked tend to be focused on themselves, not on others

Many times they are down-right mean, ruthless, and deliberately hurtful

Fulfilling their cravings is paramount in their decisions,

For they are in love with themselves and not concerned about somebody else

**Quote:** Someone put it this way, *“One-half of our problems come from wanting our own way. The other half comes from getting it!”*

Man finds it hard to get what he wants, because he does not want the best that God has to offer

God finds it hard to give

He has given and continues to give His best, but most men will not take what He has to offer

**CONCLUSION**