

# The Choice

June 28, 2020

Proverbs 4:11-27

In our passage today Solomon returned to the theme of valuing **WISDOM**. As he has been doing in every lesson before, he challenged his son to listen carefully to godly instruction.

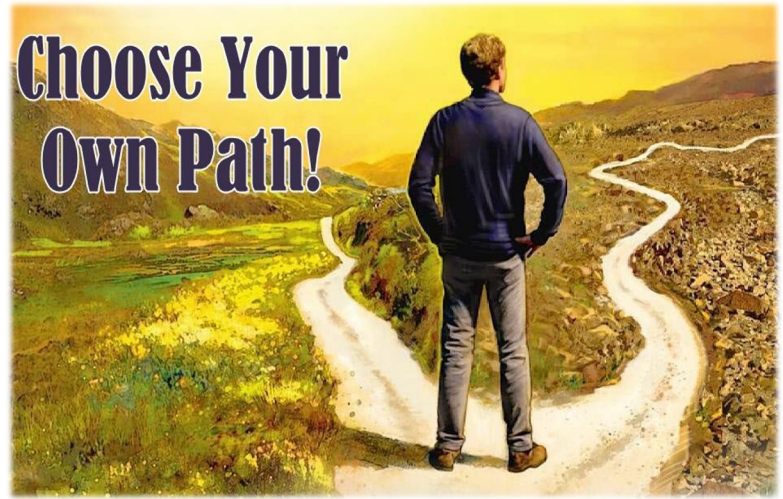
Solomon had learned some of his valuable lessons from his own father, King David. His father had instructed him to seek wisdom and embrace it as a priceless treasure. Wisdom would protect him from foolishness and give him a life of respect and honor (4:1-10). Solomon must have listened to David's encouragement because when God asked him to request anything he wanted, and God would give it to him, Solomon requested wisdom rather than wealth or power (1 Kings 3:5-15).

Although Solomon could point his son to the right path, he couldn't make the decision for him regarding which road to take. So, Solomon continues to appeal for his son to guard his heart and harken diligently to God's instruction and commandments. For the Jews during Solomon's time, the heart represented the seat of human volition, or decision-making.

Our text makes plain a truth that is not always obvious to us: our choices matter. In everything we do, we either chose to obey God or disobey Him. There is no neutrality. We choose for or against God. Solomon is pleading with his son to choose God. Solomon essentially tells his son '*I have taught you the right path to take, now choose that path.*' What is God telling us to do?

## The Path To Take (Proverbs 4:11-13)

- There are two distinctly paths in life, the way of wisdom and the way of the wicked.
  - Solomon pressed his sons to stay on the path fixed by wisdom.
    - Wisdom is seeing things God's way so we can do things His way
  - Solomon instructs that life is a journey and living well involves getting on the right path.
    - Taking the wrong path is a crooked road that leads to destruction.
  - When we think of life as a journey, we naturally think about the steps we'll take as we travel
    - ***"When you walk, your steps will not be hampered; when you run, you will not stumble."***
  - On the path of wisdom, obstacles will not hamper our progress.
    - The Lord will show those who follow Him the stumbling blocks of life that could hinder our journey.
  - ***"Take fast hold of instruction ... guard it well"***
    - Wisdom will not profit us if we don't keep it close.
    - The thief may preoccupy us with lesser things so that we neglect to study God's Word.
- **Have you seen a dust covered Bible? What does it imply?**
- **What do you do when you are overwhelmed with the number of decisions (choices) you need to make?**



Choice /CHOIs/ noun

an act of selecting or making a decision when faced with two or more possibilities.

"the choice between good and evil"

### The Path To Avoid (Proverbs 4:14-19)

- Solomon warned ***“enter not into the path of the wicked”***
    - He sounded a clear warning to those who are tempted to follow in the ***“way of evil men”***
      - Like a police officer in a busy street who holds up a STOP sign for us to see and obey. Solomon implies we should not take a single step toward the path of the wicked.
    - The order to ***“pass away”*** leaves no doubt that we should detour around it and go in another direction.
    - Solomon’s warning drives home a harsh reality that wickedness can consume a person.
      - The wicked don’t sleep until that have brought despair, grief, or sorrow to a victim.
      - The wicked gorge themselves with dishes made of wickedness and violence.
      - Their passion for criminal behavior and violence results in a lifestyle of ruin.
    - In contrast, Solomon showed the distinct difference the path of the righteous would make.
      - Those who follow the Lord have a path illuminated by ***“the shining light”***.
        - Stumbling blocks are revealed to us and there is a bright future.
        - As time moves on the path becomes even brighter and clearer.
    - The future of wicked people is darkness. ***“They know not at what they stumble”***
      - Darkness symbolizes the complete moral blindness of the wicked.
        - They travel the dark path even though they cannot see its hidden perils and traps.
    - What if we have taken steps on the dark path and want to get back to the path of wisdom?
      - For those who want to turn around (repent), Jesus arms are open to receive us.
- **Have you been tempted to take the way of the wicked? How have you avoided it in the past?**

### The Choice To Make (Proverbs 4:20-27)

- Once again, Solomon urges his son to attend to godly instruction.
    - ***“Incline thine ear”*** – listen closely, hear God speak
    - ***“not depart from thine eyes”*** – don’t let God’s Word out of your sight through neglect
    - ***“keep them in the midst of thine heart”*** – place them securely in your heart
  - In Solomon’s day, people thought of the heart as the center of life itself. Therefore, wisdom placed inside a person’s heart would lead to a satisfying life.
    - Some people today place much emphasis on physical health, finances, gaining power ...
      - If these are our highest priority, we’re making a mistake!
  - ***“Keep thy heart with all diligence”***
    - *If we let our hearts be filled with senseless thoughts, we will pay a price in senseless actions.*
  - ***“Ponder the path of thy feet”***
    - We must consider the steps we take each day.
    - Every decision (choice) we make is important. Sometimes we make small decisions that can have large consequences in life.
  - We must plan our lives in keeping with the Lord’s purpose for us.
- **What choices will you make this week based on wisdom from God?**

**Biblical Truth: All People have a choice to make:  
follow God or reject Him.**

**Proverbs 4:14-15 KJV**  
**Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.**

