

LIVING RIGHT

Proverbs 21:21

I have a foolish mindset that “more is better”. Instead of following the manual after rebuilding my tractor motor, I filled the crankcase with what I thought was a good amount of oil. 15 minutes into its first use the engine seized. All my time and money down the drain because I didn’t follow the manufacturer’s instructions. Major idiot points for that one not to mention whole lot of money and time to replace.

More recently it was time to fertilize our lawn so what did I do? More fertilizer is better than less – right? It is if you like big swatches of dead grass. Again, all the time and money I put into the lawn wasted because I didn’t follow the manufacturer’s instructions.

Nothing good comes from ignoring the manufacturer’s instructions and doing what “feels right” to me.

What’s true for lawns and lawn mowers is true of life. Nothing good comes from ignoring God’s Word and living our lives according to what “feels right”.

The Biblical term for living according to God’s Word is *righteousness*. If you do what God tells you to do, you are a *righteous* person. If you do not do what God tells you to do, you are a *wicked* person. To do *right* is to obey God’s law. Proverbs has a lot to say about *righteousness*. There are 102 verses in Proverbs that speak about *righteousness*. The up-shot of all these verses is that doing right in the eyes of God is the best way to live.

Proverbs 15:9 assures us that:

PROVERBS 15:9 (ESV)

The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,
but he loves him who pursues righteousness.

Proverbs 21:21 encourages us that:

PROVERBS 21:21 (ESV)

Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness
will find life, righteousness, and honor.

Doing what is right in the eyes of God is the best way to live. But don’t expect any support from your fellow citizens. *Righteousness* is ridiculed and reviled as

judgmental and hateful. Our secular education system and our secular media mock righteousness. Our high schools and universities teach there is no God and therefore there is no objective, moral standard to which all people are obligated. This belief is called *relativism*. Relativists believe that standards of right and wrong are societal constructs that are completely subjective. You've probably heard people say, "Well, that may be true for you, but it's not true for me." That's *relativism* applied at the personal level. On the surface, *relativism* sounds like an awesome way to live because you can do whatever you want and justify it by saying, "This is my truth." The problem is, *relativism* doesn't square with reality. If "your truth" includes lying to and using people for your gain, even fellow relativists will reject you as a jerk. Plus, God has created you with a conscience that makes you feel guilty when you do wrong. Many people turn to alcohol and drugs to deal with their guilt. Ultimately, if God exists (and He does), you will be judged as to whether or not you lived according to God's law.¹

Relativism is not true and it's a bad way to live. Pursuing righteousness is the right way to live. But if you choose to be a righteous person, be prepared to suffer because you will be hated by relativists and branded *intolerant*. Because relativists cannot argue that their beliefs are right, they resort to intimidation and violence. They bully and use fear to silence their opponents.

I'm trying to help you young people understand what you will face in high school and college where *relativism* is taught as fact. Your professors and fellow students will bully you and shame you if you hold to God's standard of right and wrong. Be prepared to be persecuted and misrepresented. If you hold to God's standard on sexuality you will be labeled intolerant and a hater of LGBTQ++ people. Don't be bullied and shamed into participating in things God says are wrong: drugs, alcohol, recreational sex, gossip, slander. Don't be bullied into calling that which God condemns morally acceptable. Give up the goal of being accepted and liked by your professors and fellow students. If that's your goal, then you will most certainly compromise and buy into relativism. If you do that you will forfeit all the wonderful blessings of the righteous life.

The bottom line in this day and age is that if you choose to pursue righteousness, you will suffer. You will be labeled and libeled as intolerant, ignorant, judgmental, a hater.

¹ Cf. William Lane Craig, *On Guard*, (Colorado Spring; David C Cook Pub.), 2010 for powerful proofs for the existence of God. Rev. 20:11-15 clearly reveals the Great White Throne Judgment awaits all unbelievers.

Keep in mind that it is worth it.

Proverbs 12:28 encourages us that:

PROVERBS 12:28 (ESV)

In the path of righteousness is life,
and in its pathway there is no death.

Proverbs 13:21 makes clear that:

PROVERBS 13:21 (ESV)

Disaster pursues sinners,
but the righteous are rewarded with good.

I want to challenge you to trust God and do what is right in His eyes when it comes to your sexuality. God created you a sexual being. The purpose for your sexuality is to produce children and to be bonded to your husband or wife.

Genesis 2:22-25 teaches us:

GENESIS 2:22-25 (ESV)

And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;

she shall be called Woman,

because she was taken out of Man.”

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Jesus affirmed Genesis 2:22-25 in the midst of His debate with the Pharisees over divorce:

MATTHEW 19:4-6 (ESV)

4 He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

I want to cut through all the confusion created by relativism and the sexual revolution by giving you the bottom line of God's law for your sexuality.

Sexual intimacy is to be enjoyed only between one man and one woman who have committed themselves to one another in the lifelong covenant bond of marriage.

All deviations are a violation of God's law for your sexuality. If you do right and you nurture a healthy relationship with your spouse, you will have the best opportunity to experience a lifelong, satisfying sex life. This law is not meant to deprive you, but to safeguard this incredibly powerful part of your life. You need to trust God and His heart for you in this matter. The people pushing the sexual revolution hate God and do not care about you at all. They want to destroy your relationship with God, your family and make you easy to control by the government. Why would you listen to them and follow their ideas about sexuality?

Be righteous!

Do what is right in God's eyes.

Experience the blessing of sex in the context of a Christ-centered marriage.

Second, I want to challenge you to what is right in God's eye regarding honesty.

Honesty is representing things the way they really are and doing everything you say you are going to do.

Proverbs 13:5 says:

PROVERBS 13:5 (ESV)

The righteous hates falsehood,
but the wicked brings shame and disgrace.

Colossians 3:9-10 commands us:

COLOSSIANS 3:9-10 (ESV)

9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

James 5:12 teaches us:

JAMES 5:12 (ESV)

But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

Honesty is the foundation of trust and trust is the foundation of relationships. If you want to be trusted by others, respected by others, you need to be honest even if it costs you.

Take time this week to read through the verses in your notes and discuss them as a family. My hope is that you will renew your commitment to be a *righteous* person who does what is right in the eyes of the Lord.

Remember Proverbs 29:6 that says:

PROVERBS 29:6 (ESV)

An evil man is ensnared in his transgression,
but a righteous man sings and rejoices.