

Message #34

Proverbs 11:14-23

THERE IS A MAJOR CONTRAST BETWEEN LIVING A WISE LIFE AND A FOOLISH LIFE, FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE, AND THOSE CONTRASTS WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE NOT ONLY IN THIS LIFE, BUT IN THE NEXT.

CONTRAST #1 – There is a contrast in seeking advice. **11:14**

The contrast is between a person who does not listen to counsel other than to his own counsel, and one who takes in as much counsel as possible before making a decision. The fool tries to make all decisions by himself. The wise person is one who listens to the advice of sound counselors.

CONTRAST #2 – There is a contrast in business speculation. **11:15**

Solomon is saying that a person who goes into some legal business deal with a stranger, someone not intimately connected to you, will end up smarting, sad and remorseful. On the other hand, the one who does not get caught in this kind of financial scheme will end up secure, safe, confident and not afraid. There is a principle here—be very careful with whom you enter into any kind of financial business.

CONTRAST #3 – There is a contrast in personal objectives. **11:16**

This is the only place in Proverbs where there is a gender contrast between a man and woman. the contrast here is that a woman was concerned more with the internal and the man was concerned more with the external. When it comes to financial matters, a woman is often more generous, more gracious and more God-honoring than a greedy man. A lowly Jewish woman could end up more honorable in eternity than a push-and-shove businessman.

CONTRAST #4 – There is a contrast in self-promotion. **11:17**

God wants men merciful, not cruel. This is a very practical proverb which says the way a person is affects self the most.

CONTRAST #5 – There is a contrast in earned reward. **11:18**

We may be absolutely certain that we will be rewarded for the way we really are! The wicked person is not blatant about his wickedness; he is deceptive. The Hebrew word means he is a false, lying fraud. Wise people truly sow righteousness into their lives.

CONTRAST #6 – There is a contrast in life's direction. **11:19**

The plural noun “life” means one on a righteous path will have a long, fulfilled, abundant, meaningful life. A fool is on a course of self-destruction which will end up with him dead.

CONTRAST #7 – There is a contrast in God's perception. **11:20**

Make no mistake about this—God views wise people and frauds in an entirely different way. The word “abomination” means that God detests a fraud in the same way He hates and detests idol worship. Carefully observe this verse for it reveals that God knows the inside of one’s heart. He bases His calculation on what is really happening in the heart.

CONTRAST #8 – There is a contrast in eternal destiny. **11:21**

The word “assuredly” or “hand in hand” may mean that no matter how many people band together in their false security, the wicked will still be punished. The other possibility is no matter how many wicked generations come and go, they are all eventually destroyed. Wicked people eventually are punished, whereas righteous people are eventually delivered.

CONTRAST #9 – There is a contrast between physical and spiritual beauty. **11:22**

Solomon wanted people to understand that external beauty is not the same as internal beauty. A person could have magnificent looks, an expensive wardrobe, drive in a beautiful vehicle and come to church, and, in the mind of God, be nothing more than a pig.

CONTRAST #10 – There is a contrast in hope. **11:23**

A wise, righteous person is out to achieve good and will ultimately have his dreams fulfilled. The foolish, wicked person is heading for wrath.

Two paths—wisdom/foolishness; righteousness/wickedness; godliness/godlessness; external beauty/internal beauty—which is it for us?