

“Divine Hope for the Self-Righteous Hopeless”

Proverbs 26:7-12

August 29, 2022

I. The Fool’s Very Lamentable State (Pr. 26:7-11)

- A. The fool’s life is a miserable one, with very little hope for improvement.
- B. Yet, even more dire is the life of the one who is wise in his own eyes.

II. The Even Worse State of Those Who Are Wise in Their Own Eyes (Pr. 26:12)

- A. Fools have no wisdom; the wise-in-their-own eyes are proud of the little wisdom they possess.
 - 1. Fools are idiotic.
 - 2. The wise-in-their-own-eyes are self-righteous.
- B. Remember that wisdom in the Bible isn’t just theoretical knowledge; it’s skill for living.
 - 1. The wise-in-his-own-eyes man doesn’t just believe himself to be intellectually superior.
 - 2. He’s convinced of his moral superiority.
- C. Why is a self-righteous person more hopeless than a fool?
 - 1. It’s easier for a fool to wake up than a self-righteous person to acknowledge how off the beam they truly are.
 - 2. The classic Biblical example of this are the Pharisees.

III. Are the Self-Righteous Beyond All Hope?

- A. No! See the Apostle Paul who was rescued from self-righteousness by Jesus.

Philippians 3:4–6 - ⁴ although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

1 Timothy 1:15 - It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.

- B. We too, as believers in Jesus, were at some point rescued from our own fundamental self-righteousness, from our state of being wise in our own eyes.
- C. Sadly, however, we still battle with the lingering temptation to be self-righteous in our application of wisdom.
 - 1. At those times, our lives are often characterized by the opposite of true Biblical wisdom:

James 3:17 - But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

- 2. Yet our gracious God still offers true wisdom to us when we humble ourselves again to ask Him for it:

James 1:5 - If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.