

#235 "Things the Wicked Despise"

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By learning what Scripture says we are not to do, we can actually glean a lot about what we should be doing. After all, most every example we see around us is wrong, so, rather than fall in line with the world around us, we should seek to do the exact opposite.

#1 The wicked despise *wisdom and instruction*. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction." Fools are not interested in growing, maturing, conforming to righteousness, or in being introspective about where and how they need to change. They are not interested in being taught because they are not interested in being changed. They prefer the devil's sedatives of evil, and they don't want to make the effort it would take to escape. Having no fear of God, they have no internal motivation to alter their behavior according to what wisdom would dictate. Fools love foolishness, whereas the wise love being instructed in wisdom.

#2 The wicked despise *the commands of Scripture*. Proverbs 13:13 says, "The one who despises the word will be in debt to it, But the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded." God's Word is not just some nice principles to help us get along in this life and in this world. Rather, it is something to tremble before with a holy, God-honoring fear. God's Word breaks us, cuts us, and reveals to us what is true about God, life, eternity, and our own hearts. Those who despise the revelation of God to man will be accountable for rejecting it, while the righteous who humble themselves before it and obey it will be rewarded. The Bible is more than "the good book," for it is God's inviolable, infallible, and eternally viable Word. The commands of Scripture should make us tremble (Isaiah 66:2), but the wicked mock, laugh, and scoff at them.

#3 The wicked despise *God Himself*. Proverbs 14:2 says, "He who walks in his uprightness fears the LORD, But he who is devious in his ways despises Him." Leviticus 26:15, 30 reveals that those who abhor God will be abhorred by His very soul. Those who despise God and care not for His love will store up His wrath for themselves. God desires relationship with His children as they trust in Him by faith and do as He has asked. His kindness leads His people to repent, but the wicked abhor His kindness because they abhor Him and want nothing to do with Him. They would rather worship themselves and join the cause of the devil, and in so doing, they make themselves enemies of God when they could be His friends. This is the worst decision one could ever make.

#4 The wicked despise *their fellow man*. Proverbs 14:21 says, "He who despises his neighbor sins, But happy is he who is gracious to the poor." The scoffer cares only for what benefits him, and, in his mind, other people exist only to get trampled upon for personal gain. A wicked person is not interested in dealing with those who are in need or less fortunate, for his driving interest is himself. The best hope others can have for being shown good will from a wicked person is that somehow the wicked individual believes that being nice would have some beneficial kickback to himself. Love for self always supersedes care

and concern for others in the mind of the scoffer, but the believer should have Christ's attitude of self-sacrifice and love for others (Philippians 2:3-7).

#5 The wicked despise *family*. Proverbs 15:20 says, "A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother." Given that the wicked have no concern for others, it should be no surprise that they don't value loving family relationships either. This stands in stark contrast to the love and concern that should be present in the family of God.

#6 The wicked despise *discipline*. Proverbs 15:32 says, "He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding." The wicked person is content to slide into spiritual neglect and self-debasement. In his spite toward God, he neglects discipline, but what he is really despising is himself. It takes faith, commitment, fervor, and hard work to grow, and the wicked person cares for none of it, choosing his own destruction. The godly, on the other hand, when reproved by God (Hebrews 12:5-6), take heed to the lessons learned and truths revealed such that they make the necessary adjustments in their lives.

#7 The wicked despise *authority*. 2 Peter 2:9-10 says, "Then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties." The wicked hate being told what to do, and they hate rules and boundaries because they remind them that they are not the authority. They will work to disrespect or challenge any authority, if only subversively or behind that authority's back. There is no way they will surrender to God as Lord, for they see confinement to God's law as imprisonment rather than freedom from the bonds of sin.

#8 The wicked despise *anything good*. Psalm 36:4 says, "He plans wickedness upon his bed; he sets himself on a path that is not good; he does not despise evil." The evil man is consumed by evil because he does not despise it. Therefore, he loves it, and, since a man cannot serve two masters, his love for evil requires that he must also despise what is good. He dwells upon his next evil move and his next evil act. When he gets up to go about his day, he plots evil, and good is not upon his mind at all. The Christian, on the other hand, must abhor what is evil and cling to what is good because it is God Who defines what is good and Who enables us to glorify Him by doing good (Romans 12:9). We should be planning good on our bed and setting ourselves up on a path that is good. Then, it should come as no surprise when our lives result in good.

#9 The wicked despise *Jesus Christ*. Isaiah 53:3 says, "He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him." Jesus is the ultimate example of everything that the wicked hate. He loved good, He respected earthly authorities, He obeyed His Father, He didn't break the laws of God, He loved people, and He was extremely disciplined. Jesus is the ultimate fear factor for the wicked because, if He is Who He says He is, they are in big trouble. It is much easier to hate Him than to face Him. The wicked will find that out the hard way, while the righteous will run to Him on that day.

#10 The wicked despise *what is despised*. 1 Corinthians 1:27-29 says, "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God." The wicked love the spotlight, the attention, the glamour, and the approval of man, but where is the love for the poor, the needy, the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the diseased, the disabled, the elderly, the unborn, the orphan, and the widow? It is one thing to give to a charity and another to love those who are hurting. Not many who are strong, noble, and worldly-wise find the narrow way (1 Corinthians 1:26), but the weak, who have nothing to lose and everything to gain, are more likely to boast in Jesus. In eternity, the first will be last and the last first (Mark 10:31). The wicked despise that truth as well, but the righteous take great hope and pride in it.

Even though we as believers have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, we still need to guard our hearts so that we do not act wickedly. The Corinthians believers were said to have even despised the church of God due to their irreverent and immoral behavior in the house of God (1 Corinthians 11:22). So we dare not think that we could never be like the wicked. Rather, we need to exalt in what they hate and seek after what they loathe. Christianity moves upstream when the river of the world flows downstream, and we should be happy to do so.