

SUBJECT: BEING LED IN RIGHT PATHS

TEXT: PROVERBS 4:10-19

Introduction:

1. It is important that we recognize the kind of world we live in.
2. Not everyone is a Christian and there are some who would actually want to do you harm.
3. Remember though, that ours is not a physical battle but a spiritual one in which the forces of evil plan and war against the forces of righteousness.
4. We find ourselves struggling over which path we should take every day of our lives. Should we follow the path that appeals to the flesh and the things of the world and omits God, or should we follow the path that appeals to the spirit, that recognizes and trusts in God, though it may not provide all we think we need?
5. Jesus likened it to two different paths which lead to two different endings. **Matthew 7:13** *Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.*
I've been in many cities and most seem to have a street called "Broadway," but I've never seen one called "Narrowway."
6. Are you ready to be led in the right path?

I. THE PLEADINGS OF A CARING FATHER.

- A. We have seen many times in the book of Proverbs the promise of long life to those who will follow after wisdom. **v.10** *Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of your life will be many.*
- B. Every father should want to teach his children the proper way to live. **v.11** *I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths.*
- C. Wisdom causes one not to stumble in their daily walk with God. **v.12** *When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble.*
 1. "Hindered" means "to get a cramp."
 2. "Stumble" means "to fall, be cast down." **Psalm 119:165** *Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.; 1 John 2:10* *He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.*
- D. God instruction, if followed, will guard one's very life.
 1. "Take hold" means "become strong, courageous, prevail."

II. WICKED PATHS LEAD WICKED PEOPLE.

- A. There is a fearful stage of utter wickedness in the lives of sinful people. It must be avoided at all cost. **vss. 14-15** *Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on.*
- C. These people can't even sleep unless they have done some wicked, evil thing. We do not understand how desperate and how deep into sin human beings can fall. **v. 16** *For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall.*
 1. The word "fall" is the same word used in **v.12** that is translated "stumble." **Isaiah 57:20** *But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.*
- D. Their lives are only sustained by more and more wickedness. **v.17** *For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. c.f. Proverbs 1:16* *For their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.*

E. They do not even understand their wickedness because it has become a way of life to them. **v.19** *The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble.*

III. IN THE MIDST OF THE WICKED PATH, THERE EMERGES THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A. This is the beauty of a cloudless sunshine; shining as it goes to the full and perfect day.

B. This shining forth echoes the righteous man's life, because Jesus is the very Light that shines forth in the midst of darkness. **v. 18** *But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

1. The first words "shining sun" is like that of a full, sunlit day.

2. The second word "shines" is like that of the sun just rising, and as it gets higher and higher, things become more and more clear and bright. **c.f. 2 Samuel 23:4** *And he shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, A morning without clouds, Like the tender grass springing out of the earth, By clear shining after rain.*

3. The word "perfect" means "established." That is, "the established path."

Conclusion:

1. The "broad way" is an extremely wide one today. It is that "carnival time" of wickedness. ("Carnival" is derived from "carnal" meaning "flesh.") It appeals only to our human, sinful, fleshly nature. It is a way of stumbling for us, time after time after time.

2. On the other hand, the narrow way is so narrow that it is limited to One Person--Jesus.

John 14:6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

3. The question you must consider for yourself is, "Which path am I on?" **Proverbs 16:25** *There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.*