

Fools Find Sport in Wickedness

Proverbs 10:23

Charlie Brackett

Notice, please, Solomon's advice in Proverbs 10:23:

Doing wickedness is like sport to a fool;
And so is wisdom to a man of understanding."

Sport is defined as a game or pastime for recreation or entertainment. It is that which is fun, playful or amusing. Solomon brings to our attention the person who considers the doing of wickedness sport. He says that man is a fool. By way of contrast, Solomon introduces the man of understanding. Each has his area of sport. The fool finds recreation and fun in doing evil; the wise man, the one he calls the man of understanding, finds his sport in wisdom. Why? How is it that each can find the same in opposing places?

The answer is in exercise and discipline. It is not in genetics or innate ability. It is not even a matter of taste. At least, not initially. Take two people who, in early life, are essentially alike. Similar genetics and abilities, the same knowledge and training, and the same values, yet later they have very different values, hopes and desires. One delights in wisdom, the other in wickedness. The difference is in how they have exercised themselves.

The Holy Spirit tells us in Hebrews 5 of people who, because of their training in righteousness, should have grown in spirituality. They should have been training others in matters of faith, but they were still babes themselves, in need of milk rather than solid food. They were told to practice, that is, exercise so that their senses might be trained to discern good and evil. There is hardly a more important principle of living in the entire Bible.

Our need for spiritual exercise is actually greater than our need for physical exercise. And it serves the same kind of purpose. Paul instructed Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:7, 8, "...discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come."

The person who cares about where he ends up can't afford to drift aimlessly through life. He must put forth arduous effort, exercising what he is and what he has in the direction he wants to go. A skilled piano player is not made on the ball field. Nor is the man of understanding developed from one who is practiced in this world's pleasures. Solomon said fools find sport in wickedness. In what do you find sport?