

Lifestyles of the Wise and Righteous

Adam B. Cozort

In our materialistic society many, even among the body of Christ, are obsessed with knowing the details of the lives of the rich and famous. The magazine racks are filled with profiles of the individuals, their wealth, their lifestyles, and their dirty laundry. Sadly, most people know more about the lives of these people than they do the lives of the righteous souls of Scripture. They are enamored with the glamour of physical possessions far more than the eternal honor of righteousness before God. Though they would, by mankind's standards, be dull and boring, we need to train people to examine the lifestyles of the wise and righteous over the rich and famous; for their lives will have far more benefit in examination.

Paul admonished the Corinthians: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1 - ESV). It is possible and beneficial to examine the lives of the righteous and desire to emulate their lifestyle as it conforms to the commands of God. Consider the lifestyles found among the wise and righteous.

A Lifestyle of Purity

Paul wrote, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phi. 4:8). The wise and righteous individual will be one focused on purity and truth.

The individuals living a lifestyle of purity will not be found entertaining themselves with the latest profanity-laced movie filled with sexual jokes and scant apparel; nor will they be seen posting vain usages of the Lord's name and profane or rude comments on their social networking sites. They will not be found sharing pictures of themselves or friends in semi-naked poses on vacation, or anywhere else for that matter; nor will they promote attitudes toward men that conflict with the love, concern, and compassion that our Lord commanded should be shown for all men (1 Tim. 2:1-2; Mat. 5:43-45).

The lifestyle of purity is a beautiful thing to behold; it doesn't have dark corners, nor does it require a sense of shame for actions committed under the influences of it. Instead, it emboldens happiness, sincerity, honesty, and forthrightness. It allows the children of God to always be who they are, not just who they want people to think they are. Take time to examine the lifestyle of purity among the wise and righteous.

A Lifestyle of Humility

Solomon reported, "The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honor is humility" (Pro. 15:33); and again, "By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life" (Pro. 22:4). When one examines the lifestyles of the wise and righteous, it is inevitable that their humility is seen. They are not lifted up with pride or arrogance, nor do they consider themselves better than other men (Pro. 16:18; Mark 7:20-23). Contrarily, they consider themselves humble servants of God, going about their lives with the understanding that their works do not merit special recognition or consideration, because they are simply doing what God expects them to do (Mic. 6:8; Luke 17:10). Therefore, whether everyone sees their deeds, or nobody in the world but God knows what they have done, the wise and righteous souls are equally happy and contented with their deeds and lifestyle. This lifestyle requires a willingness to put one's own desires to death for the cause of Christ (Gal. 2:20), a resolve to see others as more important than self (Phi. 2:4; 1 Cor. 10:33), and an unwavering attention to the commands of God (Col. 3:17).

When mankind is willing to stop focusing on riches and fame, and instead directs focus upon righteousness and wisdom, the impact is immediate. Instead of self-indulgence, greed, and wickedness, the focus becomes purity, true beauty of life, and God-centered purpose. Are we willing to stop clamoring after the lives and works of the wicked, vain, arrogant, and ungodly; and instead focus on what is wise and acceptable before God?

"If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." - Philippians 4:8