

# *The Rewards of Righteousness*

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*“He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness and honor (Proverbs 21:21; KJV).*

## INTRODUCTION

Does righteousness pay? Are there benefits to right living? Solomon speaks of the intrinsic value of righteousness numerous times.

### I. RIGHTEOUSNESS PROMOTES LIFE

He said righteousness promotes a long life of growth and progress, whose work continues to bear fruit even after death:

For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it (Proverbs 2:21; KJV).

... the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day (Proverbs 4:18; RSV).

The memory of the righteousness continues a blessing. . . . (Proverbs 10:7; MLB).

... the righteous is established for ever (Proverbs 10:25; RSV).

Surely righteousness brings life. . . . (Proverbs 11:19; MLB).

... the house of the righteous shall stand (Proverbs 12:7; KJV).

Life is in the way of the righteous, a pathway where there is no death (Proverbs 12:28; MLB).

A righteous man that walketh in his integrity, blessed are his children after him (Proverbs 20:7; ASV).

He that pursueth righteousness and lovingkindness shall find life. . . . (Proverbs 21:21; RHM).

### II. RIGHTEOUSNESS PROMOTES JOY

A righteous life is a joyful life.

The hope of the righteous shall be gladness. . . . (Proverbs 10:28; KJV).

The light of the righteous rejoiceth. . . . (Proverbs 13:9; KJV).

Right living, he said, produces good things to enjoy.

... he [the Lord] blesseth the habitation of the just (Proverbs 3:33; KJV).

Blessings are upon the head of the just. . . . (Proverbs 10:6; KJV).

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it (Proverbs 10:22; KJV).

... the desire of the righteous shall be granted (Proverbs 10:24; KJV).

... to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward (Proverbs 11:18; KJV).

The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul. . . . (Proverbs 13:25; KJV).

... the dwelling of the upright shall prosper (Proverbs 14:11; ABPS).

In the house of the righteous is much treasure. . . . (Proverbs 15:6; KJV).

... the blameless will have a goodly inheritance (Proverbs 28:10; RSV).

Blessed is the man who fears the Lord always. . . . (Proverbs 28:14; RSV).

### III. RIGHTEOUSNESS PROMOTES HONOR

Righteousness gives strength and favor.

The way of the Lord is strength to the upright. . . . (Proverbs 10:29; KJV).

A good man obtaineth favour of the Lord. . . . (Proverbs 12:2; KJV).

He that pursueth righteousness and lovingkindness shall find . . . honour (Proverbs 21:21; RHM).

### IV. RIGHTEOUSNESS PROMOTES SECURITY

Godly living promotes peace and safety.

Whoso walketh uprightly, walketh securely. . . . (Proverbs 10:9; SPRL).

... the seed of the righteous shall be delivered (Proverbs 11:21; KJV).

When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him (Proverbs 16:7; KJV).

... he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul (Proverbs 16:17; KJV).

He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his soul. ... (Proverbs 19:16; ASV).

Through righteousness comes lasting security.

The Lord does not let the righteous go hungry. ... (Proverbs 10:3; RSV).

The righteous shall never be removed. ... (Proverbs 10:30; KJV).

... the root of the righteous shall not be moved (Proverbs 12:3; KJV).

No ill befalls the righteous. ... (Proverbs 12:21; RSV).

Righteousness rescues one from crisis.

... righteousness delivereth from death (Proverbs 10:2; KJV).

The righteous is delivered out of trouble. ... (Proverbs 11:8; KJV).

... the just shall come out of trouble (Proverbs 12:13; KJV).

In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge (Proverbs 14:26; KJV).

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe (Proverbs 18:10; KJV).

Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved. ... (Proverbs 28:18; KJV).

## CONCLUSION

Since the universal plans of the Lord include all the consequences of right living, therefore, the laws of nature insure blessings for righteousness. Indeed, the very actions of the godly initiate a natural sequence of events designed by the Lord to return to them the good they perform—a rebound effect intended to reward their efforts.

The integrity of the upright guides them. ... (Proverbs 11:3; RSV).

The righteousness of the blameless keeps his way straight. ... (Proverbs 11:5; RSV).

The merciful man doeth good to his own soul. ... (Proverbs 11:17; KJV).

Righteousness guards him whose way is upright. ... (Proverbs 13:6; RSV).

... the good man gets satisfaction from his [ways] (Proverbs 14:14; MLB).

... mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good (Proverbs 14:22; KJV).

... the righteous finds refuge through his integrity (Proverbs 14:32; RSV).

He that pursueth righteousness and lovingkindness shall find. . . righteousness. . . (Proverbs 21:21; RHM).

All of these benefits—long life, prosperity, good reputation, security, and health—are natural consequences of right living. The righteous are the industrious, good citizens of the world. They earn their wages; they deserve the respect of their friends and neighbors; they enjoy the protection of the law; they maintain both their environment and their own bodies—all because of their manner of living. Moreover, they leave the world a better place.

Nevertheless, Solomon said that even righteousness will not keep us from sorrow and pain. This is a world permeated with evil, and it is the Lord's will that we patiently endure.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all (Psalms 34:19; RSV).

For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again; but the wicked are overthrown by calamity (Proverbs 24:16; RSV).

Moreover, the world's injustice tends to defeat the Lord's intention that righteousness be properly rewarded. Too often the Lord gives but the wicked take away. Solomon said, for example, that many righteous people are kept poor because of oppression.

The fallow ground of the poor yields much food, but it is swept away through injustice (Proverbs 13:23; RSV).

And our righteousness may even cost us our lives here on earth.

All things have I seen in the days of my vanity:  
there is a just man that perisheth in his  
righteousness. . . . (Ecclesiastes 7:15; KJV).

Death was, in fact the fate of Jesus and His

apostles. But the Lord has a better life prepared  
for all the godly, no matter what happens here  
under the sun.

—Walter Porter

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