

THE INSECURITY OF THE UNBELIEVER

TEXT: PROVERBS 1:22-33

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible teaches the eternal security of the believer.
2. When we refer to the eternal security of the believer, we mean that once a lost sinner has been born again by the Word and by the Spirit of God, once he has received a new life and a new nature and has been made partaker of the divine nature, once he has been justified by faith, he is eternally secure.
3. Our Lord said in John 10:27-29, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."
4. However, while the Bible teaches the eternal security of the believer; it does not teach the eternal security of the unbeliever or the "make-believer."
5. Our Lord said, in Matthew 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven."
6. So we have here two different doctrines: the security of the believer, and the insecurity of the unbeliever. The first has eternal life; the second eternal damnation.
7. When Jonathan Edwards preached his famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," his text was Deuteronomy 32:35 -- "their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand."
8. Jonathan Edwards said, "They deserve to be cast into hell; so that divine justice never stands in the way...The sword of divine justice is every moment brandished over their heads, and it is nothing but the hand of arbitrary mercy, and God's mere will, that holds it back."
9. Yes, this is the insecurity of the unbeliever.

I. STUBBORN REFUSAL TO REPENT (1:22-25, 30)

1. "Simple ones" who "love simplicity" (1:22a) refers to credulous, naive, shallow people who foolishly believe that they can turn their back on God and get away with it.
2. And there is another class of sinners mentioned here in Proverbs 1:22 -- "scorners (that) delight in their scorning." These are proud and

- haughty sinners that love to ridicule the Word of God and the people of God.
3. Matthew Henry said they are "the worst of sinners," and they take pride "in running down every thing that is sacred and serious."
 4. And there is yet a third class of sinners referred to here in verse 22 -- "fools (that) hate knowledge." These fools refuse instruction. Though they are very ignorant they are very conceited and opinionated and sure of themselves.
 5. Back in July, there were two groups of protestors demonstrating outside the Texas State Capitol in Austin, Texas. One group of pro-life Christians sang "Amazing Grace" while a group of pro-abortion maniacs chanted "Hail Satan!"
 6. These are the scornful fools described in the book of Proverbs -- scornful, stupid, immoral, obstinate, and godless. It has been pointed out that Proverbs 1:22 is directed, not against deeds, but against dispositions -- a contemptuous, discourteous mood, an angry disposition, a habitual inclination and tendency to do wrong, a frame of mind that is ungodly, etc.
 7. It all comes down to a stubborn refusal to repent. God says, "Turn you at my reproof" (1:23a). The latter part of verse 23 indicates it is not too late, but verse 24 says it soon will be too late for many people.
 8. The Bible emphasizes repentance. Repentance is a change of mind which leads to a change in direction. A.C Dixon said, "In repentance you think of the sin you hate; in faith you think of the Christ you love."
 9. A number of years ago a murderer was convicted and sentenced to death. The murderer's brother was rich and influential and was able to persuade the governor to grant his brother's pardon. It was agreed that he would go and visit his brother in prison and deliver the good news personally.
 10. After greeting his imprisoned brother, he said, "What would you do if you were to receive a pardon?" The brother replied: "The first thing I would do would be to track down the judge who sentenced me, and murder him; and the next thing I would do is track down the eye witness who testified against me and murder him too!"
 11. The brother turned around and left the prison with the pardon still in his pocket – there can be no pardon without repentance!
 12. Evangelist Sam Jones said, "When General Lee, under the apple tree at Appomattox, handed his sword to General Grant, he said with his whole heart, and said it for his whole army, 'We will never take up

- arms against the old flag again.' I tell you, my fellow-citizens, when a poor sinner goes to the cross and surrenders, let him surrender with the understanding that he lays down his old weapons of rebellion."
13. God's call can be answered or God's call can be refused (1:24). To those who repent and are submissive, the LORD pours out His Holy Spirit, and gives a disposition to hear and a heart to do His will (1:23).
 14. To those who refuse to repent, there is fear and destruction and distress and anguish (1:27).

II. SUDDEN JUDGMENT OF THE WICKED (1:24-27)

1. The LORD graciously stretches forth His hand, but wicked sinners refuse His gracious invitation. Jeremiah 6:10 says, "To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it."
2. Proverbs 29:1 says, "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."
3. There is no "remedy," because sinners have refused the remedy.
4. Because sinners refuse God's outstretched hand, and have set at naught all His counsel, and would none of his reproof, God will laugh at their calamity (1:24-26).
5. Sinners are laughing now. Television shows and Hollywood movies mock God and worldly comedians laugh at the Bible, but remember, God has the last laugh!
6. Psalm 2:4 says, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision."
7. And after He has a good laugh, Psalm 2:5 says, "Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."
8. Mark these words -- wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure, and calamity (Proverbs 1:26) and fear (1:26, 27) and destruction and distress (1:27).
9. Their calamity will surely come (1:26). Sickness will come, and disease will come, and fear and distress will come (1:26, 27).
10. Fear and distress will come because sickness and disease are the harbingers of death. The Hebrew word translated "desolation" in verse 27 literally means, "devastating storm" and it is translated that way in other versions.
11. Proverbs 1:26 and 27 says their calamity will put them into a great fright. Fear seizes them, as they realize they are literally slipping into hell.

12. Their total and final destruction shall come suddenly as a whirlwind (1:27).
13. Sir Francis Newport was the head of an British atheist club. These were his last words to those gathered around his deathbed, "You need not tell me there is no God for I know there is one, and that I am in His presence! You need not tell me there is no hell. I feel myself already slipping. Wretches, cease your idle talk about there being hope for me! I know I am lost forever! Oh, that fire! Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell! ...Oh, that I could lie for a thousand years upon the fire that is never quenched, to purchase the favor of God and be united to Him again. But it is a fruitless wish. Millions and millions of years will bring me no nearer the end of my torments than one poor hour. Oh, eternity, eternity forever and forever!, Oh, the insufferable pangs of Hell!"
14. Another Englishman, Sir Thomas Scott, said this on his deathbed, "Until this moment, I thought there was neither God nor hell; now I know and feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty!"
15. Fear, desolation, destruction, distress, and anguish (1:26, 27)!

III. SLUGGISH RESPONSE TO GOD'S WARNINGS (1:28-33).

1. There are rumors that wealthy egotistical Donald Trump may run for governor of New York State. Back in 1989, Donald Trump told an interviewer, "Right now, I'm genuinely enjoying myself. I work and I don't worry."
2. "What about death?" the writer asked. "Don't you worry about dying?"
3. "No," Trump said. "I'm fatalistic and I protect myself as well as anybody can. I prepare for things."
4. However, as Trump started walking up the stairs to have dinner with his family, he hesitated for a moment. "No," he said finally, "I don't believe in reincarnation, heaven or hell — but we go someplace. Do you know, I cannot, for the life of me, figure out where."
5. If he would read the Bible, he would be able to figure it out (cf. Luke 16:19-31; Mark 9:43-48; John 3:16).
6. That interview was back in 1989 -- twenty-four years ago, and Mr. Trump is much closer to eternity now.
7. David said, "There is but a step between me and death" (I Samuel 20:3).

8. James said, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James 4:14).
9. Moses said, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Psalm 90:10).
10. Hebrews 9:27 says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."
11. A preacher counted all of the warnings about hell and judgment in the New Testament and figured there are 260 chapters in the New Testament, and there are 234 warnings in the New Testament about hell and judgment.
12. He said this, "If you and I were traveling down a highway 260 miles long, and as we were driving along we saw 234 big danger signs, I think we'd be crazy not to want to get off and take a different route!"
13. Sinners are on the road to hell and they don't seem interested in getting off!
14. Evangelist Sam Jones was preaching from Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death," and he saw an old sinner sitting up near the front and he said to him, "There you are, after sixty odd years of age, and I wish you would get up and tell this congregation your wages for sixty-five years of sinful bondage."
15. The man twisted and turned in his pew, but said not a word. The next day he met Sam Jones on the road and he said, "Oh, Jones, when you put that question to me last night, if I had stood up and told the plain truth it would have frightened many a soul last night. I can tell you, sir, that for sixty-five years of sinful bondage, all I have to show for it in the world is the most godless family in this town, and a hard heart, and a stiff neck, and a rebellious soul, and no assurance at all that I will ever be saved."
16. What a terrible thing it is to harden one's heart and pass the point of no return! "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Genesis 6:3).
17. Psalm 95:8 says, "Harden not your heart," and that warning is repeated three times in the book of Hebrews (3:8, 15; 4:7).
18. Some hard-hearted, stiff-necked sinners make a feeble attempt to call on God but then it is too late (Proverbs 1:28-30).
19. Notice Proverbs 1:29 says you have to "choose the fear of the LORD."

CONCLUSION:

1. The Bible teaches us that God is merciful, longsuffering, and patient (1:23), but it also teaches that His patience can be exhausted (1:24-27).
2. Furthermore, the Bible also teaches that foolish men put off salvation until it is too late.
3. If you know that you need to get right with God I encourage you to do it right now. Tomorrow could be too late.
4. It is dangerous and unwise to procrastinate.
5. During the Revolutionary War, Colonel Rahl, who was the commander of the British troops in Trenton, New Jersey, was playing cards with some of his soldiers when a courier brought an urgent message stating that General George Washington was crossing the Delaware River.
6. Colonel Rahl put the letter in his pocket and didn't bother to read it until the card game was finished. When he finally got around to reading the letter, he realized the seriousness of the situation, and he hurriedly tried to rally his men to meet the coming attack.
7. But his procrastination was his undoing. He and many of his men were killed and the rest of the regiment was captured.
8. The British ambassador Nolbert Quayle said this, "Only a few minutes' delay cost him his life, his honor, and the liberty of his soldiers. Earth's history is strewn with the wrecks of half-finished plans and unexecuted resolutions. 'Tomorrow' is the excuse of the lazy and refuge of the incompetent."