



# ASOMANING'S SERMONETS



## THE PATH OF LIFE

*But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.*

*Proverbs 4:18-19*

May the entrance of Your word, Lord Jesus, bring light to souls, awaken the dull, strengthen the weak, comfort the sorrowful, minister hope to the hopeless, and salvation to the lost in Your name. Amen!

Beloved, God has given us life and as rational beings, we are responsible for how we use that life. It is evident from Scripture that we will give account of our life and receive either a reward or punishment according to how we have lived. Apostle Paul said, *“So then each of us shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12)*. God gave you and me a free will since we are intelligent beings, and with this will comes the power to make choices. Accordingly, life is about making choices, and to live right is to make the right choices. My prayer and hope are for God to guide you to live right to the glory of His name. Amen!

I put before you, in this sermon, dearly beloved, four main points: Firstly, God has put before mankind two main paths of life, which are the path of the just and the path of the wicked. Secondly, description of the path of the just. Thirdly, description of the path of the wicked. Lastly, exhortation to turn away from the path of darkness and choose the path that leads to life.

### **God Has Placed Before Mankind Two Main Paths of Life**

God does not force man to do anything because He created him to be rational and free. What God does is to present man with choices and urge him to make the right choice so that he may not only avoid punishment but receive a reward. *“See”, says the LORD, “I have set before you today life and good, death and evil” (Deuteronomy 30:15)*. God calls for your attention, saying, *“See”* or *“Behold”*. The choice is yours. The ball is in your court. God does not only present you with choices but He also urges and exhorts you to make the right choice. He does this in verse 19 of the same chapter: *“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing”, He says, “therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19, Emphasis added)*. God shows you His love and care by giving you good counsel to guide you in your decisions.

This is how God has dealt with mankind since the beginning of the world. He dealt with Adam, the first man in the same way. How do we know this? God presented Adam with choices when He placed in the midst of the Garden of Eden the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and commanded Adam not to eat the fruit of the latter. The Scripture says, *“And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die”” (Genesis 2:9, 16-17)*.



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When God commanded Adam, He presented him with a choice. Adam was free according to his own will either to obey or not to obey. In these words, *“Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die”*, God presented to Adam the two paths of life, namely, the path of obedience, righteousness and holiness which leads to life and the path of disobedience, sin and wickedness which leads to death.

Some people question with malicious intent whilst others with mere curiosity ask, “Why did God put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil there when He knew that man would fall?” They speak as if God intentionally put the tree there to cause man to sin. But the Scriptures everywhere teach us that God does not tempt anyone to sin (See James 1:13). However, God tests or proves us (See Genesis 22:1). We have already said that man is a rational being with a free will. Therefore, what God requires of us is free and willing obedience to His will. God does not seek from us forceful and false obedience. To freely and willingly conform our own will to God’s truly pleases Him. However, there cannot be true and willing obedience where there is not the choice to disobey. Thus, for willing obedience to take place, there has to be the choice to disobey. In Adam’s case, this element was provided by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

To be righteous is to disregard the choice to disobey and opt for the choice to obey. Adam was created in the state of innocence with the potential to be righteous or evil. In the state of innocence, Adam could not be said to be righteous if there was nothing to tempt him to sin. Therefore, there was the need to test him. Whatever Adam would choose, either good or evil, would constitute not only his nature but that of his posterity. If he chose obedience, he and his posterity would become righteous. On the hand, choosing disobedience meant that he and his posterity would become sinful. The test came and he failed; he chose disobedience instead of obedience and that radically changed his nature from being innocent to being a sinner. The consequences of his wrong choice are death and all the wickedness we see in the world now. For where does all the wickedness and sins in the world come from? Do they come from animals and the inanimate creation or from ourselves? All the sins and wickedness in the world come from ourselves; you, me and our fellow humans. Thus, the Scripture testifies most truly that, *“...by one man's disobedience many were made sinners” (Romans 5:19)*. Again, *“...through one man, sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12)*.

The just recompense for the sin of the head of the human race, Adam, is death, that is, eternal death. Hence, God will not be unjust if He leaves us to die. God is merciful and just; He cannot deny Himself. His justice demands that we suffer and die whilst his mercy yearns to save and deliver us from our misery. In His wisdom, God sent His Only Son to come in human flesh to deliver mankind from sin by paying the price of death for the sin of the whole world. According to His own will, God regenerates or creates anew the heart, that is, the spirit of anyone who humbles himself, acknowledges his sins, repent, and believes in His Son so that he may live in obedience to God’s will for the rest of his life. In this way, God becomes the *“just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:26)*. Therefore, two paths have been put before the human race again, namely, the paths of unbelief and the path of faith. Naturally, men are on the path of unbelief. Thus, the choice is to either remain there or seek deliverance in Christ.



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### The Path of the Just

According to our opening Scripture, *“the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day”*. What is the meaning of this? Before we answer this question, let us look at who a just person is, not according to the wisdom of men but according to God’s word. For *“...all men are liars”* (Psalm 116:11) but *“God...cannot lie”* (Titus 1:2). Thus, our final authority on any matter should be the word of God and not the wisdom of this world. Who then, we ask again, is a just person? In simple terms, a just person is a person who is right in God’s sight. Someone who is legally innocent before God is just. A person may actually be guilty but legally blameless. Therefore, when we say that someone is just before God, it does not necessarily mean that he has never committed sins but that God holds him not guilty for his sins because they have been fully paid for.

We can never be just in ourselves since we are all sinners. All the good things that a natural person does cannot justify him because he himself is not righteousness. To do right in God’s sight, you must first be right yourself or in person. In other words, for your good works to be accepted by God, you must first have a good or a righteous nature. In God’s sight, if your being is not good, your works, no matter how brilliant they shine, are also not good. Therefore, we cannot do good whereby we may be justified because our nature is depraved due to the sin of Adam. Hence, we must depend on another’s work, even Christ’s to be justified. For He is the only one who is good by nature or in Himself, and so His works are also good. Accordingly, any one to whom Christ imputes His own works becomes just or righteous, not by act but by faith. For it is through faith that the works of Christ are imputed to us. Therefore, without faith in Christ, no one can be justified or be made righteous.

Now, let us look at some individuals in the Bible who, at the dawn of history, pleased God and were declared as righteous in His sight. Ponder over what is written of them; whether they attained their righteousness by their own works or by faith. Consider, in the first place, Abel. It is written of him, *“By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks”* (Hebrews 11:4). He became righteous by faith and God approved his works. It is written, *“And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering”* (Genesis 4:4-5, *Emphasis added*). Read again slowly, the underlined words. God respected Abel (his person) and then his offering. God accepted him before his works. If God did not accept him as just or righteous, his sacrifice also would not have been accepted as in the case of Cain, his brother.

Enoch walked with God and did not see death because God took him; for *“he had this testimony that he pleased God”* (Hebrews 11:5). And what shall we say about Abraham to whom God credited righteousness? Was it credited to him because of his works or because of his faith? Hear the testimony of Scripture: *“And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness”* (Genesis 15:6, *Emphasis added*). God counted *“it”*, that is, his faith for righteousness. All these heroes became righteous by faith and not by their works. *“Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin”*



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(Romans 3:20). The “*deeds of the law*” are the same as our good works, and so no one can be justified or become righteous by his good works.

Beloved, do not think that I am speaking against good works because they are the fruits of faith. Faith makes us good; it renews our hearts and make us new creation. When our nature becomes good or righteous by the renewing work of the Spirit of God, we cannot but bear fruits of good works and live in righteousness. Those who become new creatures must live in newness of life. So, faith and good works are inseparable just as fire and its brightness are inseparable. This was the case in each of the heroes we mentioned above. They had faith and love, love to God and mankind. This is the path of the just or the righteous. We enter upon this path by faith and we persevere in it in love.

Beloved brethren, this righteous path, this path of faith, love and hope which leads to eternal blessedness, and upon which the just walks “*is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*” The shining sun is the rising sun in the morning. You know that when the sun rises at dawn, its brightness keeps increasing, casting out darkness, till it illuminates the whole earth. Moreover, as the brightness of the sun increases, its heat also grows in intensity. The just or righteous is compared to this operation of the sun. How so? When the “*Sun of Righteousness*” (See Malachi 4:2), Jesus Christ, rises with healing in His wings on anyone who believes, the soul of that person becomes illuminated or enlightened. Again, when anyone is lighted by the “*true Light*” (See John 1:9), such a person becomes, as it were, light or the sun. The new life he or she receives through the new birth is compared to light. For this reason, believers are said to be the “*light of the of the world*” (Matthew 5:14). Although, there are many lights that illuminate our world, the greatest of them is the sun. So, when Jesus said that believers are the “*light of the world*”, He compared them to the sun. In verse 15 of the same chapter, the Lord Jesus also referred to His disciples as lighted candles or lamps. He then went ahead in verse 16 and exhorted: “*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*” Light and brightness are two distinct things although the latter comes from the former. The new life within the just of righteous corresponds to light (the object) whereas the good works of the just refer to the brightness. As the brightness proceeds from the light, so does the good works of the just proceed from the life within him.

I have said before that when the sun rises higher from the horizon, its brightness or light increases and fills the whole earth. In the same manner, the new life within the just or righteous must keep growing and result in abundance of good works. The life within the just must not be stagnant; it must grow in every aspect. Now, it is written that the sun shines brighter unto the perfect day. The perfect day of the sun is the full light of day. Take it to be noon day; for by then, the brightness of the sun fills every place of the earth. The just too has a perfect day because his path is likened to the path of the sun. The perfect day of the just is the day of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. For that is the only time when the light within the just will shine in its full strength. It is when our glory shall shine in its full luster; for then we shall be like Him because we shall see Him as He is (See 1 John 3:2).

At present, “*we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord*” (2





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*Corinthians 3:18, Emphasis added*). Now, like the sun, we keep growing from glory to glory as we behold the Lord's glory in a mirror. What is the meaning of "with unveiled face"? That is, with faith; for unbelief, as a veil, blinds our minds so that we cannot see the glory of the Lord Jesus according to what is written in 2 Corinthians 4:3-5: "*But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*" And what is the meaning of beholding the Lord's glory "in a mirror"? That is, the Scriptures; for they portray to us the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hear what the Lord said in John 5:39, "*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.*" (*Emphasis added*). The whole Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation point to the Lord Jesus Christ. Again, "*And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself*" (*Luke 24:27, Emphasis added*). Need I explain further? The Pentateuch, known as the five books of Moses (Genesis to Deuteronomy), the history books (Joshua to Esther), the Wisdom books (Job to Song of Solomon), and all the prophetic books, major and minor (from Isaiah to Malachi) contain nothing but things concerning Christ. And what is the New Testament but the fulfilment and explanation of the Old Testament?

Nowhere, not even in creation, is the glory of the triune God reflected more brightly as in the Scriptures. Reader, what the Scriptures contain are reflections and not the true things. When the perfect day comes, just as we see objects clearly at noon day, we shall no more see in a mirror; we shall see God and behold the Lord Jesus Christ as He is. This is the goal of the Christian life. This is where the path of the just leads to. The path begins with faith, perseveres in love and hope and ends in sight. We strive to live a righteous and holy life; we live in love, love to God and our neighbor; we perform good works so that we may attain to the sight of the blessedness promised us by God to which we behold now in faith. This sight is the perfect day. Let nothing hinder you from reaching it.

### The Way of the Wicked

We now come to the third part of the message where we will look at the way of the wicked. Our opening text says, "*The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble.*" I will not spend much time describing in detail the way of the wicked because it is the direct opposite of the path of the just which we have extensively expounded above.

The way of the wicked is like darkness. The Scripture does not say that the way of the wicked is like the going down of the sun or the sun setting; it is already dark, there is no light. However, their darkness keeps increasing as they continue in sin. Darkness connotes ignorance, error, unbelief, sin, and death. Those who walk on this path are ignorant of the knowledge of God which is the light that leads to life. What does the Psalmist say, "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" (*Psalms 119:105*). What is in the word of God but the knowledge of God? Some glimpses of God's nature can be gathered from creation which may inspire piety and the worship of God but these have no saving power. It is only the Scriptures that can make one wise unto



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salvation (See 2 Timothy 3:15). It is only the word of God that can guide us to our true home – heaven.

Since those who walk in the way of the wicked are devoid of the light of the word of God, they err in life. They err in their thinking and in their actions; for our thoughts control our actions. They live for the world and the things in it. They respect, honor, depend, trust, and enjoy the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forevermore. Amen! The wicked also err in their worship; either they worship the wrong object such as stones, wood, rivers etc. or they worship the right object – God in a wrong way. Their ignorance and error lead to another dangerous thing, namely, unbelief. The mind of some of them is so dark that they deny the existence of God. Those who believe that God exists, do not honor or glorify Him *“because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened”* (Romans 1:21). What is the meaning of *“they did not glorify Him as God”*? That is, they did not relate to Him as God just as when a son knows who his father is but refuses to give him the honor due to a father. In other words, they do not fear or obey Him; they do as they like. Hear what the LORD says, *“A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My honor? And if I am a Master, where is My reverence? Says the Lord of hosts to you priests who despise My name...”* (Malachi 1:6).

From unbelief proceeds all diverse sins and unrighteousness of the wicked: *“adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like”* (Galatians 5:19-21), which shut men out of the kingdom of God. Apostle Paul describes them in Romans 1 as *“being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful”* (Rom 1:29-31). He prophesied that these would abound in the last days which would make the times dangerous or perilous, *“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”* (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

I do not need to tell you that we are experiencing all these sinful deeds all over the world now; for you yourself know about it. You see it in the home, market place, on the street, on TV and everywhere. The Spirit says that *“evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived”* (2 Timothy 3:13). What is *“impostors”*? Fake men of God and evil or seducing spirits impersonating the Holy Spirit of God. The spirit of deception abounds everywhere even in some churches; for not all churches or pastors are fake. There could not be fake ones if there were no genuine ones. Therefore, beware and vigilant!

And what is the import of the words, *“evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse”*? In other words, there is no hope for this world; for the darkness of the world will get darker and darker. Had there been any time in the history of the world in which the world has been darker



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than in our generation? This generation is darker than the past generation and the coming generation will be darker than the present one. God, who sees the end from the beginning says so. Have no hope for this world then, my dear reader.

This is the path of the wicked. All those who take this path are shut out of the kingdom of God. It is a broad path and many people are in it. It seems to be an enjoyable and an enviable path now but it will ultimately lead you to death eternal, and shall be great torment and gnashing of teeth.

### Exhortation

And now, my last duty, in this sermon, is to exhort you to make the right choice. I say, therefore, shun the way of the wicked and take the path of the just. Live for God, your Creator. Pursue peace with all men and holiness without which no one can see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). Do not make yourself an enemy of God by loving the world and the things in it. If you were to gain the whole world, it would profit you nothing because you will eventually lose it; for you came into the world with nothing and you will leave with nothing. The purpose of the time you have in the world now is to be reconcile to God.

One more Scripture and I will bring my message to a close. The Psalmist queries, *“Who is the man who desires life, and loves many days, that he may see good? (Psalm 34:12)*. Although, this is true in this temporal life, the Psalmist had his mind on eternal life when he uttered these words. No matter how long we live in this world, we will eventually die. Read Genesis 5 and you will realize that all the early fathers who lived longer, with the exception of Enock who walked with God and was taken, had this written of them: *“and he died”*. Even Methuselah who lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years ultimately died. A life that must necessarily end cannot truly be said to be of *“many days”*. The Hebrew word translated as *“many days”* can also mean always, everlasting, evermore or perpetual. True life is living forever and this cannot be attained in this world. Who among us do not love to live a long life? We all seek it at the great expense of time, money and effort.

The Psalmist added, *“that he may see good”*. In this world, good and evil are mixed together. We experience good today and evil tomorrow, vice versa. To always see good is not of this world but the world to come. If you want to live a good life forever, which you do, hear the instruction: *“Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:13-14)*.

May the Lord bless His word for us all. Amen!