

## Proverbs 2:12-15

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/prov/prov-2/proverbs-212-15/>

*Wickedness is a perversion of God's design for the world and for each individual life. Those who chose it find themselves fighting against reality.*

Solomon continues laying out his pathway for how human responsibility best interacts with God's design for the world, and with God Himself. The first half of Chapter 2 focused on the direct positive outcomes of wisdom. The second half is a warning of the negative consequences of choosing the other way—the way of *evil*.

Only through aligning our choices with a trust in God will we be *delivered from the way of evil*. The word *way* here is the Hebrew word “derek,” which means *journey*. Like wisdom, *evil* is a path. A *way* of life. Only through accepting and applying God's knowledge to our lives can we be *delivered* from the *evil way*.

One of the keys to Wisdom Literature (the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon) is this challenging mix between making the best choices we can and trusting in God—even when the consequences are confusing or the purpose unclear. Job was baffled by the trajectory of his life. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon warns that life is vaporous and enigmatic, even when we fear God and obey His commands. In Proverbs, Solomon will talk about the confusing reality of exceptions—wisdom is not a strict prescriptive formula. It is a path.

When we face this uncertainty, it leads to two options. We can either press into trusting God or we can steer off the path in search of our own *way*—which will ultimately be some kind of illusion of control.

The *ways* of *evil* are referred to as perversions. Wisdom *delivers* us from the way of *evil* and *from the man who speaks perverse things*. This *man* is representative of those who choose *evil*. In the next verse (13), those who choose *evil* are referred to as *those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness*. They choose to take what God means for good, as a means for trusting in Him, and remake it in their own image. For their own ends. They choose darkness over light.

Those who leave the *paths of uprightness* to walk in the *ways of darkness* have departed from the good path. They have left. The Hebrew word for *leave* here is the word “asab,” which is most often translated “forsake.” Those who *walk in the ways of darkness* first have to *leave* or “forsake” the path for which they were created.

Solomon is pointing out the absurdity of this choice. To forsake the way of God is to *walk in the ways of darkness*. Obviously, walking in *darkness* is very difficult; it is vastly inferior to walking in the light. We were made to walk not just with our feet but with our eyes. Without vision, it is hard to move. Walking becomes frustrating, slow, and crooked. By leaving the path of wisdom,

the wicked choose to walk blindly. This is the reality of what is happening, but will of course not be the perception of those who choose darkness, at least not initially.

The wicked, therefore, *delight in doing evil*. They rejoice in forsaking reality. Choosing their own way, *they rejoice in the perversity of evil*. They have left the straight path and *chosen the crooked path*. The straight path is wisdom and the deformed path is wickedness. The wicked delight in their twisted perversions. The design for their life, the way, has been abandoned. *Evil* is not a creation. It is a *perversity* of good. In essence, evil is the giving up of good. Deciding to lean away from God rather than into Him. We are *delivered* from the fate of *evil* by receiving the knowledge of God (verse 11).

We need God's guidance to protect us from these perversions. So that we do not become one of those *who rejoice in the perversity of evil*. There is the famous saying that the gates of hell lock from the inside, suggesting those who do *evil* have chosen it. They prefer it. The negative consequences of evil become their preference. This is the end result of denying reality. Those who choose *the way of evil*, the path of *perversion*, succumb to a *crooked* and *devious* existence. They slip further and further from reality, believing more and more in their *perversity*.

### **Biblical Text**

**To deliver you from the way of evil,  
From the man who speaks perverse things;**

**13 From those who leave the paths of uprightness  
To walk in the ways of darkness;**

**14 Who delight in doing evil  
And rejoice in the perversity of evil;**

**15 Whose paths are crooked,  
And who are devious in their ways;**