

Feet That Are Swift in Running to Mischief

Pr 6:16 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Introduction:

1. We use the word mischief today to refer to things that are not really that bad.
 - a. Egging someone's house
 - b. Toilet papering someone's trees
 - c. When I was in the sixth grade we stunned a wasp and dropped it down the back of a girl's blouse and she was stung 3x - that is mischief
 - d. In the fall we'd go to the corn field and get a few ears of field corn and shuck it and then around Halloween we would go corning. We'd throw a couple of handfuls at people's windows and they would come outside to see what was going on
2. But the word here translated "mischief" here is translated evil most of the time.
 - a. This word is used 663x in the Hebrew OT
 - b. 442x it is translated "evil"
 - c. 59x it is translated "wickedness"
 - d. 21x it is translated "mischief"
3. It is the word "evil" in these verses....

- a. Ge 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.
 - b. Ge 37:2 These *are* the generations of Jacob. Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.
4. God hates those who enjoy evil, they love evil and they are quick in running to evil.
 5. Those whose feet are swift in running to evil have six characteristics

Those Who Are Swift in Running to Evil...

I. THEIR CONSCIENCE NO LONGER BOTHERS THEM WHEN THEY SIN - 1 TIM 4:2

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

1. We are born with a conscience
2. The conscience is meant to be like an alarm system that goes off when you are about to do something wrong or after you have done something wrong
3. Beware of letting your conscience be your guide because your conscience can become corrupted and seared
4. Go to some far off island where they have never met white men or to some jungle where they have never seen a Bible or heard of Jesus and those people will understand that stealing is wrong, that murder is wrong
 - a) *They have never heard - "thou shalt not kill" or "thou shalt not steal" but they will still recognize that those things are wrong.*
 - b) *They have a conscience*
5. Those who are swift in running to evil and wickedness have a conscience that does not bother them
 - a) *They sin and it does not bother them*
 - b) *They sin and then sleep like a baby that night*

- c) *Vicky's father would not take a bowling ball to work - he couldn't sleep at night*
- 6. A person's conscience can become seared -
 - a) *Like my fingers at McDonalds*
 - b) *Like my feet in NJ*
 - c) *Suppose someone steals an item from Walmart*
 - (1) His conscience bothers him
 - (2) But the next time he steals his conscience does not bother him as much
 - (3) Then less and less the next time etc.
 - (4) Eventually he can steal and not feel a thing from his conscience

Those Who Are Swift in Running to Evil...

II. THEY HAVE NO FEAR OF GOD - PROV 8:13A

13 The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

1. Someone who loves the Lord and fears the Lord hates evil
2. People who love evil and are swift in running to evil prove that they have no fear of God
3. Those who fear God and love the Lord want to please him and they want to avoid that which would displease God
4. When a person is saved, then God puts that fear in his heart
Jer 32:40b ...but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.
5. Those who are swift in running to evil have no respect for God, His ways, His commands,
6. At one time, in this land, even unbelievers had a respect for God
 - a) *They would not think of working in the fields on the Lord's Day*
 - b) *They could not curse in front of women or children, or the preacher*
 - c) *That is disappearing today*
7. Remember the thieves who were crucified with the Savior

Lu 23:39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

- a) *One thief was changed*
- b) *One thief began to fear God*
- c) *One thief stood up to his friend and rebuked him*

Those Who Are Swift in Running to Evil....

III. SEEK TO BRING OTHERS WITH THEM - PROV 4:14-19

Pr 4:14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. 16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall. 17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. 18 But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. 19 The way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

Pr 1:10 My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

Pr 13:20 He that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

1. Those who are swift in running to evil enjoy bringing other people right along with them
2. If a kid runs with the bad crowd, expect him to be pulled into it
3. This is a separation text and it tells us who to avoid in our lives
4. Remember that Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom and the next time you see Lot he is living in Sodom.
5. See here that evil is contagious
6. A Christian in the military was determined not to be like the others in

his unit. "My lifestyle irritated my superior officer. What irked him most was not my refusal to drink even one bottle of beer. The officer had many fine qualities and when he was sober we were good friends. Once he even offered me three months of his pay if I would just take one drink. If he had offered me his pay for ten years it wouldn't have tempted me. Not that I am perfect, of course, like anyone else I was vulnerable elsewhere. My determined sobriety troubled this man's conscience."

Those Who are Swift in Running to Evil....

IV. REJOICE TO DO EVIL - PROV 2:14

14 Who rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked;

1. Like those who take part each year in New Orleans during Mardi Gras
2. They rejoice in their evil
Pr 14:9 Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour.
 - a) *There is no shame*
 - b) *Sin is funny and fun*
3. One way to make a thing acceptable is to put it on a TV program and make it funny
 - a) *Make the homosexual on the show the funny, loveable character and make the Christian the bigoted, bad character*
 - b) *Make a TV show where everyone is getting drunk and they are falling over each other and make it funny and that takes the sting away from the sin - it becomes fun and funny*
 - c) *The TV shows don't show you and lives that are ruined by alcohol and sin - they make it fun and funny*
4. These modern reality shows
 - a) *Little girls who are cussing*
 - b) *Honey Boo Boo*
 - c) *Big brother - all these men and women living together*
5. When sin loses its shame, then you can count on a nation becoming

corrupt

6. Anymore it is the Christians who are the bad people

a) *We are intolerant*

b) *We are the ones shoving our religion down people's throats*

Those Who are Swift in Running to Evil...

v. OFTEN SUFFER PREMATURE DEATH - PROV 11:19

19 As righteousness *tendeth* to life: so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it to his own death.*

1. By the lifestyle that they live they destroy themselves
2. One preacher said, "Some of those old boys that I used to drink with and party with are dead."
3. Janice Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Belushi and that club - find out the name of that club - they are all dead
4. The "27 Club" is a designation given to a group of rock 'n' rollers who all died at the age of 27. The most recent inductee into the 27 club was Amy Winehouse who was found dead in her London apartment last July. Her untimely demise came as no surprise to family, friends or fans. Winehouse's lifestyle had for some time been out of control. Dominated by alcohol, drugs and eating disorders, she had been in and out of rehab numerous times. So destructive was Winehouse's lifestyle that a website appeared in 2007 asking people to predict when she would die.

One book lists 34 rock performers who died at the age of 27.

Among the more prominent members of the "27 Club" are: Brian Jones, founding member of the Rolling Stones; Jimi Hendrix, pioneering guitarist; soulful singer Janis Joplin; Jim Morrison, lead singer of The Doors; and Kurt Cobain, lead singer of Nirvana.

One thread that is common to the vast majority of celebrities who have died at an early age is they pursued with wild abandon what some call "the rock 'n' roll lifestyle." Simply put, they practiced unbridled hedonism. They did what they wanted, when they wanted and without any regard to negative consequences.

Are there lessons to be gleaned by examining the lives of the members of the “27 Club?” I think so. One is that fame and fortune are poor substitutes for meaning and purpose. It seems, in the end, that celebrity and wealth are empty pursuits.

Amy Winehouse, like other “27 Club” members, had it all. She was famous, wealthy and her talent was celebrated. Yet, it is clear that “having it all” did not quench a yearning in her soul. Something was missing.

I am convinced that a life that is void of meaning seeks to find purpose and fulfillment in experiences. And for too many members of the “27 Club” the experiences they pursued were self-destructive. Another lesson is that the so-called “rock ‘n’ roll lifestyle” is simply unsustainable. A human body can only take so much abuse and then it breaks down -- physically, mentally and emotionally. A person running on a hedonistic treadmill succumbs, sooner rather than later, to drugs, disease or despair.

While members of the “27 Club” may have gained the whole world, they seemingly lost their souls. In the end their lives were, as Jesus indicated in the Gospels, personally unprofitable. And that is beyond sad; it is tragic.

Those Who are Swift in Running to Evil...

vi. SPEAK EVIL OF THOSE WHO DO GOOD - 1PET 4:3-4

3 For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: 4 Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*:

1. Has anyone ever looked at you like you were strange?
 - a) *You bow your head in the break room and thank God for your sandwich. Someone comes in and says, “What’s the matter? You got a headache?” “No, I’m just thanking God for this food.” And they look at you as if you came from a different planet.*

- b) *“You go to church 3x per week? Are you crazy”*
- c) *“You give a tenth of your money to church?”*
- 2. *“You just think that you’re better than everybody”*
- 3. *“You Baptists think that you’re the only ones going to heaven.”*
2Ti 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Conclusion:

1. Keep your distance from those who love evil and are swift in running toward evil.
2. Chuck Swindoll tells the story of the spider who build a beautiful web in an old house. He kept it clean and shiny so flies would patronize it. The minute he got a “customer” he would clean up after him so other flies would not get suspicious.

Then one day a fairly intelligent fly came buzzing by the clean spider web. Old man spider called out, “Come in and sit.” But the fairly intelligent fly said, “No sir, I don’t see other flies in your house, and I’m not going in alone.”

Presently the fly saw on the floor below him a large crowd of flies dancing around on a piece of brown paper. He was delighted. He was not afraid if lots of flies were doing it. So he came in for a landing. Just before he landed, a bee zoomed by, saying, “Don’t land there, stupid! That’s fly-paper!” But the fairly intelligent fly shouted back, “Don’t be silly. Those flies are dancing. There’s a big crowd there. Everybody’s doing it. That many flies can’t be wrong!” You know what happened. He landed on the paper and died.

Some want to be in the crowd so badly that we end up in a mess because we didn’t listen or search out a situation. What does it profit a fly (or a person) if he escapes the web only to end up on the glue?