

Proverbs – Wisdom That Works - Part 4

The Good Life – Proverbs 2:1-22

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – June 6th, 2021

Introduction

- This morning we are again turning to the book of Proverbs to learn how to live the good life and to enjoy the life that is good. We again hear the wisdom of God from the mouth of wise parents speaking to their children. May we all hear what God would be saying to us this morning.
- This chapter presents to us an “If-then” formula. For example, *If you work 5 hours, then you will receive \$100.* It is a conditional promise or a contractual agreement. If you do this, then you will receive that. If you do what is instructed in this chapter, then you will truly live in the land. First, we have to look at our part of this equation.

Desire wisdom

Proverbs 2:1-4 (NIV)

My son, *if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2 turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— 3 indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4 and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure*

- In this passage, there are three “ifs”. This is our part of the equation. These are the things that we are to do if we want to live a life that is good.
- First (v.1) – we are to be receptive to the word and wisdom of God. “Accept my words.” Are you willing to accept what God would say to you? Not everyone is. Why? Because we think we know what is better, we think we know what is right, and we think we have it all together. We don’t accept them because we think we know better. This is pride, and it takes humility to acknowledge that we have a lot to learn. And that is the sight of Him. We don’t know anything. First, we are to accept His words, be willing to hear Him, and desire to hear Him.
- Second (v.2)- not only are we to hear him, but we are also to “store up” his commands within us. We are not to just have them go in one ear and out the other. His words are to be valued and treasured and collected and saved, like putting money in the bank or food in the kitchen. They are to be “stored within us.”
- We are to “accept them,” and then we are to “turn our ear” toward them, lean in, really listen, and then give our heart to understanding what His words mean. That is to think about them, study them, meditate upon them and then put them into practice.
- Third (v.3) – we are to be willing to receive the word, and then we need to actively pursue the word. The first two verses are a response to wisdom’s call. In the next two verses, we are to call out to wisdom. We are to “call out” for insight and “cry aloud” for understanding. This is not a passive receptivity, but this is an active pursuit. We are longing, and we are looking for wisdom.
- Forth (v.4) – we are to “look for it” as we would for silver, mining the hills, applying effort, and time and energy to wisdom, giving ourselves to it, investing in it. We are to “search for it” as we would a hidden treasure.

- How many of us are doing this? Where are you with this? It is available to you. Are you listening, are you treasuring, are you pursuing wisdom? This is our part, and all of us have the opportunity to do so.
- When we look for wisdom in our pursuit of how to live a life that is good and how to obtain the good life, then we will find the knowledge of God. Wisdom will lead us to Him.

Find the knowledge of God

Proverbs 2:5-8 (NIV)

then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. 6 For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. 7 He holds success in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, 8 for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones.

- Then you will understand the “fear of the Lord.” If you will look for wisdom, you will see things, how they are put together, how they work, and our place in them. Then you will ask the bigger question of who put them all together and realize that you are not the center of the universe. That there is someone and something bigger than us. You will understand the “fear of the Lord.” This is the gateway and the door that will lead you into the “knowledge of God.”
- The Lord is the one who gives wisdom, and He is indeed the source of all wisdom. From Him comes knowledge and understanding, and without Him, we would be incapable of anything. He is the one who holds “success” for the upright – and He is also the one who defines success . . . and gives success. He is a shield that will protect you, and He is the one who will enable us to walk and to be blameless in His sight. In following Him, we will be guarded and protected from all kinds of foolish and harmful choices and people.
- If you are looking for wisdom, you will fear the Lord, and from this fear, you will gain knowledge of Him. And from this knowledge of Him, you will be given wisdom, and knowledge and understanding, He will give success to the upright, He will be a shield to the blameless, a guard to the just, and protection to the faithful. The Lord gives wisdom. The Lord provides success. The Lord shields. The Lord guards. The Lord protects. These things come from our knowledge of Him, our fear of Him, our pursuit of wisdom, from our desire to truly know what is life and what is living.

Understand what is right and just and fair

Proverbs 2:9-11 (NIV)

Then you will understand what is right and just and fair—every good path. 10 For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. 11 Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.

- Once you know about God and know Him, then you will understand what is right and what is just, and what is fair – every good path. You will know what to do when it comes to how you are to live your life. Godly character is applied theology. How we live flows from what we believe. What we believe comes from our desire and pursuit of wisdom. Wisdom when it enters our heart, when it moves from something we know to something we believe, it will be pleasant to

your soul, you know in the depths of your heart that it is true, and this knowledge will be pleasant and oh so good to you.

- And from knowing the truth about God and knowing God, you will gain discretion – the ability to make proper decisions and these choices will protect you and guard you. They will keep you from following and be trapped by wicked and immoral people. It will keep you from wickedness and immorality and will help you persevere and protect you from the distress, devastation, and destruction that wickedness and immorality bring.

Be saved from wicked people

Proverbs 2:12-15 (NIV)

Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, 13 who have left the straight paths to walk in dark ways, 14 who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, 15 whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways.

- The wisdom of God will save you from the ways of wicked people. From walking in their ways, and falling for their lies. These people's words are perverse, their logic and their language, and the way they think twists what is right and just and fair. There is not a fear of God. There is a love of self and what is best for me and what my flesh thinks is right or what I want and desire with no heed to the wisdom of God.
- These people have left the way of wisdom and have turned to walk a dark path. The way of God that is full of light and life and clarity, to sneaking and dark, hidden ways of walking, full of trickery. They delight in doing wrong, and evil has become “good” to them. They “rejoice” in the “perverseness of evil.” And evil becomes worse and worse and more and more perverse.
- Their paths are “crooked,” and they are devious in their ways. And there are plenty of people who live like this. Wisdom will save you from becoming one of these people, following in their footsteps and reaping their reward.

Be saved from immoral people

Proverbs 2:16-19 (NIV)

Wisdom will save you also from the adulterous woman, from the wayward woman with her seductive words, 17 who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God. 18 Surely her house leads down to death and her paths to the spirits of the dead. 19 None who go to her return or attain the paths of life.

- The wisdom of God will protect and save you from sexual immorality. From the “wayward” woman or the “wayward” man. People who are trying to seduce you and take you away from the path that is good. They are looking to convince you that being with them is better than being true to your partner—the one to who you made a commitment and a covenant before God. Once you stray from the wisdom of God, you will be vulnerable to follow a way that you think will lead you to a better place. But this pathway looks to lead you to an “elevated life,” but in actuality, it is the doorway to death. You think it will lead you up, but the truth is it

will let you down - way, way down to death itself and the spirits of the dead. This way will leave you lifeless and take your very soul.

- Does this mean that there is no hope for those who have committed sexual immorality? No, there is still a redeemer, there is a way of escape, but you will pay a heavy price, and if you do not repent and return, there is only death in store for you. This is such a strong temptation that wisdom will warn us from “adultery” time and time again in the continued chapters ahead (Prov. 5-7).
- The wisdom of God of honoring your covenant you made to the partner of your youth will guide you to follow this commitment, and from it, you will be spared and saved from what is dead, promising what is life.

Live in the land

Proverbs 2:20-22 (NIV)

Thus you will walk in the ways of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous. 21 For the upright will live in the land, and the blameless will remain in it; 22 but the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the unfaithful will be torn from it.

- If you receive wisdom and pursue it, you will find God, and God will protect and provide for you. Therefore, you will walk in ways that are good and keep to the paths of the righteous. Your ethics, the way you live, always flow from your theology, what you believe.
- You will “live in the land”; you will be among the land of the living, and you will truly “live” in it. You will not just exist on this plane and on this planet. You will truly live and remain, not just for this lifetime, but live eternally in the new heaven and earth.
- But all those who are wicked, those who have chosen to forsake wisdom, and rebel against our good and perfect God, because of their wickedness will be cut off, from the land, will not enter into the promised land of the Lord and will not experience the new life. They will be torn, removed from it.

Conclusion and Communion

- *If you desire wisdom, then you will find the knowledge of God, then you will understand what is right and just and fair, then you will be saved from wicked people, then you will be saved from immoral people, then you will truly and eternally live in the land.*
- So, choose to give yourself to wisdom, turn your ear to here. Listen and live. Pursue what is right and true and godly. Give yourself to the knowledge of God, and He will protect and provide. In His pathway is the road to true success and the way that is God, and the way to true life.
- Jesus Himself is the Way, Jesus Himself is the truth, Jesus Himself is the life. Jesus Himself, is the wisdom of God, He is the wisdom of God that lived among us, who is the way for all of us and invites us to follow Him, to turn from our wicked ways and receive true life from Him.
- Respond to His invitation today, give yourself to true wisdom and find the one who is true life.