

WORSHIP SERVICE - 7.17.2022

HOW WISDOM REWARDS YOU - PART 1

I. INTRODUCTION

PROVERBS 3:13-20

13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who gets understanding,

14 for the gain from her is better than gain from silver
and her profit better than gold.

15 She is more precious than jewels,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.

16 Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.

17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;
those who hold her fast are called blessed.

19 The Lord by wisdom founded the earth;
by understanding he established the heavens;

20 by his knowledge the deeps broke open,
and the clouds drop down the dew.

II. WISDOM REWARDS YOU WITH A BLESSED LIFE

- The second part of chapter 3 is in reality four poems that were edited at some point to form the fourth lesson from the father to the son.
- The first three poems serve to motivate the son in regard to how wisdom will reward him if he seeks her and holds on to her and the fourth contains the lesson itself on being a good neighbor and avoiding God's judgment.
- v13-18 contains the first poem about the great value of wisdom.
- There is a word that bookends this poem. Notice that it starts and ends with the word "blessed".
- This is called an *inclusio*. Everything that is sandwiched between those two outside words is defined by those two words, supports those two words, or expands on those two words.

- v13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
- v18b those who hold her fast are called blessed.
- The point that Solomon makes is that the one that is categorized as being blessed is the one who finds wisdom and holds on to her.
- Everything between those two thoughts supports that point.

- When we read the word “blessed” we may think of the word “blessings.”
- Blessings are something that God bestows upon someone.
- **Ephesians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,
- But being blessed is not the same thing as receiving blessings.
- The word blessed means the state of being happy, content, or highly favored
- Blessed is a state of being. It describes the condition someone is in.
- Those who are blessed are characterized by happiness, contentment, and divine favor.
- Bruce Waltke in his Proverbs commentary, describes blessed as, “*people who experience life optimally, as the Creator intended.*”
- We can say that someone who is blessed is experiencing the good life as God intended.

- In the Beatitudes, Jesus uses the same word, “blessed”.
- Matt 5:3-12 you read, “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted...*”
- Jesus is referring to their state of being, setting these people as the model to be envied or imitated and those who receive these rewards.
- **Rev 1:3** Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.
- So the picture being drawn in this poem is that the one who finds themselves in this state of being blessed, who is experiencing the good life as God intended, is the one who finds wisdom and who gets understanding.
- That person who gets wisdom is blessed.

1. HER VALUE

- Why is the one who finds wisdom and holds on to her considered blessed?
- First, because of her value.
- Wisdom’s gain, her profits, far exceed that of gold, silver, or precious jewels. These are commodities that everyone would love to have in large quantities—wisdom is far better than all of those.
- Wisdom is so much better than material wealth or possessions because when you have it, you can’t lose it.
- Jesus said in Matt 6, to store up treasures in heaven for this very reason.
- As we looked at last week, God does want to bless us at times with material things, but without wisdom, we cannot be formed in to the kind of people who will properly enjoy these things in the right context.
- To paraphrase Bruce Waltke on the difference between money and wisdom, “*money can put food on the table but not fellowship around it. Money can buy you a house but it doesn’t make it a home.*”
- In contrast, wisdom can give you spiritual, material, and relational blessings.

- But wisdom is not our default mode.
- Money and stuff can be acquired through human strength and ingenuity.
- Wisdom, however, which is infinitely more valuable, cannot be acquired that way.
- It is for the one who seeks, and finds, and apprehends it as a divine gift.
- Wisdom comes from another dimension because God is the source of wisdom.
- It only comes through a relationship with Jesus Christ—who is wisdom incarnate.
- In him alone are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

- Is there anything you desire to have more than him?
- How would you answer the question, “*In order for me to really be truly happy, I need Jesus but I also need _____?*”
- When you have him—wisdom—then you can live in that state of blessedness that Proverbs is talking about.
- Wisdom can make a happy home, loving marriages, enriching relationships, a good life that cannot be valued by earthly metrics of success and wealth.

2. HER REWARD

- The second reason the one who finds and holds on to wisdom is considered blessed is because wisdom pays off big!
- Wisdom rewards with long life in her right hand and riches and honor in her left hand.
- Recall how Solomon received his divine wisdom, 1 Kings 3. God gave him what he asked for, wisdom, but also gave him so much more.
- How does wisdom reward with long life, riches, and honor?
- Wisdom helps you avoid the pitfalls that can cut your life short.
- It helps us avoid foolish things and foolish decisions that can damage our life and reputation.
- Following the teachings of Proverbs will generally lead to the blessed life, the good life as God intended it.
- Solomon describes the way of wisdom as pleasant, and peaceful. Who doesn’t want their life to be characterized by that?
- But the key isn’t to desire the blessed life—the key is to desire and seek after wisdom—that is the aim of one’s life.

3. HER PROMISE

- Here is the third reason one is considered blessed for having wisdom, Solomon declares that wisdom is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her.
- A connection is being drawn here to the tree of life in the garden.
- God gave Adam life and the tree would continue to give him life if he obeyed God.
- Through Adam and Eve’s sin, mankind lost access to the tree and the garden paradise and the world was plunged into a curse.
- Through Jesus, we have eternal life, and we know that the promise at the end of the age for us, in the new heaven and new earth, is that the tree of life will be restored.
- **Rev. 22:1-2** Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
- For now, Proverbs is giving us a foretaste of what the tree of life promises.
- Wisdom gives us a preview, a glimpse, of heaven and eternity.
- Why did Adam and Eve lose access to the tree of life?
- Because they wanted to obtain the knowledge of good and evil apart from God.
- Proverbs calls us back to following God, to stop trying to seek after earthly knowledge apart from God, his wisdom is a tree of life.
- That’s why you need to get wisdom and hold onto her.
- Holding fast to the life-giving wisdom of Proverbs is what we must do until we reach the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.
- **Rev. 2:7** He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.
- The only way is to humble ourselves and take hold of Jesus. When we do that, when we have Jesus, we are truly blessed.

III. WISDOM REWARDS YOU WITH GOD'S ORDER

- 19 The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens;

- 20 by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.
- We see in this text that, “*by wisdom*” the Lord made everything in this universe.
- The whole of the cosmos was created by the Lord by means of wisdom.
- The words wisdom, understanding, knowledge are used to describe God’s creative act—the Lord possesses all of those in complete perfection and totality.
- The creative power of the Lord to think and speak something into existence is a work of his wisdom as much as it is of his power.

• **Have you taken some time to think of the complexity of his creation? To marvel at His creative wisdom?**

- **Psalm 19:1** The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
- [The Webb Space Telescope](#)

- But not only did God make everything by wisdom, it is also through wisdom that God sustains his creation.
- The deep breaking open speaks to the past creative action of Gen. 1-2 and the clouds dropping dew speaks to the present actions of the hydrologic cycle that sustains life on our planet.
- The provision of the life-giving water necessary for our survival and continued existence is intricately woven into the created order.
- By wisdom, God gives the earth everything it needs to sustain itself.
- This is how immense the wisdom and knowledge of God is.

- These questions get to the point that Solomon is making with this short poem.
- If the Lord employed wisdom as his tool in bringing about all of the marvelous things of creation, setting the earth on its foundation, dividing the primeval waters, establishing every system that sustains life on this planet, what can his revealed wisdom do in the lives of those who find it?
- If God brought the world into existence through wisdom, then what makes us think that we could continue on in our life without the wisdom of God?
- If God can do all of these great and glorious things by wisdom, what can he do for those who seek after him?

- God is so much smarter and wiser than we are.
- **Isaiah 55:6-9** “Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; 7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- **Romans 11:33** Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!
- What would make us think we can do life without needing his wisdom?

- All of the wisdom contained in Proverbs flows from the vast scope of the Lord’s wisdom.
- By observing creation you can see that God built order into his creation.
- The world works because God made it to work in a certain way, according to his divine wisdom.
- Wisdom grants you an ability to rightly perceive God’s order and live by it.
- When you do live by God’s order, life generally works out the way God intended for it to work out.
- When you violate or go against God’s order, things can be disastrous and lead to ruin.

- Living against the way God made the world to work will not bring success but ruin.
- Living in the flow of the way God made the world to work will put you on the path of life and peace.
- Get wisdom and live by God’s order.

CONCLUSION

- This passage points us to Jesus who is both the Creator and Sustainer of all things.
- **John 1:1-3** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.
- **Colossians 1:15-17** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
- **Hebrews 1:3a** He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.
- The wise order of the universe exists because of the wisdom of its Creator.
- That wisdom is Jesus. All things point to him, all things exist because of him, all things find their purpose in him, and all things are upheld by him.
- Since the created order exists and is centered on Christ, you must know him in order to be rewarded with the ability to perceive and live according to his order.