

Proverbs 3:13–18
How to Be Happy

Monday, September 23, 2024 • Read Proverbs 3:13–18

Questions from the Scripture text: What man is happy in v13? What does wisdom exceed in value (v14–15)? What does she give (v16)? What are her ways like (v17)? What is she to whom (v18a)? Therefore, who are happy (v18b)?

How can we be happy? Proverbs 3:13–18 looks forward to the sermon in the midweek prayer meeting. In these six verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **happiness is in God Himself, through His Word.**

How to be blessed (v13, 18). Happiness, blessedness, comes by not just finding (two synonyms in v13; cf. 2:2a) wisdom but grasping it (two synonyms in v18; cf. 2:2b). When wisdom is applied to the heart, what is found and laid hold of is not merely truths and techniques but the Lord Himself (cf. 1:7, 2:5). Would you enjoy the blessed life? Then know and fear the Lord through finding and hanging onto His Word.

Possessions (v14–16). Silver (v14a), gold (v14b), and rubies (v15a) can buy much, but what they can buy don't compare (v15b) to length of days (v16a) and honor (v16b). The true riches are purchased by the knowledge of God. Only in the knowledge of Him can any possessions be a true blessing. Only in the knowledge of Him is there everlasting life and glorious honor in a new heavens and new earth.

Pleasantness and Peace (v17–18a). Wisdom doesn't just obtain pleasant things. Living wisely is itself pleasant (v17a). The path of wisdom is itself an enjoyment of peace (v17b): whole blessing in the whole of life. Wisdom is like a tree of life (v18a): a provision from God in which we taste the blessedness of being right with Him. Walking with God is pleasant and blessed, because He Himself is the true pleasantness and blessedness.

To what are you tempted to look for enjoyment and peace? By what means does God turn you to Himself instead?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving us Your wisdom, by means of Your Word. Thank You for giving us all things. But thank You that these are but a secondary blessing to the gift of Yourself in Your Son. Give us to look to You alone for all our blessedness, so that even in Your good gifts, it is first and foremost You and Your goodness that we enjoy, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP73C "Yet Constantly, I Am with You" or TPH73C "In Sweet Communion, Lord with Thee"

"(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Proverbs Chapter 3 verses 13 through 18. These are God's words. Happy is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gains understanding. For her proceeds, are better than the prophets of silver and her gain then fine gold. She is more precious than rubies and all the things you may desire.

Cannot compare with her. Length of days is in her right hand. In her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness. And all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life. To those who take, hold of her and happy. Are all who. Retain. So far, the Reading of Gods inspired.

And they're interrupt.

At the beginning and end of this section, we have the little bookends that sort of highlighted to us that One, you one thought, one unit. From verse 13 through 18, and that is happy is the man who at the beginning of verse 13, and then at the end of Verse 18, Happy are all who.

Uh, and so Happiness. Uh, blessedness. Joy. For us comes, of course, in God himself, but God has given us means. He's given us his word and because The beginning of wisdom is the fear. Of the Lord to reverence him rightly. While referencing him rightly recognizes that he's communicated himself to us by way of his word.

And so, a proper fear of the Lord will, then find wisdom will seek and search like we've been hearing throughout Proverbs so far will make whatever use it can of the word of God. Order in order to have him by his own means. And so you have the, the two things at the beginning, you have happy as the man who finds Uh, that is That we should not just find and gain wisdom and understanding like, we Uh, Thinking about, The first part of chapter 2 verse 2 incline, your ear.

Uh, to wisdom. But then, in the second part of chapter 2 verse 2, we had apply your heart to understanding. And that's similar to the idea in the end of this little section. Happy are all who retain her and really, it's Grasp who cling to her? With their hands.

And so happiness, blessedness in your life comes from God himself. And in God himself, do not think that there is a technique or an activity that in and of itself, or by itself, won't make you happy. But the way that God has given you For having him as your happiness, the means by which God gives himself to you, to be, your happiness, is to find his word to incline, yourself to his word.

Listen, listen to his word. And then to grasp, to hold it. Or does our English translation, our English version has here in verse 18. To retain it. If you would have a happy life then you must know and fear the lord. And if you are to know and fear the lord, you may the only way to do it is the way that he has given, which means finding receiving, obtaining gaining his word and hanging on too, cling clinging, To living by his word.

And so that's how how to be blessed. And then, in the middle part, We have. The possessions that wisdom gives us and then Pleasantness. That wisdom gives us the that which wisdom gives us. Is better than any of the possessions. That you can get by the wealth of this world.

Silver, the first part of verse 14. Gold second, part of verse 14. Rubies first part of verse 15, They can, they could buy much. In that culture. At that time, they can still buy a fair amount today. The silver golden rubies. But Can silver gold and rubies buy length of days?

Can silver gold and rubies, buy real honor not just being honored by others but actually being weighty in the grand scheme of things. The the man who appears to others to be the most weighty, but does not have the knowledge of God. He gets thrown on the trash Heap of history.

Yeah, out of the hundreds of billions that there have been, there are maybe a handful whose names are even remembered by men. But how honorable how weighty? How great Are those who have lived in the knowledge of the Lord and died in the knowledge of Lord and will rise again.

And the knowledge of the Lord. And so in, Her her profits and her proceeds length of days is in her right hand and in her left hand riches and honor. These are the the riches not just long life in this world, which can instrumentally come by following God's word by following his wisdom and in the way he Uh, created his world to work.

And the ordinary.

In the, in the ordinary working of his Providence. Uh, things like Being wise and not self-indulgent, working hard and generous. And All of. Uh, the mental and emotional

benefits. Of knowing the Lord and walking. All those things can contribute to long life or you may be cut down in the flower of Youth.

But if you know the Lord, if you have true wisdom, And of course, knowing the Lord is only By faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ by Hope in him. Um, Than your length of days is infinite. And same with. Uh, same, then with the honor. New heavens and new Earth in which we reign as kings forever.

Having been restored to. Uh not just to our original kingship in Christ but brought into a greater kingship in the last Adam than that, which the first Adam lost. So, The possessions that wisdom gets us. Yes, in this life but how much greater and Fuller when we think of it in the whole of what the Lord teaches us in his word?

And then, The second thing. Uh, that not only does wisdom get us things but it is itself. Pleasant. So, the wise way, leads to great things. But the wise way itself is a reward. Her ways are ways of pleasantness. All her paths are peace. And so living wisely. Living in fellowship with God, according to his word as pleasant already.

Uh, you might lack much, creaturely pleasantness, there might be physical discomfort and relational opposition from others in a In a creation that is bound to corruption and Decay. You might toil hard and then something happens, that wipes it all out or you leave it to a child who ends up being a fool and destroys it, you know, all of that, you know, the things that Ecclesiastes noted might happen.

That would make it vanity. But if you're not living, merely under the But in the knowledge of him who sits above the Sun as it were, Then you have in him a pleasantness that is not providentially dependent. Is not dependent on what you have. It is not dependent on what happens.

It does not, it is not dependent on other people and what they think of you. And you have a pleasantness that cannot be taken from you, her ways, or ways of pleasantness, you have a peace, a Shalom, that cannot be disrupted. Um, what is happening although you may grieve as Jesus did.

Uh, over the consequences of unbelief and the continuing effects of the Fall. Yet, his own peace was not disrupted by those things. Uh, even in his Humanity, the only disruption of his peace and his, Shalom came as he suffered by way of his Humanity for our sins. But Jesus says my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

So that we may know that he our God who died for us, never leaves or forsakes us even to the end of the Age. And that the Triune God in the son, never leaves, Or forsakes us. And so it's not just that the wise life can get you. Length of days and can get you.

Uh, rich is an honor. That the wise life itself, the life lived in fellowship with God, is itself, a pleasantness that is above these other things that that can get you, is it self-awpance? That is above all these things? These other things that the wise life Can get you.

So walking with God, Um, Uh, Pleasant and walking with God is peaceful, wisdom is as it were a tree of life. Um, so long as the Covenant of Works was not. Broken so long as it was still in effect. Adam or Mrs. Adam could go and eat of the Tree of Life and know that they were in fellowship with God.

And that what was promised to them in this God, who is their life? Is that in the keeping of that Covenant? They would be able to enjoy that life forever. It was a sacramental tree, it wasn't magical fruit, that God was worried about Adam and And Eve getting to After the fall.

And so he places the angel in the sword. It was sacramental fruit. And it would have been. It would have been a cruelty of God. To permit them to continue to eat of the sacramental fruit and think that, they were somehow still having life and could still have it forever.

And so he, he puts the safeguards in place. To keep to guard as the actual language in Genesis 3, the way to the Tree of Life and we're not done with it yet, we see at the end of Revelation that there is the tree of life. Bearing. Uh, bearing the the 12 fruits And it's on either side of the river and so on.

Um, well we don't have the Tree of Life now. But we do have wisdom. We do have the fear of the Lord. And living in fellowship with him. And it reminds us, it teaches us. It makes us to know that we are right with him and that we are the Blessed ones.

Who shall be brought into the fullness of the blessedness of belonging to and knowing having fellowship with having had Covenant, kept with God, Which of course our last atom. In the Covenant of Grace, the one in into whom Faith, brings us bringing us into the last Adam himself, in Union with him and bringing us into the kept Covenant of Grace, the rewards of which have been secured for all of those who are party to that Covenant and you become party to it in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Wisdom is like a tree of life to you now. Uh, spend time in his word in the morning, in the evening and these family worship times in the public worship. Genuine Bible wisdom is as a tree of life to us. Uh, it makes us to enjoy. Um, the pleasantness, the blessedness.

Of belonging to God. So may the Lord give us to both find wisdom by his word and to cling to grasp retain. Uh, wisdom. By his word that we may have the happy life, the Blessed life. Let's pray.

Father, we pray that your spirit. Would produce his fruit in. By use of your word. That we would be full of not just love. But, And peace. For, we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.