

**Proverbs 3: 13-17; “The Pleasantness of Wisdom”, A Devotional for the Mid-Week
Zoom Fellowship & Prayer Meeting of our church on May 6th, 2020,
By Pastor Paul Rendall.**

I want to direct your attention this evening to verse 17 where Solomon says – The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. We need to ask ourselves whether we ourselves consider God as our chief joy, and whether we are experiencing the pleasantness of knowing God’s wisdom and walking on her paths; the paths of righteousness and truth? What is the chief end of man, the 1st question of the Shorter Catechism asks? It is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. The way to both glorify God and to enjoy Him forever is to seek to understand how great is the pleasantness of God-given wisdom to your soul.

1st of all – Let’s think about the Happiness of the person who finds wisdom.

Verse 13 – “Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding...” How is wisdom found then? It is found, it says here, by seeking it and finding it, spiritually speaking. It is called gaining understanding, here in verse 13. And how do you gain understanding? You must gain it from God Himself, and you gain it from God by receiving His word, the Bible, and treasuring His commands within you. Listen to Proverbs 2: 1-7a – “My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; yes if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” “For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright...”

There is work that is required to obtain wisdom, but we see that it is well worth it; that it is even a pleasant work if your heart is right. Proverbs 2: 10-13 – “When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; understanding will keep you, to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things, from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness.” So there is pleasantness in receiving God’s word and treasuring His commands within you. You incline your heart to hear as a disciple, and you so you apply your heart to understand what His word is saying to you. If you seek for wisdom, and search for her as for hidden treasures, even the search itself will become pleasant to you. It is true happiness to seek and to find God-given wisdom for it brings lasting joy and peace in learning to do God’s will from a clear conscience, knowing that you are being led and directed in the ways in which God would have you to walk.

And so, the person who seeks wisdom diligently, will find it, if theirs is a sincere heart. The true spiritual understanding that is being talked about here is the wisdom which is based upon the true knowledge which is found in God’s word and it becomes something that you will use in making your decisions concerning what you will do in every situation of moral importance in your life; how you will think and act in every situation. Wisdom is the right application of Biblical knowledge. Being wise only comes when you turn from the worldly knowledge of fallen sinful people around you, and go directly to God’s word to find out what His will is, and what his ways are like. A person of the world may talk to you about how you can invest your money and how you can get good dividends from investing in gold or silver. This may indeed be to your earthly advantage.

But verse 14 of our text says that the man who gains understanding will find proceeds better than the profits of silver, and greater gains than investing in fine gold. Psalm 19, verse 10 says – “More to be desired are they than gold, (that is, the truths of God’s word) yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” “Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.” So wisdom is found in knowing God and walking with Him. Do you remember what it says about the man Enoch in Genesis 5: 24 – “And Enoch walked with

God; and he was not, for God took him.” Now, we must ask ourselves – Why was Enoch taken suddenly to be with the Lord, on a certain day of God’s choosing? It was because the Lord was so delighted to have fellowship with him, that He wanted to bring him to himself right away; right then. He was so pleased with his walk; that is, Enoch was so wise in the way that he lived, that God just simply took him one fine day, suddenly and directly, to be with Him forever. Enoch had learned wisdom and he had found wisdom to be a pleasant companion to him. He wouldn’t lose her when he was suddenly translated from an earthly existence to a heavenly one. And neither will you, if you make her your close companion, and speak with her, and walk with her every day.

2nd – Let’s think about the value of wisdom to the soul of the Christian.

Wisdom is a very valuable companion. She is talked about in verse 15 as more precious than rubies, and everything that you desire cannot compare with her. How do you come to have wisdom as your close companion? You come to have this pleasant companion on the road of life, by becoming a true Christian, by receiving the Christ in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. In receiving Christ as your Savior and Lord and learning to walk with Him, you will have wisdom and you will find her more and more speaking to your heart and in your heart; a reminder of what the Bible says.

Becoming a Christian comes from being made wise unto salvation. You will recall that the apostle Paul says to his helper-evangelist Timothy that he must continue in the things which he had learned and been assured of, knowing from whom he had learned them, and that from childhood he had known the Holy Scriptures which were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2nd Timothy 3: 14 and 15) So, we see here in these verses, that you are a true Christian if you continue in the things which you know and are assured of; that they are true from the word of God, the Holy Scriptures. How comes this great assurance that the Scriptures are true? Well, when you receive Christ as your Savior and Lord, you at that moment, receive also the greatest of all gifts that God will give to you in this life; the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals the wisdom of Christ and His ways to you.

Paul says in Colossians chapter 2, verses 1-3 – “For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. So here the Paul’s great conflict was that while he was in prison that the saints could not know the comfort and consolation, the instruction, and edification of his being with them, teaching them the Lord’s word. But He knew that God Himself could encourage them by the Holy Spirit, and that through prayer and seeking God’s face and remembering what they could of His blessed word, their hearts being knit together in love, that they would attain to the riches of the full assurance of understanding anyway. They would understand the knowledge of the mystery of Christ; that in him were hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. They would find out for themselves that God could give them this wisdom so that they would know the ways of pleasantness and the paths which would lead them to experience the joy and peace in believing in Him and seeking the wisdom which is from above.

There are great benefits that come from really knowing how pleasant and desirable wisdom really is. Verse 16 says – Length of days is in her right hand and riches and honor in her left hand. Blessings of all kinds, both temporal and spiritual, although we should primarily focus on the spiritual. She is continually leading you into paths of pleasantness and peace. She is a tree of life to all those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her. In other words, if you take hold of her she will help you to manifest the fruit of the Spirit, (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self –control. And in doing that, in the various situations of your life, you will come to find that God’s way is much, much better than the world’s way. In James chapter 3, verses 13-16 it says – “Who is wise and understanding among you?” “Let him show by

good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.” “But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.” “This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.” “For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.” Not very pleasant way to live that way, is it?

But James goes on to say in James chapter 3, verses 17 and 18 says – “But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” “Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. So I hope that you can see that in finding wisdom are found all the ways of pleasantness and peace. Here is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are those who retain her; who hold on to her. We will need to seek and find this wisdom all the days of our Christian life, until the Lord takes us to be with Him forever. May the Lord help each one of us to take hold of this pleasant companion, and walk with her, and retain her.