

Prov. 19:8, 16, 23: Whoever gets sense loves his own soul; he who keeps understanding will discover good . . . ¹⁶ Whoever keeps the commandment keeps his life; he who despises his ways will die . . . ²³ The fear of the LORD leads to life, & whoever has it rests satisfied; he will not be visited by harm.

Intro: What words/phrases best describe Proverbs? Wisdom; Obedience; Fear of the LORD

We focus on all three of these in our verses for today. And there are warnings for those who don't pursue these things (punishments), & there are rewards promised for those who do pursue them.

As God's children, get wisdom, obey, & fear the LORD, & you'll have the joyful life forever.

As God's children: GOSPEL!

- a. People lie because they are wicked:** Jesus died & rose for the wicked & changes the wicked!
- b. People lie to keep themselves from getting in trouble:** We deserve the greatest trouble in hell forever, but Jesus saves!
- c. People lie to get what they want:** The Gospel changes what we want: from selfish to Godward!
- d. People lie to make themselves look better in the eyes of others:** Our identity is in Christ!
- e. People lie because they are afraid:** The Gospel reminds us that we are accepted by God!
- f. People lie to flatter others & not to offend:** The Gospel frees us from the fear of man!
- g. People lie to cover up other lies:** The Gospel changes us so we walk in the light & love truth!

1. Get Wisdom

Prov. 19:8: Whoever gets sense loves his own soul; he who keeps understanding will discover good

a. Get sense & keep understanding: The word for "sense" here is the same word for "heart". It's sort of like saying, "Get a life!" "Get a heart!" But here it means get a heart of wisdom; get a heart of sense; get a heart of understanding according to God & His Word & Wisdom! Godly character!

John Kitchen: The word "sense" in the first line is the Hebrew word for "heart". Throughout Proverbs, the word "heart" has been used metaphorically to refer to "sense", "wisdom", and "understanding". Here, too, it describes not the physical organ of life, nor simply the normal sense of mind, motions, & will. It is, here, a picture of that which ideally fills the heart, controlling the thinking, feeling, & choosing of a person.

Prov. 3:13-18: Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, & the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver & her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, & nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches & honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, & all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed.

b. Get wisdom & keep wisdom: You must get it & keep it! You must acquire wisdom & love wisdom & keep pursuing wisdom & keep living the wise life. How? Know God; Church; Private religion; Surround yourself with godly, wise people; Life; Be humble enough to listen & learn.

c. If you get sense & keep understanding, you love your soul, & you'll discover good: God is the good – the best! God's wisdom is best! God's sense is best! God's understanding is best! A heart for God is best! Godly character is best! If you do life God's way, it's best for you!

John Kitchen: When a person lays hold of that (or is laid hold of by it), then he “loves his own soul”. This is a perfectly appropriate & healthy love. This is not a sinful introspection or selfishness. This is simply self-preservation. “No one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes & cherishes it” (Eph. 5:29). So too, here, there is a healthy self-interest that is evidenced not by self-focus, but by a fixed attention on wisdom & understanding. Personal health does not come by focusing on self, but by focusing on God & His wisdom. So true is this that wisdom personified can say, “For he who finds me finds life, & obtains favor from the LORD. But he who sins against me injures himself; All those who hate me love death” (Prov. 8:35-36).

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2. Obey God's Word

Prov. 19:16: Whoever keeps the commandment keeps his life; he who despises his ways will die

a. Whoever keeps the commandment keeps his life: 1) In this life: If you don't commit adultery, no husband is going to kill you from jealousy; If you don't have sex outside of marriage, you won't get all manner of STD's, no abortions; If you don't have gay & lesbian sex, you won't get all manner of deadly diseases; If you don't abuse drugs & alcohol, you won't die of over dose – you won't ruin your life; If you don't live a wicked life, God won't kill you.

Commentator: Keeping God's law as well as following the advice of the father allows one to live life in a way that minimizes the possibilities of premature death.

2) In the life to come: If you know God by faith alone (this is the only way you can truly obey God!), then you will live forever! And those who know God, will obey Him!

b. He who despises his ways will die: 1) In this life (see above); 2) In the life to come: hell

c. God has a passion for obedience: Jn. 14:15, 21; 15:10: If you love me, you will keep my commandments . . . ²¹ Whoever has my commandments & keeps them, he it is who loves me . . .
^{Jn. 15:10} If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments & abide in his love. & he who loves me will be loved by my Father, & I will love him & manifest myself to him.

- **1 Jn. 5:2-3:** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. & his

commandments are not burdensome.

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3. Fear The LORD

Prov. 19:23: The fear of the LORD leads to life, & whoever has it rests satisfied; he will not be visited by harm

a. The fear of the LORD leads to life: 1) In this life (see above); 2) In the life to come: heaven

1) Fearing the LORD means you know God & He knows you

2) Fearing the LORD means you hate evil

3) Fearing the LORD means you will keep His commandments by the power of His Spirit

4) Fearing the LORD means fearing Him & nothing else (He can cast into hell)

5) Fearing the LORD means fearing Him as one who is forgiven & safe

6) Fearing the LORD means trusting Him

- To fear the LORD is to know Him & to be in a personal relationship with Him & to worship Him with reverence & awe! It's to turn from your sin & trust in Him & follow Him & obey Him & live for Him & delight in Him above all else!

7) The fear of the LORD is the Christian's delight

b. Those who fear of the LORD rest satisfied: Ps. 36:8: you give them drink from the river of your delights.

- **Ps. 42:1-2:** As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

- **Ps. 63:1-3:** O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry & weary land where there is no water. So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power & glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.

- **Ps. 91:1, 10:** He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty . . . ¹⁰ no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.

c. Those who fear the LORD will not be visited by harm: 1) In this life (see above); God protects you; You don't make poor choices; 2) In the life to come: receive heaven; not hell!

Charles Spurgeon (Psalm 91): Before expounding these verses I cannot refrain from recording a personal incident illustrating their power to soothe the heart, when they are applied by the Holy Spirit. In the year 1854, when I had scarcely been in London twelve months, the neighborhood in which I labored was visited by Asiatic cholera, & my congregation suffered from its inroads. Family after family summoned me to the bedside of the smitten, & almost every day I was called to visit the grave. I gave myself up with youthful ardor to the visitation of the sick, & was sent for from all corners of the district by persons of all ranks & religions. I became weary in body & sick at heart.

My friends seemed falling one by one, & I felt or fancied that I was sickening like those around me. A little more work & weeping would have laid me low among the rest; I felt that my burden was heavier than I could bear, & I was ready to sink under it. As God would have it, I was returning mournfully home from a funeral, when my curiosity led me to read a paper which was [posted] up in a shoemaker's window in the Dover Road. It did not look like a trade announcement, nor was it, for it bore in a good bold handwriting these words: "Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

The effect upon my heart was immediate. Faith appropriated the passage as her own. I felt secure, refreshed, girt with immortality. I went on with my visitation of the dying in a calm & peaceful spirit; I felt no fear of evil, & I suffered no harm. The providence which moved the tradesman to place those verses in his window I gratefully acknowledge, & in the remembrance of its marvelous power I adore the Lord my God. The psalmist in these verses assures the man who dwells in God that he shall be secure. Though faith claims no merit of its own, yet the Lord rewards it wherever he sees it.

He who makes God his refuge shall find him a refuge; he who dwells in God shall find his dwelling protected. We must make the Lord our habitation by choosing him for our trust & rest, & then we shall receive immunity from harm; no evil shall touch us personally, & no stroke of judgment shall assail our household . . . It is impossible that any ill should happen to the man who is beloved of the Lord; the most crushing calamities can only shorten his journey & hasten him to his reward. Ill to him is no ill, but only good in a mysterious form. Losses enrich him, sickness is his medicine, reproach is his honor, death is his gain. No evil in the strict sense of the word can happen to him, for everything is overruled for good. Happy is he who is in such a case. He is secure where others are in peril, he lives where others die.

- **Lk. 21:16-18:** You will be delivered up even by parents & brothers & relatives & friends, & some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my name's sake. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish.

- **Rom. 8:35-39:** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord

- **Rev. 21:4:** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, & death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

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Jesus: Prov. 19:8: Whoever gets sense loves his own soul; he who keeps understanding will discover good: Jesus had the most sense – in fact He has all sense, all understanding, all wisdom –

He keeps it all forever, yet He gave up His life & soul on that cross so that you might have life & have Him & in Him have all the treasures of wisdom & knowledge! He did not discover good on that cross, but He discovered the worst thing we could ever face: He discovered the anger, curse, forsakenness, & damnation of God, so that you will never be cursed, never be forsaken, never be sent to eternal damnation in hell!

Yet because Jesus has all wisdom & sense & kept understanding perfectly, He is risen! His soul lives forever! He discovered the greatest good! He glorified God perfectly & redeemed sinners!

Prov. 19:16: Whoever keeps the commandment keeps his life; he who despises his ways will die: Jesus kept God's commandments perfectly! Yet, He didn't keep His life – He gave up His life so that you might have life eternally! Jesus never despised the ways of God, but He died so that you might live! But Jesus lives too! He rose up! Because He kept God's commands, He rose up! Jesus didn't despise God's ways so He did not die! And if you believe in Him, you will not die either!

Prov. 19:23: The fear of the LORD leads to life, & whoever has it rests satisfied; he will not be visited by harm: Jesus feared the LORD perfectly, but His perfect fear led to His death so that you might live! Jesus didn't rest satisfied, but the wrath of God rested on Him so that you might rest satisfied forever in God's presence where there's fullness of joy & pleasures forevermore! Jesus was visited by the greatest harm on that cross so that you shall never face any of that harm!

But because Jesus feared the LORD perfectly, this did lead to life because He rose up from the dead! Jesus did rest satisfied with His finished work & all the children God has given Him – He redeemed the nations as His inheritance! It is finished!

All our failures to obey these Proverbs were counted as Jesus' failures on that cross! That's why He died! Yet, Jesus obeyed all these Proverbs in our place, & that's why He rose up! And so, Jesus saves us & empowers us, as God's children to get wisdom, obey, & fear the LORD more & more! And oh what a good, joyful life we have awaiting us now & forevermore, in Christ!

Christ Jesus Has All Wisdom Sense
Has Understanding Heart Immense
Keeps God's Commandments – No Offense
Feared The LORD With Love Intense
Yet Discovered Bad That's Dense
Loved Not His Soul To Death That's Tense
Found No Rest But Wrath Suspense
Was Visited By Harm Immense
He Bore God's Wrath To Recompense

He Died Alone – No Self-Defense
But These Proverbs Are True And Hence
He Rose Again – New Life Commence
Discovers All That's Good And Sense
Keeps His Life – Now Grace Dispense
He'll Never Die – All Death's Past Tense
So Those In Him By Faith Commence
To Have All This At His Expense
New Life And Rest In Him Intense
Rest Satisfied In Christ Immense!