

“Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it *is* better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She *is* more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days *is* in her right hand; *and* 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 them that lay hold upon her: and happy *is every one* that retaineth her. The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.” (Pr 3:13-20 AV)

We have read the entire 3rd chapter of Proverbs several times in the past weeks, because it is so packed with useful ideas for the betterment of men and women—it is exceedingly rich for those who will meditate on it, especially in terms of Christ and the Gospel, for everything here is fulfilled in Christ our Savior.

This passage shows that faith is not empty of content. Just the opposite, faith is filled with content of the highest form, riches whose value cannot be estimated; happiness and contentment; long life and honor, pleasantness and peace. To put it short, wisdom is a Tree of Life, upon which the richest fruits grow. In fact, the entire universe of heaven and earth bear witness to these things, which the foolishness of the world and the men of the world cannot and will not understand. There are several things I want to emphasize in this passage that are exceedingly profitable. There are many other things that could be said, but this will suffice for this morning.

1. Because we are wayward children, wisdom is the lesson taught by the chastening of the Lord, as we have seen in previous messages.
2. In spite of this chastening, the way of wisdom is a pleasant and happy journey, peaceful and profitable.
3. The way of wisdom is a Tree of Life to be laid hold of, and retained.

We have, therefore, the CPR of wisdom: Chastening [training], Pleasantness, Retaining.

- I. Wisdom is the lesson taught by the chastening of the Lord. See verses 11,12 as preliminary.
 - A. We are not chastened because we are good, but because we are sons. Chastening mean training, or instruction. It may involve the rod, but is much broader than punishment.
 - B. This chastening provides the inner architecture of our souls as a fit dwelling place for God. Proverbs 9:1-6
 1. The inner man of the wise is built upon the solid rock of the sayings of Christ, not the shifting sand of man’s own understanding. The wise have forsaken their own understanding and do not lean upon it. They have come to the house of wisdom and have found great abundance there.
 2. The child of God has an inner feast always going on: he feeds upon the word of God, rejoices in the word of God as one who finds great spoil.
 3. This feast is prepared for all those who are simple, but who are made wise by the bread and wine provided. The simple has forsaken the foolish and lives, going in the way of understanding.

- II. The way of wisdom is a pleasant and happy journey, peaceful and profitable.
- A. Vs. 13: Happy is the man that finds wisdom. Thus saith the Lord. It is a pleasant journey.
- B. Vs. 14,15 Great riches belong to the man the finds wisdom.
1. Hence, we are told to buy the truth and sell it not: Cost involves:
 - a. The price: your own ideas and vain reasonings.
 - b. The price: time for meditation: See Psalm 90:7-12
 2. Price: Proverbs 2:1-11 The Lord has treasures laid up for you and me: vs. 7 See Colossians 2: 2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; 3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
 3. Treasure: Ephesians 3:17-19: The prayer of Paul for the church. In Christ in the length, breadth, width, height.
 4. Wisdom is not some abstraction, but is found in Christ alone. See 1 Cor 1:27-31 Wisdom is where God says it is, and it is not in those who think they are smart.
- C. It is a journey that ends in eternal life, when the days of our discipline and training are over.

III. Do you doubt these things? Then look to creation. Vs. 18-20

- A. Wisdom is a Tree of Life, and is the source of every good thing.
1. Jesus: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Also: Joh 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. Joh 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. Joh 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.
 2. The way of wisdom is the way of faith, faith in Jesus Christ and submission to Him.
- B. Wisdom must be laid hold on and retained: Faith reaches out and lays hold on Christ. There is an energy to faith that will not be denied; neither will faith turn away from Christ, for the life that He gives is eternal life, and faith will not abandon Christ, nor will the Spirit of God turn away from Christ.
1. Faith is passive in the sense that its power is not in the flesh, in man's natural strength, for by man's wisdom God cannot be known.
 2. Faith is active in the sense that it lays hold on man and drives him to God, it is a power that works in the children of God, a power that having begun its good work will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.
 3. Faith has the Spirit of adoption, the sense of sonship which cries "Abba, Father," so that the discipline of our Father is not in vain, but achieves its desired aim, conformity to the image of Jesus Christ.
 4. So, in answer to what must I do to be saved? The answer is both "nothing," and "everything." Nothing in my own energy and strength, but everything in and by the Spirit of God.

- C. The very heavens and the earth display the wisdom and power of God, so that we can be assured that none of His promises will fail.
1. Psalm 19 speaks to this wisdom, the wisdom of the Triune God.
 2. Hence, we are not to glory in the things that the world glories in: 23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.
 3. Paul put it this way: Gal 6:14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.
 4. It is in the cross of Christ that the depths of the wisdom and power of God is revealed, for it is there that mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other. Taking away the wrath of God against the people God, Jesus ascended into heaven to pour out the Spirit upon those who believe to bring them all the riches of the grace and favor of God.
 5. Hence the beloved Apostle John's words are fulfilled: 1John 5: 11-12 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Application:

1. Lay hold on Jesus Christ. Magnify him: make Him large in your life and try to get others to see His greatness and glory.
2. Do not deny His name, for there is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved.
3. Hold fast the profession of your faith, for He is faithful who promised.
4. Find all your wisdom in Jesus Christ, in His person and His work and His words, for in Him is hidden all the fullness of the godhead bodily.

May God bless you. Amen and Amen.