

Principles from Proverbs: Taming the Temperament

Finding Happiness and Joy, Continued

II. Key Relationships that Promote Happiness and Joy

A. Close Personal Friendships

Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel. Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not...." (Proverbs 27:9, 10)

1. Develop long-term personal friendships with sweet-natured people. Beware of negative, critical, and egotistical “stinkers.”
2. Deepen friendships with individuals who can promote your welfare through wise counsel.
 - a. Seek close friendships with successful people, those who have proven themselves in significant areas of life.
 - b. Accept “heart to heart” counsel from your close friends. “Hearty counsel” literally means “from the depths of the soul.” Remember, surface friendships reap half-hearted counsel at best.
3. Never forsake a true friend. Loyalty is the great essential to friendship. Cultivate friendships that transcend age and generation.

B. A Loving Spouse

Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. (Proverbs 5:18)

1. Frequently, the joy or misery of those who are married is ultimately tied to one's spouse.
2. This verse has specific reference to the physical intimacies of marriage. Physical intimacy should be maintained throughout marriage as a source of joy.
 - a. Contextually, the verse emphasizes the joy of long-term marital faithfulness.
 - b. The verse assumes ongoing physical intimacy in marriage—beginning from the first day and continuing into throughout the years.
3. Choose your spouse carefully! Your happiness depends largely upon him/her.

C. Good Children

A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother. (Proverbs 15:20)

Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth his substance. (Proverbs 29:3)

1. More than anything else, wisdom will make our children successful. Wisdom is both taught and caught—from Godly, consistent parents.
2. Wisdom always promotes morality, and morality always promotes ultimate success. Immorality is a mark of the fool!

Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul. (Proverbs 29:17)

3. Proper discipline is the most certain way to good, delightful children.
4. Typically, children who trouble their parents were not the recipients of consistent, godly discipline—especially in their young childhood. The more you discipline in young childhood, the more rest you'll have as the child matures!

D. Righteous Authority Figures

When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn. (Proverbs 29:2)

1. A righteous man is one who meets his obligations. It is a joy to be under the authority of a man who consistently fulfills his responsibilities.
2. Living under the authority of a “wicked” man spawns sorrow, depression and misery.
 - a. Contrasted to the righteous man who meets his obligations, the wicked ruler is inconsistent and careless about his obligations.
 - b. Selfishness is frequently the root of a failure to meet obligations. Sometimes leaders become so “wicked” as to view themselves obligated to no one.
3. Be careful under whose authority you place yourself. Do not work for a crooked boss. Even unsaved men can have a sense of obligation and can be faithful in meeting theirs. Dr. Bob Jones Sr. said, “Beware of the man who is rude to his inferiors or who kow-tows to his superiors.”
4. Be certain that your authority figures within the context of church are righteous. Both pastors and deacons must be verifiably righteous in meeting their obligations to God and man.