

2022.06.11 Family Worship lesson in “the Proverb of the day”

Proverbs 11:16–21

“Living before God's Face for True Blessedness in this World and the Next”

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- 16 A gracious woman retains honor,  
But ruthless men retain riches.
- 17 The merciful man does good for his own soul,  
But he who is cruel troubles his own flesh.
- 18 The wicked man does deceptive work,  
But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward.
- 19 As righteousness leads to life,  
So he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death.
- 20 Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD,  
But the blameless in their ways are His delight.
- 21 Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished;  
But the posterity of the righteous will be delivered.

Pastor leads his family in a selection from “the Proverb of the day.” In these six verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that since God is just and wise, and has secured blessedness for believers in Christ, the path of true blessedness is to believe in Christ, and then to live by that faith.

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**(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 referenced above)**

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Proverbs 11 verses 16 through 18. These are God's words. A gracious woman retains honor but ruthless men retain riches. The merciful man does good for his own soul, but he who is cruel troubles his own flesh.

The wicked man does deceptive work.

But he who sows righteousness. We'll have a sure reward. I try to change my mind. We're going to go through verse 21 after all as righteousness leads to life. So he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death, those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to Yahweh but the blameless in their ways are his delight though.

They joined forces, the wicked will not go. On punished put the posterity of the righteous will be delivered.

So far, the

Reading of God's inspired. Andarent word.

There's a way of living that thinks that we can manipulate outcomes that we are the ones who ultimately cause what happens. But the right way of living is to remember that we are always before the face of the Lord, and that the outcome is always according to his wisdom and his justice, this doesn't mean that you don't do anything because after all the Lord's going to do it all it means that if he is operating according to his wisdom and his justice, and here's appointed what is good.

And he appoints the means by which it comes. Then you do. The good means by which you hope to get the particular good thing and you trust that whatever he brings will have an ultimate goodness, that is infinitely greater and more enduring. Even then whatever short-term goodness, you were aiming at and ordinarily in his providence that which is wise produces benefit and blessing even in a temporal sense.

But the person who tries to do this, apart from God, the person who tries to get for themselves what they want and think they are. Accomplishing it by wickedness. They are the greatest fools to be pitted. Because as they exert wickedness to get for themselves their pleasure, they're doing it before the face of a, not only wise and powerful, but also perfectly just and holy God.

And so whom do they think they are really going to harm? God will not permit them to harm the righteous. Since God is turning everything for the good of the righteous, indeed, whatever they do that is against God. In all of it, they harm themselves whether they are unconverted, wicked, wicked in their being therefore, and are heaping up for themselves.

As Romans. 2 says heaping up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath increasing their capacity for wickedness and enduring of the wrath of God. So that they're wrath, their experience of God's wrath will be even greater in that day. Or even the believer in a temporal sense when we slide into the same sort of thinking and we indulge sinfulness and we're not putting sin to death, or what does that sin need?

If you're an, if you are a genuine, a legitimate child of God, the Lord loves you. And He disciplines the Son of him, he loves and you increase for yourself. The amount of chastening that is necessary in order to be brought to that. Holiness that is required for you to receive that.

Which Christ has died for and which Christ will certainly receive. So we come to Proverbs 11:16 through 21 and it tells us in several little couplets to remember this. A gracious woman retains honor if you want to be honored, if you want to be thought, well of and often girls do and some try to make themselves showy.

One of the things that girls are often prone to not that guys aren't, but one of the things that is most difficult and the setting soon for girls as gossip, the idea that that by saying things that cast others in a negative light in contrast yourself in a positive light and by saying things that draw others to you, you can make them much closer to you so that there will be distant from others.

But a woman ought to have gracious lips. She ought to speak kindly and favorably to and about others. And a gracious spirit that she would be kind. The first and greatest honor is the honor that comes from God. The Lord help you my daughters to see and desire and prefer that God would be pleased that God would honor the character of Christ being worked out in your life.

This is even what the apostle gives the to as an incentive to the wife, of a husband who's disobedient to the Word and 1st Peter. Chapter 3 that as she has this gentle and quiet spirit that she has. As she has this gracious spirit, that may or may not come to be precious in the sight of her husband, but it is very precious in the side of the Lord.

So you would have eyes for him so that your lips would speak graciously. That is the way for true. Praise. And then within the church and in relationships, she who is in, invariably kind is esteemed by all is very difficult to maintain. They gossip or an ugly view of her.

You can probably think of some of the ladies in the church who are invariably kind. They've got gracious. Lips, they're always speaking. Well of God and they speak kindly too and about others, they may not be the center of attention but they don't need to be. They have a gentle and quiet and humble spirit.

And whenever you go and spend time or talk to them, you know, that you're going to be treated kindly and there's peace around them. So it's really the gracious woman who retains honor, but ruthless men. And the reason it says men here is because the participle translated ruthless as masculine retain riches.

Whether they are genuinely ruthless or just shrewd, it's either saying that a man must be wise and not just gentle that there has to be a combination of them or that might be talking about a wicked sort of ruthlessness where you retain the riches. But as the proverbs, tell us and many places riches vanish, they disappear.

A good name is to be desired above riches, especially that good name. That is with God, but remembering that it is God, who makes all of these things fall out. Therefore, the merciful man does good for his own soul. You observe someone who's always kind and generous good to others.

And you say boy that man does so many other people. Good. The Holy Spirit comes in Proverbs 11 verse 17. He says that man does himself so much good. There is a genuine mercy where in response to God's love you love him and therefore you love your neighbor first, great commandments, second great commandment, there's a wonderful delighting in God and fellowship with God.

Whose mercies are new every morning. And he is the original mercy giver. And of course, you don't have anything that he didn't give you to begin with. And so, you are sharing the mercy that he gives you. And the scripture says, with the merciful, the Lord is merciful. And so, the more merciful you are, the more God gives you to be merciful with.

So the way to accumulate for yourself, that which is genuinely good, not just a, not just an object that has some value in it. But the, the type of having of it that the having is itself, valuable the way to accumulate good things, is to be generous, to be generous with your time to be generous with your labors, to be generous, with your property, to be generous with your praise, to be generous, with your kindness.

The merciful man does good for his own soul that he, who is cruel, who seems to go around troubling others. He's troubling his own flesh, The Lord repays. He is an Avenger, He will not allow any sin to go unpunished. It is a lie from your the flushness of your heart.

When anger rises up and takes starts to take control of you that you can show others how mad you are at them. And you're gonna punish them by the display of your anger. And then you're gonna punish them by actions that you take in your anger. The only one you ultimately punish in that way is yourself because God makes all things fall out correctly.

If the thing that has been done at which even you would be righteously angry as wicked, the Lord will punish it and that's why we are free to do. Good to those who persecute us to feed our enemies and give them something to drink, not because it's wrong to be angry at what they have done.

But because God is the one who punishes There are institutions families and countries and churches in which there are penalties that God has appointed authorities to carry out. And there are there is therefore punishment in this life and in this world. But even that is instituted by God and appointed to be carried out, not in the wrath of anger, but recognizing the anger of God and responding in an appropriate way.

But someone who indulges harming others, and this goes, even beyond those who are rash in their anger, those who think cruelty as fun, because they have a position of power. And so they're able to impose their will upon others. This is one of the reasons for instance, that we don't force physically, the younger children to do, what is right, We appeal to them through the heart.

There is a dynamic, enforcing someone physically, where whatever fleshliness there is in you will enjoy the power and the control and it can even get so bad in a person that they think it's fun. This is one reason why you should never even indulge the ability to dominate and animal or another creature.

That sort of cruelty feeds this addiction to being the one in control. And you guys have known people who, for instance, when you are playing airsoft enjoyed just taking pot shots at creatures for the pleasure of being in control and being able to harm them without consequences. No, God is in control and you should not find pleasure in cruelty in the ability to impose pain or to impose your will on for no reason upon a creature, let alone upon a man, the wicked man, does deceptive work but he who says righteousness will have a sure reward, whatever.

The wicked man accumulates or gets for himself. It's all gonna be taken away, whatever righteous man does. However, much his work. Seems to not get things for himself. He is going to receive everlasting. Blessedness. And so even if the wicked seemed to prosper for a while, it's like an

illusion.

A mirage. It isn't what he thought it was when he had it, and it will suddenly vanish, and he will be destroyed all at. Once the righteous man, everything that he has in this life, even if he has all of the influence and power and property and praise that this world has to offer, it's not even begun to be what he will have from God.

And so, the righteous man's reward is sure. In fact, it's way better than what it appears to be even already. But the wicked man's work and the fruit of his labor is deceptive. You will not be able to keep any of it. As righteousness leads to life. So the only one who can actually be righteous especially from the heart, is one who has already counted righteous in Jesus and receives life because what Jesus has done is counted for us.

And so righteous living that walking in good works, that God has prepared beforehand. That's the, the path between when you come to faith in Jesus, and when you receive what Jesus has deserved for you. So righteousness leads to life, you don't earn life by your righteous deeds. And yet, if you're not walking in righteousness, then you haven't begun on the path to life.

And you won't come to the conclusion of life at the end of your path, those who try to divorce righteous living from imputed righteousness in Christ, have put asunder what God has joined together and they cannot separate those two things. So righteousness leads to life. It's a teaching of the Bible and it's a reality, doesn't earn life, but you should be alarmed if you care not for righteousness.

And you walk not in righteousness that the path that you are on, is not the path that ends in life. So second half of verse 19, he who, pursues evil, pursues it to his own death. If if you indulge and excuse and make ways for doing that, which is wicked this pursuit, this facilitating of doing evil in your life, is really the path that ends and death.

The righteous continue to sin in this life but we hate that we continue to sin. God repeatedly makes us to see, it brings us to renewed repentance, makes us to see his love and forgiveness in Christ, brings us to renewed resolve after loving and pleasing and obeying and serving him who has loved us so much.

And has redeemed us if that's not the sort of life that you have. Then you are in everything you do. Fashioning forging your way to hell to your death, those who are of a perverse heart or an abomination to Yahweh, but the blameless in their ways are his delight.

Of course, they are his delight. Not only in the external conformity of what they do to his law, but in the fact that this could only be done through Christ and he loves the image of his son, which is to whom you are united, and whose image is being formed, more and more in you as you are being conformed, more and more to him.

And so, the more you look like Jesus in your heart, especially remember the first half of verse 20, talks about the heart, the more you look like Jesus, the more delighted the Lord is when he looks at you both in your union to Christ and in your similarity to Christ, and you may be pleased, not proud of yourself, but please with Christ.

And please, with every Christ-like thing that you find in yourself and that's the key, isn't it To actually enjoying the good work that he is doing without being proud of yourself? The knowledge that it has only come from him and that really, it's him that you're being pleased with.

And so it comes with the pleasure of gratitude and humility and amazement that any such good could ever be produced in someone. Such as you. And you enjoy the sweetness of God and rather than being tempted by a demon to pat myself on the back and say, ha, look at how.

Well, I'm enjoying the sweetness of God. You say, how good you are? Lord, Jesus. That you have shared this part of your character. With me that I might enjoy the, sweetness of God who deserved only to suffer the wrath and hatred of God upon me and my sin. And so with every other grace, how good you are.

Lord Jesus that you would share this grace with me and we would be pleased with him in every part of our growing in him and grateful to him just as God is pleased with him in every part of his growing us and being pleased with his son. What a wonderful statement.

The blameless in their ways are His delight. You cannot care too much about godliness. If you care the right way about godliness because you're delighting in enjoying what the lights? God, that which pleases him. And then the last verse that we have before us today, though, they join forces.

So they are hand in hand. In the wickedness they will not go unpunished. Of course, the Tower of Babel is a wonderful historical example. The whole world hand in hand and wickedness, Be careful about the unity at all costs idea that pervades. The churches today you want to unity with God and therefore a unity with all who agree with God and who are a group not only belonging to him but our walking according to his way if they belong to him.

And they're not walking according to his way, you can't have unity in their walking but he'll take care of them and he'll take care of you. And as he sanctifies the two of you, you'll have more and more unity. The wonderful truth about those who are genuinely in Christ, is they all end up perfectly like Christ.

And so we have a unity that is real and that is certain and that is future. And so to to pursue it and participate in it, we all reform our theology. According to the Bible, We all reform our practice, according to the Bible, We adopted this statement about the RPCNA.

That was a pretty good statement at the Senate saying that the the collaboration or whatever the language was that we've been working on as a good thing and it's worth pursuing, but we're not actually trying to forge organic unity and because I'm trying not to get up and speak to every issue.

I didn't get up and speak to this one either but I did tell a few, a few friends and hopefully we have a good edifying effect on one another. Yes, we do want organic unity. We want them to be reformed and we want ourselves to be reformed until we all practice and think so much.

According to the Bible that it would be a rational for us not to be united. And every one of us who genuinely belongs to Christ in both, denominations are going to have an organic unity. When we transfer our membership to the assembly of the firstborn. And the souls of the just made perfect.

So we are all going to have organic unity, Those who are godly Now. Are we going to have it in this life? Maybe the more we the more we reform not just in accuracy of doctrine but in the life and character and desires and priorities and pleasures of Christ, The more united will be and that's how you get unity as a congregation.

That's how you get unity as a Presbytery. That's how you get unity as a Senate or a national church and so forth. That's the kind of unity we want as a church by working through and pursuing Reformation that's kind of unity. We want as a family. Though. They join forces though, they are united in their wickedness.

They will not go unpunished Everyone against God. Still loses that the posterity of the righteous will be delivered. You see there is a covenantal unity between you and your father. If your father believes in Christ belongs to Christ you belong to Christ, and you are called to believe in Christ.

And so long as we maintain that unity, I using God's means and you using God's means and you and I looking together to use his means to bring to fruition to make fruit of the unity that you have with me as being from me and counted and my household and federally represented unto God in me.

We look to him to make it Barrett's fruit. And if the faith that I had is reproduced by God, through these means that he's appointed according to these promises that he has made. You will receive the same deliverance in Christ. The same conformity to him and our family resemblance will be even greater and glory than it was on earth.

Yeah, not a lot of Egyptians around here and so there's a more noticeable noticeable, family resemblance for some of you even than others. But for all of you, well, when I have been perfectly conformed to Christ, and if you come to faith in Jesus, and when you have been perfectly conformed to Christ, our deliverance will be this the same.

We'll look exactly the same. Our characters will be. Perfect perfected in the same holiness. So, the posterity of the righteous will be delivered. We must live our life in this world as those who realize that God is the one who brings all the ultimate results. And so let us not be discouraged if we live by faith in Christ and walk and righteousness by how small the fruit of it appears to be.

Now that will have its fruit because God is the one who gives us and let us not envy anything that the wicked seem to be able to accomplish or obtain, because all they are, ultimately accomplishing is their own destruction. And don't you think that by wickedness you can ever accomplish anything?

Anyway, we could have a whole other lesson on the righteous lie right now, But we will close in prayer. We've had a lot of instruction. Oh Lord. There's so much here in these six verses and yet, the heart of all of it is that we depend upon you. We live before you that we will appear before you in the last day and that we will either appear with the righteousness of Christ counted for us and the Blessedness of Christ given to us or we will appear in ourselves.

And with our wickedness, without any atonement and receive according to what we deserve forever and ever. And so we pray O Lord that you would bring any at this table to faith. Should they not yet? Believe have mercy O. God renew in each of us repentance from our sin and faith in Jesus Christ and love for you and a delight in who you are.

And on a short hope of all that Christ has earned for us and keep us. We pray from living as if you do not exist. And as if we can manipulate situations to our advantage rather than serving you and employing your means to our advantage. Help us. So God, then to live by faith.

And not by our own scheming or self-indulging or self-interested self-advancement. O God, have mercy on us and deliver us from ourselves for. We ask it in Christ who gave himself for us and to us so that we might ask this and all other good things in his name. Amen.