

Outcomes of honouring the Lord (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] I will endeavour to speak, as the Lord may help me, this evening from the chapter that was read, that is, the 16th chapter in the book of Proverbs.

And I ask your attention particularly to the 7th verse. The verse in the 16th chapter of the book of Proverbs. When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. What a great meditation it is to consider ourselves in the light of that which is right as opposed to that which is wrong.

God has given to us a measure of understanding, sensitivity of spirit that to a great degree registers whether a thing is right or whether a thing is wrong.

And my friends, the perfect measure in respect to the difference between that which is right and that which is wrong is when we are brought to consider our ways in the context of pleasing the Lord.

[1 : 54] Now, the thought of the darkness, blindness, fallen humanity left to the flesh is so often indifferent to the pleasure of the Lord in any way almost.

And self so often takes precedence over the consideration of God's pleasure to that which is our own pleasure.

And we become servants, as it were, of those things that we like and we become antagonistic to those things that we don't like.

But when a man's ways please the Lord. Oh, what a wonderful thing it is to have that good standard raised up by the Spirit of God in our hearts.

Our hearts which by nature inclined to evil but that is challenged, as it were, continually by what are the thoughts of God concerning what I'm saying, what I'm doing, where I'm going.

[3 : 29] And all those questions which associate with our passage along life's way. And I wonder, looking back over this day, how we can draw a line, so to speak, between what has exercised us in respect to the pleasure of the Lord, as opposed to the pleasure of the Lord, as it was, and how we can draw a line, so to speak, between what has exercised us in respect to the Lord.

And how we can draw a line, so to speak, between what has exercised us in respect to the Lord. Now, my friends, God is a sovereign. He brings his fear into the hearts by the Holy Spirit in regenerating blessing, sometimes in a very young person.

And that young person is made alive to the reality of God and God's pleasure and God's displeasure with respect to their way in life.

What a blessing it is to have the fear of the Lord implanted within us in the days of our youth. So the reality of God, his mind, and the influence of that mind upon us, not just confined to the things of this world, but projected into that eternal world yet to come, to have the fear of the Lord in regard to the pleasure of God, and displeasure of God in respect to what we do, what we say, with whom we mix, where we go.

And even in the very thoughts of our hearts, we come to the measure. Right thoughts, as opposed to wrong thoughts, or good thoughts, as opposed to evil thoughts.

[5 : 58] When a man's ways please the Lord. And surely I've said enough in this opening approach to make us realize that the mind of God is so comprehensive that every one of our thoughts, every one of our words, every one of our ways falls into one of two categories in respect to our relationship with God.

It gives God pleasure or displeasure. Things that displease him. And there are things which please him. And oh, when the Lord, by his grace, exercises our souls in these ways, my friends, what carefulness is wrought in our hearts, respecting the way of life as we are living it.

And the text indicates very clearly that God has displeasure.

And God makes his displeasure to be known. If a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him.

And you know enemies are many and strong. And we find a lot of avenues come into our experiences here below that have a goodly measure of enmity involved in them.

[7 : 51] And it's a sad thing if the Lord uses those things to chasten us, to instruct us, to guide us in respect to our way through the pilgrimage here below.

When a man's ways please the Lord. Now, the Lord has given us all a conscience.

And that conscience, when sanctified, is a very clear indication as to what pleases God and what displeases him.

It's a terrible thing, my friends, to persist in a manner of life wherein our consciences bear witness that what we're doing, what we're saying, where we're going, and even what we're thinking is displeasing to God.

Oh, what a wonderful thing it is when God, by his grace, gives us a tender conscience. A conscience that registers, and not only registers that which is right from that which is wrong, but exercises our hearts more and more in a desire to please God and to prosper under his blessings that associate with that pleasure as opposed to being under the displeasure of God, the withholdings of his spirit, the contrary developments of his providence when sometimes, because of our displeasing God, God seems to turn our world upside down and all things seem to be working not for our good, as far as we can judge them, but for our sorrow.

[10 : 11] When a man's ways please the Lord. When a man's ways please the Lord. Oh, my friends, how important is the principle?

Because God has all power, and God uses means, and while it seems in his long sufferings, he suffers the world to go on in total displeasure, as it were, as they fill up the cup of iniquity against the day of wrath, but what a mercy, what a mercy, if the Lord has made you and I to differ.

He's sanctified our hearts and our minds, He's given us a rule to rule by, that when our conscience smites us and makes us realize how wrong we are, we turn aside in secret and pour out our complaint before the Lord and ask him to be merciful and gracious, forgiving, and turn to us again in the favours of his mercy and of his grace.

Well, no, when a man's ways please the Lord. This is such a comprehensive statement of truth. You and I, in the house of God, this evening, we may anticipate the blessing of God where the Lord has promised to bless his truth and his people and it is good for us to come into the house of God, but what about our spirit in coming?

Is it to worship God? Have we had a prayerful approach in finding our way into the sanctuary that the Lord will come and manifest himself to us as he does not to the world, to separate us, as it were, in the favours of his sovereign grace with a worshipping state of mind and a heart prepared as receptive ground to receive the seeds of divine counsel and truth?

[12 : 44] Oh, my friends, when a man's ways please the Lord. Isn't it a wonderful thing to come hungry and thirsty into the house of God? And you know, hungry and thirsty hearers are a great benefit to preachers because if they come in in that exercise, pleading the promise of God, blessed are they which hunger and thirsts after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Surely the Lord, in answer to that statement of divine purpose, will from time to time let fall from heaven a handful of purpose.

There will be a blessing and you will be brought to appreciate the blessedness of having such a God as this God who has everything and every body under his control.

When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him. We might say a carnal heart is an enemy and a carnal heart is an enemy to live and move as it were with a stony heart, a heart that seems impregnable to the arrows of the Almighty as he fires through the preached gospel revelation of his mind, his will and his way.

When a man's ways please the Lord, my friends, if we approach the means of grace in a gracious spirit, the Lord blessing us with an anticipation of his presence, his love, his grace, his power, I say carnality of thought and interest sometimes seems to be banished and there is a sitting under his shadow with great delight and finding his fruit sweet to our taste.

[15 : 12] Some of you have known the distinction and difference. Painfully perhaps if we consider relative numeracy of blessing and being under blessing and being as it were in a carnal state of mind sitting in the house of God under the sound of the truth.

But what a wonderful thing it is to be conscious of the Lord's presence and the Lord dealing with our cases and our needs both in grace and in providence.

When a man's ways please the Lord. And again the way of life the way we're living outside has an influence on the blessing we receive inside.

and you know I I feel if our lives conform to the world as we live out our daily lives and we're as it were more conformed to the way of the public in general than the Lord in his displeasure withholds perhaps not altogether but in great measure the influence of his spirits and the sensible presence of his good hand resting upon when a man's way is pleased the Lord.

And that takes me doesn't it to the way of life under profession under profession the Lord has ways of chastening by withholding those of us that have been parents know the distinction between our attitude to those that so obviously are going out of their way to please us and those that in a natural antagonistic assertive sort of youthful way are indifferent comparatively openly opposed to what they know to be our mind in certain areas which category receives as it were the comfort and affection in a practical sense of their parents or when children are living antagonistic to our revealed mind and will it creates a feeling within of distance not altogether indifference and especially in the matter of prayer for those that are near and dear to us but nevertheless there's not the outgoing demonstration of affection and pleasure that is exhibited when our children please us with what they're doing and what they're saying with whom they're mixing and so forth well the

[19 : 04] Lord is a heavenly Father the Lord is a heavenly Father blessed be God he doesn't deal with us altogether as our sins deserve one of the great blessings of the family of God is this whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth what son is he whom the father chasteneth not and my friends what a chastening it is when the Lord seems in under his displeasure to withdraw to a great degree from us the presence and the love and life and liberty of the spirit of the living God oh to live with the spirit of enmity against God and godliness in our hearts

I feel so often it produces a deadness a coldness and almost a despondent influence upon our profession well now when a man's ways please the Lord he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him there's the enemy of self consider your ways and turn again to the Lord if so be you've known what it is to enjoy sweet liberty before the Lord he's blessed you in secret sometimes with such an overflowing of his spirit that you scarcely know known how to rise from your knees and continue your usual exercises either getting into bed or attending to the duties of the day you've been so blessed

I remember once in 1948 when I had a wonderful time of spiritual liberty my friends I just didn't want to leave the throne of grace it was such a pleasure to feel the presence and power of the Lord in my soul that I chose to remain awake rather than close my eyes and turn to sleep but all I can't talk many days like that many nights like that no not many nights like that but blessed is the memory of such an enshining and liberating influence of the spirit of the living God now when we think of the

Lord using means to express his displeasure I'm going to turn in my thoughts to the Lord using people to manifest his displeasure and his pleasure toward the people of God and let me go to the beginning Abel was under an influence of saving grace he feared the Lord but Abel I wonder how much of Abel's experience in the life that he lived was subject to the bitterness of his brother

Cain but I'm not suggesting in a moment that the exercise of Cain in bitterness against Abel was all disadvantage to Abel the Lord maketh his people's enemies to be at peace with him it pleased God in the beginning that the bitterness of Cain should be the means of grace to introduce Abel into the very presence of the Lord and to crown him with that deliverance which is singular when the Lord calls his people to himself love but let us go on you remember

[24 : 32] Laban and Jacob don't you Jacob had two wives Leah and Rachel Laban was a taskmaster wasn't he he was not sympathetic with Jacob surely the opposition of Laban to Jacob was not contrary to Jacob's ultimate prosperity but he eventually with the two daughters of Laban took leave of them and without notifying Laban of what he intended and what he was doing he Jacob left Laban and went with his two wives but what a means of grace was Laban to Jacob in seeing the hand of God in realising that God used Laban as the father of those two favoured women through whom the descent of Abraham was so clearly manifested and my friends it was not to the detriment of Jacob or the detriment of the fulfilment of God's promises to father

Abraham and Isaac too that Laban had the attitude he did toward Jacob but when a man's ways please the Lord he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him and if you read through the history in Genesis relative Laban comes and makes peace with Jacob or Jacob makes peace with Laban in the issue and the Lord obviously exercised his power in blessing Jacob to see that he is a God over all and blessed forevermore and we can go on can't we with David and Saul look at the enmity that King Saul exercised toward David David comes to the almost despondent conclusion that despite all the favoured preparation that God had given him in his own soul that he ultimately should be the king of his people

David says I shall one day die by the hand of Saul I can't see that the tables ever can turn to such a degree that I shall be king and Saul not standing in my way but how the Lord brought David into situation wherein he was found with Saul in the same cave and David could go and take a bit of Saul's robe and he could hold a conversation with Saul and Saul was speaking to him in nothing less and nothing but the words of a good relationship the Lord completely seems to have changed Saul's spirit to be kindly and thankfully disposed toward

David who had not taken Saul's life but rather had exercised his recognition of the anointing of Saul and would not lay a finger to hurt him when a man's ways please the Lord he maketh even his enemies my friends we're looking at a position where the hearts of all men are in his hand and he turns them whithersoever he will now you and I perhaps in our pilgrimage through life have had seasons when we've suffered we've suffered and we may feel reviewing the situation that we've suffered wrongfully and it's been very very bitter it's been very very distressing but the

Lord overrules he maketh if our man's ways please the Lord he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him look at your own self first of all examine yourself and see whether ye be in the faith or no whether your spirit is right pray for your enemies pray for your enemies don't neglect the scriptural exercise or injunction that we're not to as it were challenge enmity with enmity but should challenge enmity with prayerfulness pray for your enemies do good to them that hate you show mercy to them that spitefully use you and so forth yes a constructive reaction to something mortifying wounding to nature but the

[30 : 33] Lord is in control the Lord sets as it were the bounds to the bitterness and hatred of those with whom we find it almost impossible to continue in any relationship even in business or in it may be in the family circle whatever may be the relationship present the Lord has the hearts of all men in his hand he turns them whithersoever he will and he can make a bitter enemy a real friend he can make a bitter enemy a real friend and my friends when he does oh what a what a token it is that the Lord is not displeased but rather merciful and gracious in hearing and answering the humble prayer of an unworthy person when your ways please the

Lord oh if you're suffering opposition and you don't know how to tolerate it you don't know how to live with it you find sometimes your spirit so wilts under the influence the contrary influence that you think I don't think I can stand this any longer well now remember the Lord is in control the Lord is in control I remember I remember in my business life I was working at the general electric company in Coventry at the time and they appointed a man who was within five years of retirement and he was appointed as my immediate boss and I didn't agree with him in all things and he took strong exception to one or two things that I suggested would be an improvement in the department and its function and oh it was a great trial so that so that

I got to dread every morning when the clock was telling me it was time to go off to work and the first man I could meet it seemed time after time was this man who obviously was antagonistic but you know I I wrestled with it I tried to avoid I dodged here and there to change the pattern but eventually the Lord brought me to see that the answer to the situation was to pray for the man to pray for the man and that I did when I came eventually to leave the general electric company to go to a position in Birmingham this man was so changed in spirit that he said to me when it came to the farewell assembly I was just about to leave and the department had had a connection and so on and there was a bit of a do when he said look here

Mr. Groucher he said I can't come out and present this to you he said I shall make a fool of myself he said I should be weeping some shedding some tears he said if I come out he said I feel I just want you to accept this and go around the department to give them the voice of your appreciation and then fade away and he wouldn't come out to hand me the present that had been collected and I believe he himself contributed quite generously to the collection that was taken but that man that I had to pray my way through as I dreaded meeting him first thing in the morning day after day after day was so changed by the Lord that a lion became a lamb a lion became a lamb all my friends many many many of our difficulties can be resolved by prayer that never can be resolved with any inferior endeavour or you try to do your utmost you try to win their support but something comes to seem to add fuel to the fire take it to the

Lord when a man's way is pleased the Lord praying always by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your mind be made known unto God I'm quite not the word perfect but that's the spirit of it prayer resolves many many problems you think of David and his prayers in the Psalms now toiled as it were and wrestled and how the Lord brought him ultimately to occupy the throne of Saul and to see how God could bring him through the fiery trial of bitterness not only affecting David personally but David's blessed friend

[36 : 46] Jonathan who was the son of Saul himself who has seemed to have a right spirit right through while his father's spirit was anything but just and profitable well now when a man's ways please the Lord let him the Lord let him go to prayer and see what God can do and see what God will do I remember I'm going to come to the amen but I remember our father my brother David here will have heard the story from my father himself when he used to tell us some of his war stories and we were lads we were very interested in hearing what father had to say about his experiences on the psalm and other battles in the first world war but father was a subconductor of ordinance that is he had quite an influential non-commissioned rank and he was in charge in some great measure of the suitable armaments getting up to the fighting soldiers in the foremost part of the war war and there was an officer who took for some reason a personal dislike to my father

I can't remember just all the details now but I know this officer took a dislike to my father and there came a point in the conflict when this officer was going forward in a motor vehicle to deal with some problem nearer to the front line and the father and there was another non-commissioned officer there present and when it was the choice of the two this officer chose the other man and left my father my father was somewhat wounded by the choice because in some senses he was senior to this other man but they drove off in this vehicle and a shell came over and this man that was sitting in the seat where my father would have sat had he been chosen to go with this officer to the forward position was killed the antagonism of that officer to my father was a means in the

Lord to spare in my father's life you see what I'm trying to demonstrate the enmity can be overruled as a means of grace to preservation and to profitable instruction that we look on the situation and realise whether a man our enemy or our friend he's subject to the Lord's power he's subject to the Lord's power he can only our enemies can only do what the Lord permits them to do they're as much under his control as our best friend in that sense the Lord uses our friends sometimes to exercise our hearts in comfortable and profitable ways while we see his judgmental hand from time to time taking hold of our enemies and dealing with them in sometimes strict chastisement sometimes even taking them from the realm of time into eternity when a man's ways please the

Lord this is the key this is the key they shall make his enemies to be at peace with him my friends instead of as it were rebelling against such a situation and saying why is it why does God allow it can't he change his spirit toward me and make life livable look it's all in the balances of God's purposes that God turns the hearts of men wheresoever whomsoever he will and when you and I are brought to that to commit it into the Lord's hand and seek to live by his grace through whatsoever he appoints prayerfully remembering that we be hoven in scriptural instruction not only to remember our friends in prayer but also to seek the well-being of those that may be bitterly opposed to us when a man's way is pleased the

Lord oh my friends look at yourself self examination why is this my experience it seems that the Lord has turned against me the Lord is using means that will ultimately be profitable to you when your ways please the Lord he will then turn your captivity and make your enemies at peace with you I hope you've taken the principle it's a lovely history in the Acts of the Apostles and with this I close when Peter was in prison and those dear people were praying James Herod had taken James life and Peter was the next on the list after Easter and it seems as though everything

[43 : 40] Herod was in a very powerful position and there was suffering in the church in a very personal and intimate way to those dear souls that got together in prayer when Peter came ultimately and knocked at the door and the people praying wouldn't accept the fact that it was Peter at the door he maketh even his enemies to peace to be at peace with him God can make any crooked thing straight and he can make every rough place plain the Lord God omnipotent reigneth Amen back excues turn in ■■■■ his heart José kid