

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Lay Hold of the Tree of Life

Speaker:

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Date:

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Scriptures:

Proverbs 3:13-35

Theme: Humbly lay hold of the tree of life and you will find the favor of God.

Introduction: The history of mankind is filled with attempts to find the secret to youth and eternal life. We all feel the effects of aging and we know that death looms, and that death is neither natural nor good. Christians recognize something deeper: the presence of the tree of life in the garden, and the sad effect of the fall that mankind was removed from its presence and cursed. We cannot go back to that place; but in his word, the Lord has given us access to another tree of life.

We pursue that tree in two parts:

1. Wisdom as the Tree of Life (13-20)

Wisdom is personified again as woman, beautiful and gracious in truth and elegance. Everyone wants to be near her.

The promise of reward from wisdom is great: better than any wealth, offering peace, pleasantness, and long life.

The section is framed by blessing: "Blessed is the one who finds wisdom...those who hold her fast are called blessed" (3:13, 18).

Yet sinful man often rejects wisdom and settles for inferior pleasures that do not last and cannot satisfy.

Wisdom plumbs the greatest depths of the mysteries of life (vv. 19-20). In that way, it points us to Wisdom himself (Col 1:15-17; 1 Cor 8:6; Rom 11:33-6).

2. How we can humbly lay hold (21-35)

Wisdom offers many benefits. The sweetest benefits in life come as we walk in the Lord's way.

Wisdom grants us: life for our souls; adornment for our necks (it is noticeable and attractive); and security (peace, sweet sleep, sound decisions).

We walk in wisdom especially in our neighborliness. We are prohibited from five things (vv. 27-32): withholding due good; failing to give help when we have it; planning evil; contending without reason; and envying the violent man.

Finally, we are reminded that God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble (v. 34). Those who are humble are wise and receive God's favor.

Questions:

1. Are you pursuing wisdom? What's it worth to you?
2. Where does God's wisdom bring you into conflict with the world in your daily life?
3. Are you proud, or humble?