

6.02.2024

Chapter 2 – Where Your Treasure Is
Supernatural Deliverance (vs.10-17)

Proverbs 2:10-17: For wisdom will enter your heart
And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

Discretion will guard you,
Understanding will watch over you,

To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things;

From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To walk in the ways of darkness;

Who delight in doing evil
And rejoice in the perversity of evil;

Whose paths are crooked,
And who are devious in their ways;

To deliver you from the strange woman,
From the adulteress who flatters with her words;

That leaves the companion of her youth
And forgets the covenant of her God.

We come to this wonderful book of Proverbs that is about really preparing us to reign with Christ. God has called us to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation; a people for God's own possession; that we might be leaders rather than followers. So, the world has their ideas of doing things and their fads and really, it's amazing to me how sheepish people really are; how they'll easily follow almost anything that becomes popular. We're prone to the peer pressure,

and to the things that the world tries to get us to do. Nevertheless, we're not followers of the world, we're followers of Christ and God has called us into this wonderful ministry of doing what is right; of thinking in a superior way. The fact that at the very beginning, you have the title of this particular book, which is Proverbs. Proverbs, as we've been talking about, "*mashal*," makes reference to a superior way of thinking. It is a preparation. In fact, the Greek term that is used in that particular word is dealing with reigning. It's dealing with ruling as well. The consummation of it begins in Proverbs 31:1, where the cry of the mother, as she is turning to the son is, "O Lemuel" which means devoted to God, "You need to rule well." So, it goes into that wonderful explanation of what a king does. In the very beginning of Proverbs 31, it begins to show us what wisdom looks like, as wisdom is his wife.

We come into this book being prepared, and that God is dealing in our hearts through these particular words to make us like Him, to cause us to think appropriately. This is not only going to help us in many ways in perhaps being successful, but God is going to protect us from things that we never could have imagined.

One of the great passages that we oftentimes think of in 6, is about what we should be praying for, and it ends with "deliver us from evil." In this particular passage that we're going to be looking at, what we're going to be seeing is, God's delivering us from evil. It is God's desire to do that, and He's going to demonstrate within this particular passage how we do that. The fact that we are to reign is clearly not for the sake of being superior, but it is for the sake of in humility, Scriptures says, we received the word of God, which is able to save our soul. Then it goes on and tells us that the whole reason why God gives us wisdom is that we might serve well, that we might minister to people; that we might help and do the right things.

So, we come into Proverbs 2, and we deal with this wonderful thing of wisdom and how we get it. The fundamental point at the very beginning of the book is that we have to have the right affections in order to have the wisdom within our heart and within our mind. If in fact you love the wrong things, you'll never be receptive to the things of God. So, Chapter 2 starts off this way,

"My son, if you will receive my words
And treasure my commandments within you."

It starts off with a treasuring and with loving the right things; longing for the right things.

The question is, "How do I display that love and longing?" And he goes into some detail at the very beginning of this. In fact, it goes into the realm of "if," "then." "If you will make your ear attentive." "If you will long for this." "Search for her as for hidden treasures." God is looking for you to have an intense desire. It is not merely your studies and your pursuit that will cause you to be wise, but it is that heart of desire that God will reward, and He will give you wisdom. So,

the fundamental understanding is that wisdom, knowledge, and understanding comes from God. He's the One that gives it. So, in order for you to receive it, you have to do that which is pleasing to Him, and that which is pleasing to Him is that you love the right things.

So, as you come in this passage, it really sets the stage of desiring the right things, longing for the right things, pursuing the right things. The result is very clear in verse 10, which is where we pick up today, that God will, by His power put wisdom within our hearts. That's an amazing phrase, isn't it? The fact that God will actually put, inject, this wisdom within our hearts.

(Proverbs 2:10) "For wisdom will enter your heart..."

It starts off with an interesting little word that is a conjunction within the Hebrew text, which really is connecting the thought that's already been proceeding. The thought is that "If you will, God will." And it begins to tell you what God will do.

In fact, if you look in verse 6,

"For the LORD gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

(Proverbs 2:7) He stores up..."

He's the shield. He's the one that does it. So, the conjunction is fundamentally connecting the fact that He's going to do this.

In the King James, the way that it's translated in Proverbs 2:10, it uses the word "When," which means that there's a kind of a foregone conclusion that it's going to happen because you sought the right things; you've pleased God. He's the one that gives it. He will give it to you. It's a done deal. It's going to happen. I like done deals. I like the fact that you don't have to guess and wonder, "Am I going to get wisdom at all?" He goes, "It's going to happen." One of the ways you can read that particular injunction is, "Indeed wisdom will enter your heart." It's a wonderful way of putting it.

He will cause wisdom to enter your heart. What is wisdom, really, as far as what He's talking about within the passage? Well, obviously He's been talking about prudence. He's been talking about a sense of good judgment, understanding the right thing to do at the right time; the right decisions to make. One of the reasons why evil comes into our lives is because we make really bad decisions. The fact of the matter is, we don't always know what the right decision is in any given circumstance because we don't know what the outcome will be. We don't know all the things that are involved in the decision making process. So, in many ways, it's impossible to know that perfect time for that perfect decision. As Ecclesiastes tells us, there's a time and season for everything under the sun, but who knows what time it is and who knows what's

going to happen afterwards? So, Ecclesiastes reminds us that you can't know everything, and that's a big problem, especially when making decisions, but God does. God is the rewarder. God places on your heart and God begins to move in your heart, and that's why it actually uses the phrase, "wisdom will enter your heart." God is moving in your heart. Now, when He uses this Hebrew word, "*lēb*" for heart, he is dealing with the center of your being. More specifically, the focus of your life. The fact is that the right thing, good sense, good judgment will actually be the focus and the determination of your life. You will be focused on exactly what to do. That's encouraging because I need that kind of focus. I need to know exactly what to do.

It then goes on and says,

"... and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul."

When He's dealing with knowledge, He's dealing with understanding. He's dealing with the sense of perception, the things that you perceive; the way that you perceive things, will be pleasant to your soul.

If you were to take Ecclesiastes 1:8, you would almost come up with a different conclusion, because one of the statements that Solomon makes in that passage is that knowledge can make you more miserable. Increasing the knowledge can actually bring more pain and misery. So, how is it that knowledge can be pleasant?

If you go to the end of Ecclesiastes 2, we understand that God gives knowledge. So, why would He give me something that would be painful? The point is that without God's direction, knowledge is painful, but with God's direction, with His heart, His spirit, His understanding and His way of perceiving things, the knowledge will be pleasant to you.

Ecclesiastes 7, if you just turn there with me, just to kind of give you an understanding of what he's talking about within this setting.

(Ecclesiastes 7:1) "A good name is better than a good ointment,
And the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth."

We read that particular phrase, and we go, "I don't get that. That can't be."

He then begins to explain it from God's perception; from the way that He sees things.

(Ecclesiastes 7:2) "It is better to go to a house of mourning
Than to go to a house of feasting,
Because that is the end of every man,
And the living takes it to heart."

In other words, at a funeral, you begin to think about mortality. You begin to think about what things are really important.

(Ecclesiastes 7:3) “Sorrow is better than laughter,
For when a face is sad a heart may be happy.

(Ecclesiastes 7:4) “The mind of the wise is in the house of mourning...”

You actually are thinking and dealing with things that are very important.

“... While the mind of fools is in the house of pleasure.

(Ecclesiastes 7:5) It is better to listen to the rebuke of a wise man
Than for one to listen to the song of fools.”

It's actually better for you to be rebuked by a wise man than to sit around and just laugh about stupid stuff. Why? Because you're actually learning things that will help you in life, whereas, the other way you're fundamentally wasting your time.

(Ecclesiastes 7:6) “For as the crackling of thorn bushes under a pot,
So is the laughter of the fool;
And this too is futility.”

The passage is really conveying throughout and it's not telling us not to be happy during times of God's blessings.

In fact, it tells us in verse 14,

“In the day of prosperity be happy,
But in the day of adversity consider —
God has made the one as well as the other...”

In other words, when good times come, when bad times come, the knowledge and the perception that God has given us can be pleasing. In fact, there's a point in James, as we've oftentimes repeated, in James 1. You can consider it all joy when you encounter various trials, knowing that God is testing and is doing a great work. So, everything that you see, the way that you see it through the eyes of God, it becomes pleasing, and a beautiful thing. God is doing a wonderful work.

He starts off with the fact that God is going to give you, in your heart, a sense of common, good sense. I wouldn't say, “common sense,” good sense. It doesn't seem to be common anymore. A sense of good judgment, and good sense. God is going to put that into your heart. It will become the focus of your life and everything you begin to discern and the way you perceive things will be pleasant because you'll see God's hand in it. You'll see what He's doing. You'll see how He's worked. God is literally causing all things to work together for good to those who love Him, and to those who are walking according to His purpose. It's a different way of seeing things. God is going to cause this.

Then, it goes into the passage and as He clearly set the stage, God is the one that is doing this to protect us, He begins to show us how it protects us.

In fact, it goes in verse 11,

“Discretion will guard you,
Understanding will watch over you,

(Proverbs 2:12) To deliver you from the way of evil...”

How are we delivered from evil? I'm going to go into some explanation of what that means within the passage, especially the phrase, “discretion will guard you.” But before we go into it, the question then comes up, what exactly are we being guarded from? What is it that we're being protected from? So, let's go on and read the passage and see the things that were being protected from.

“To deliver you from the way of evil,
From the man who speaks perverse things.”

The best way to describe “perverse” is that which leads you away from doing the right thing. It's rebelliousness. It's not strange for a man to know the right thing. He knows the right thing. It's not that it's a mystery to him. The right thing is not enigmatic to man. God has actually placed the conscience within him to know the right thing to do, but he just doesn't want to do it. The passage is telling us that God is going to keep you from listening to people that are telling you, “Let's go another way.”

(Proverbs 2:13) “From those who leave the paths of uprightness
To walk in the ways of darkness.”

Darkness is that wonderful description of where the path leads you. Why are people depressed? Why is their life dark? Why are they hopeless? Why are they confused? What happened? Well, according to Psalm 1, according to this particular passage, they listen to the wrong people. They allowed those people to come into their lives and to direct them and they said, “You don't have to do that, and you don't have to listen to them.” And it takes them away from the paths of uprightness. Well, what is the right thing to do? Do we really know the right thing? Well, I mean, just look at some of the fundamentals, “Children obey and honor your parents.” How complicated is that? Now, I can tell you there's going to be a lot of people that are telling your kids, “You don't have to listen to them.” But it's not going to go well, not only in the life of their relationship with their parents, but in life in general, and just a little tidbit at the very end, you won't live long. I mean, that's the promise of God. Honor and obey your parents, that your days would be long. So, God would bless you.

Scripture tells us when evil comes at us, according to Romans 12, that we don't return evil for evil, but we give a blessing instead. Now, Scripture is very clear about how we are to respond and how we are to react, but there are people that will tell you, "Why don't you just get even with them?" And ok, that's an easy thing to do, but it's very destructive in the long run. There are things that Scripture tells us to do that are very clear; things that we know are right, that are very clear in our own hearts. Scripture says don't hang on to anger. Don't be angry, don't hate your neighbor. Don't hate those around you. It's a very simple thing, isn't it? We know the right thing to do. There will be people that are telling you to do the wrong thing. "Don't put God first."

So, if you look at the passage, it starts off, they're going to speak perverse things, they're going to cause you to leave the path of uprightness, to walk in the way of darkness. Then, verse 14, these are people who delight in doing evil. They actually get their jollies from doing it. The description here is they display glee when they do the wrong thing. Can you imagine somebody actually being happy about doing the wrong thing? I see it on TV all the time.

(Proverbs 14) "Who delight in doing evil
And rejoice in the perversity of evil."

Once again, that's that sense of doing the wrong thing, taking you off the path of what is right; twisted thinking. In fact, he will actually use that particular word in verse 15,

"Whose paths are crooked..." or twisted.

When it reads in verse 14, "And rejoice in the perversity," it actually gives an interesting picture of somebody dancing and spinning around. That seems pretty happy, doesn't it? I guess there is a joy in darkness for a while.

"Whose paths are crooked,
And who are devious in their ways."

Deceptive, departing from that which you know is right.

That God is going to, if you look in verse 16,

"To deliver you from the strange woman..."

You see the word "deliver"? It actually is an interesting picture of snatching away, which is telling us that this strange woman, "From the adulteress who flatters with her words," is very alluring. It's very easy. Once again it becomes a metaphor of anything of the world that attracts you. Things of the world are very attractive. They know how to attract, and they know how to make you feel good. I mean, you can watch a commercial and it'll tell you that you actually have a more enjoyable time if you take certain drugs, and you'll be happier, and you'll be put in all

kinds of interesting settings. If you're driving a certain car "You're going to have a happier life. Everybody's going to be wonderful in your life." It's very alluring because they're speaking words that will flatter you. Proverbs 5:3 uses the same terms.

(Proverbs 5:1) "My son, give attention to my wisdom,
Incline your ear to my understanding;

(Proverbs 5:2) That you may observe discretion
And your lips may reserve knowledge.

(Proverbs 5:3) For the lips of an adulteress drip honey
And smoother than oil is her speech."

Flattery is an interesting word that was used in the passage, and it actually comes from the word "to be divided." What it means is that she doesn't mean anything she's saying. She just has another agenda, and it is to use, but wow, they become really good at what they do. I think it's the purpose of Romans 12, where it says, "Don't think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to have sound judgment." It doesn't take much to get your head kind of big and inflate it and think, "Wow, I do deserve this stuff. I am the greatest thing that ever walked the face of the earth." And you sure swallowed it hook, line and sinker.

Proverbs 7 gives the description.

(Proverbs 7:1) "My son, keep my words
And treasure my commandments within you.

(Proverbs 7:2) Keep my commandments and live,
And my teaching as the apple of your eye.

(Proverbs 7:3) Bind them on your fingers;
Write them on the tablet of your heart."

Whatever it takes to remind you of what God wants you to do, even if you have to sticky notes on your head.

(Proverbs 7:4) "Say to wisdom, "You are my sister" ..."

That's an interesting relationship of somebody that you love, but it has good moral ramifications to it.

"Say to wisdom, "You are my sister,"
And call understanding your intimate friend;

(Proverbs 7:5) That they may keep you from an adulteress,
From the foreigner who flatters with her words."

If you look with me in Proverbs 22:12, it says,

“The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge,
But He overthrows the words of the treacherous man.”

Which seems to convey that God's really the protector here.

If you drop on down to verse 14,

“The mouth of an adulteress is a deep pit;
He who is cursed of the LORD will fall into it.”

Ah. It's actually showing you the other side of the coin. The word “curse” there is really provoking God to anger. The question is, how do you provoke God to anger? The answer is you leave Him. You pursue other things. You put other things in front of Him. You provoke Him to anger. What's the result? Well, according to Romans 1:26, God gives you over to your degraded passions. In other words, He steps out of the room and no longer do you have the protection. You look at certain people and you go, “How did they do that stupid, stupid thing?” God walked out of the room, and they had no sense. Good sense left them because good sense walked out of the room. It's God that keeps us from doing certain things and He protects us. It's what Proverbs 2 is saying, He delivers you. He snatches you out from those influences that will come in and flatter you and will in some way make you feel important by virtue of doing the things that you do; this is really the interesting setting within the text, even to the point of leaving people that really do love you and care for you.

The way that it reads is,

(Proverbs 2:17) “That leaves the companion of her youth...”

Proverbs 5:18 says,

“Let your fountain be blessed,
And rejoice in the wife of your youth.”

The difference between a wife and that one night stand, is that a wife is somebody that actually loves you; a wife is somebody who's going to be with you for better, for worse, in sickness and health, till death do you part; somebody that is your trusted friend, your companion. It is interesting that this word for companion is not only used just for wife but in some cases, it's used for your father. In other cases, it's used for a brother or a sister or friend, but it will oftentimes be translated, “your familiar friend.” As Proverbs will say, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend.” This is somebody that cares for you, not just using you for themselves or to get something. It is not an opportunist that comes into your life, but somebody that really cares for you; not somebody that is fabricating things to make you feel good so that they can get

something from you. It's actually somebody that cares for you. The strange phenomenon in this is that you would leave them to go with her. See, that's the strange thing. Why would you do that? Why would you forsake somebody? Even the wording with this, if you look in verse 16, "from the adulteress," is a word that really deals with somebody that is not attached to you. There is a cold detachment. This particular word is seen in Genesis 31. I wouldn't normally have you turn to this, but I want you to see it within the context because it really describes what it means when it describes the foreign woman that comes to you.

So, in Genesis 31, you begin to see Leah and Rachel, as they begin to describe their father and his relationship to them. Jacob is saying to them, You want to stay with your dad? They go, "Why should we stay with him?" And this is their answer within the passage,

(Genesis 31:14) "Rachel and Leah said to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house?"

(Genesis 31:15) "Are we not reckoned by him as foreigners? ..."

How was a foreigner seen? Look at the text,

"... For he has sold us, and has also entirely consumed our purchase price."

They're saying, "We're just somebody that he uses."

When he's talking about adulterous woman, a foreign woman, a strange woman, it's somebody that just uses you to get what they want. It's hard to be protected from evil. The passage says there are things, there are people that are devious about what they do. They know how to manipulate, they know how to say things. It's very easy to be sucked into it. What protects us?

This takes us back to the beginning, and if you look with me in that wonderful text in verse 11,

"Discretion will guard you." What is discretion and how does it guard you? I mean, obviously God is doing the work, but He works with the heart that's truly His. So, discretion comes into the formula in which He then guards you because of this. Discretion itself is something that will cause you to think right. It should, but this particular word is not just simply thinking right, it's just plain thought. Your thoughts will guard you. The word that is used, "*m²zimmâ*" is a word that refers to not only thought, but purpose.

If you look with me in Jeremiah, you'll see the word translated in a different way. It is interesting when you go through Scripture, you begin to see different definitions for the same word. The context will oftentimes define the clarity. If you look with me in Jeremiah 23, it will give you a different perspective of the word, which helps you understand the word better. Jeremiah 23 begins to talk about the anger of the Lord within the text, and it says this in verse 20,

(Jeremiah 23:20) “The anger of the LORD will not turn back
Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart...”

Now, you remember in Proverbs 2, we read the word “discretion.” It's the same word. The purpose of His heart. The discretion of your heart. What will guard you? The purpose of your heart. It's one of the reasons why, if you back up, He will cause wisdom to enter your heart. What will be your purpose? You'll have a different purpose. You'll have a different drive. What is the purpose? What are you doing? I remember oftentimes I would get in trouble and do things and my folks would just come up to me and they'd go, “What are you doing? What were you thinking?” And of course, the proper answer was “Nothing.” I wasn't thinking about anything, obviously, an airhead, breezeway. The fact of the matter is that will get you in a lot of trouble, and that's really what Scripture refers to as “simple minded;” the person that is thinking that way. This particular passage is giving you that and there's another angle to this.

If you look in Jeremiah 30:24, it will use the same word “*m^zimmâ*.”

“The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back
Until He has performed and until He has accomplished
The...”

Here it is again, except now it's defined as “intent.”

“The intent (*m^zimmâ*) of His heart.” So far, we have some kind of understanding about discretion. That discretion, which is supposed to be the very thing that guards us, has to be thought of as the purpose that we have; the intent of our hearts. In fact, it's very much a synonym of another Hebrew word, “*yēšer*,” which deals with, and is oftentimes translated “intent;” the purpose of your heart.

Genesis 6:5 talks about those that were wicked and the reason for the flood, and it says that the “intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” It was talking about “*m^zimmâ*,” the intent, the things that they wanted to do.

You see it in Genesis 8:21, God realized that man's thoughts are evil. The word “thoughts” are the intent; the way that he purposes to live. These are all the same word as “discretion will guard you.”

I know that sometimes these obscure minor prophets, we call them, seem to be lost in our memory, but if you look with me in Habakkuk, chapter 2:18, it uses this word, “*yāšar*” which is dealing with the intent of the heart as well. Once again, a synonym of the other word.

(Habakkuk 2:18) “What profit is the idol when its maker has carved it,
Or an image, a teacher of falsehood?
For its maker trusts in his own handiwork (yāṣar) ...”

What Scripture is telling you in this, it goes on and says,

“When he fashions speechless idols.”

It's talking about the fact that your intent, your purpose, is framing something. You're actually building something in your head. Maybe a picture is coming in your eyes, but something is being framed. It will actually be used in Psalm 103, that talks about He knows our frame. It'll use this particular word. The same thing would be “intent.” So, the intent is framing something. A thought or idea becomes an intent. The intent becomes an idol. I don't know if you see the progression or not, but it starts off with just the thought. It then becomes a purpose. That purpose and intent then becomes something that you make, and ultimately something that you worship. It starts with the imagination of the heart. His point is that that your discretion, the thing that you make as your purpose, the thing that you form as your focus, will be that which will preserve you and will keep you.

One of our favorite passages is found in Isaiah 26. We usually quote the King James in this verse,

(Isaiah 26:3) “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”

If you look with me in Isaiah 26, I think some of these verses are near and dear to us, but completely understanding what they're saying sometimes gets lost. I was talking to somebody this past week. I said, “What's your favorite verse?” And they were quoting a particular verse, and I said, “What does that mean to you?” They go, “I hadn't thought about that.”

Isaiah 26 starts off with the fact that God is going to be our city, our protector. Man built cities that he sees as his protection or as his security. Of course, it seems to be any place but that, and that's why Scripture goes on to call it a “city of chaos.” So, that's the only thing man can build.

(Isaiah 26) “In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah:
“We have a strong city;
He sets up walls and ramparts for security.”

God will set up walls and ramparts to deliver you from the evil.

(Isaiah 26:2) “Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter,
The one that remains faithful.”

Now, let's talk about intent and purpose. What's your intent? What's the purpose of your life? What's the focus of your life? Because whatever it is, is going to be that which guards you, that which watches over you, that which protects you. Some people, their focus is money, and their perception is, "It will watch over me when I get old. It will hug me. It will love me. It will care for me when everybody else is gone." And I would say, "It's not going to work." The question is, where is your heart? Is it faithful to God? "The one that remains faithful." Fidelity is a big thing. Now, if you think about the adulterous woman, she could care less about fidelity, relationship, or how anything affects anyone, just, "Whatever I can get from you, and then we're gone." There's no connection, all detachment. That's the world, isn't it? "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. Don't get attached to them. They will not protect you. They won't love you like I do."

So, it starts off with the one that remains faithful. Then, it goes into the passage as we would read it in the King James, "Thou wilt keep in perfect peace." The way that it reads in the NAS is, "You will keep..."

The "nation" that's actually written in there, is just "those that."

"Thou will keep those that have steadfast..." Ah, "purpose," "yēšer," intent.

See, we don't oftentimes read that. Who is the one that is kept? It's actually going to use "*nāšar*" to guard or to keep; the very word that Proverbs uses. He will be guarded by God. Who is the one that is kept? Look at the passage. The one of steadfast purpose; of steadfast intent. I know what my purpose is. Do you know what your purpose is? Paul will tell Timothy, "You have a course to finish. Finish it. I finished the course." I know what God has me here to do. I know it's to please Him, to honor Him, to point to Him. It's all about Him. If I'll be faithful and remain faithful to that purpose, will anything come into my life that God hasn't ordained for my good? Nothing. God will protect me from evil forces that could come in; forces that I could never see or perceive God will keep away, but I've got to keep my focus on Him. See, if you keep your focus on all the problems and all the difficulties of the world, "Oh, there's a problem there. There's a problem here." There's just no way, and the only thing that's going to do is just make you more miserable, frustrated, and confused, but God will keep you in perfect peace, whose purpose and intent is trusting Him. Isn't that what it says? Thou will keep the nation steadfast in purpose, in perfect peace, because it trusts in Thee. What's the purpose? "I'm going to trust You. I'm just going to believe You for everything."

(Isaiah 26:4) "Trust in the LORD forever,
For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.

(Isaiah 26:5) "For He has brought low those who dwell on high, the unassailable city..."

There are people who think, "Well, I'm secure because I have this and this." He's going to bring them low. What does it look like? He actually defines this in verse 8,

(Isaiah 26:8) "Indeed, while following the way of Your judgments, O LORD, We have waited for You eagerly; Your name, even Your memory, is the desire of our souls.

(Isaiah 26:9) At night my soul longs for You, Indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently..."

What does it look like to be of steadfast purpose and intent? I think he's pretty well described it. "We have waited for Thee eagerly. It's Your memory of Your name, the desire of You; longing for You." "That I might know Him." Paul will write, "The fellowship, even of His sufferings; that I might even know what it means to suffer for doing what is right, just like Christ did." My goal and my pursuit are the things of following God. If this is true, what's the promise, according to Proverbs? Discretion will guard you; your thoughts, your intent will guard you; will keep you in perfect peace. Understanding shall, "*nāṣar*," literally watch over you.

Colossians 1 gives us a wonderful promise as we go into this chapter. Of course, Christ is everything. I mean, there's nothing that He doesn't control. So, isn't it wonderful that we can put our trust in Him? This says in Colossians 1:9,

"For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will..."

Ah, that would be your focus.

As Ephesians 5 would say, "Trying to learn what is pleasing God." That would be your focus. You wake up on a given day and you go, "Ok, what is it You want? What is the purpose of this day according to You?" If I'll be steadfast in that thought, He will keep me in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Him.

I think of Philippians 4 where it says, you don't have to be anxious about anything, but with prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known. Then it goes on and says, "Look, I tell you what, to sum it up, think about these things: whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things, and the God of peace will be with you." God's fundamentally saying, "I see what you think. I know the intent of your heart, and I know what you're driven by. If you have the right drive, I'll protect you." He's not asking you to be perfect, He's just saying, "If you'll pursue the right things, and your heart will long for the right things, I'll take care of everything else." I mean, look, we either walk by faith, or we don't.

(Colossians 1:10) “So that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.”

It's like as time goes on, you begin to go, “Yeah, I mean, I knew to begin with that He wanted this, but now I'm beginning to see He wants this too.” And you're beginning to see such marvelous things.

(Colossians 1:11) “Strengthened ...”

With what? Your power? See, the fact is that He empowers you to do the things that He's purposed for you to do. I mean, how bizarre is it that you start off feeling kind of lethargic and lackadaisical, but you say, “You know what? I'm going to make this the intent of my heart.” And you begin to pursue and take the steps that God tells you, and then all of a sudden, you're going, “Where did I get this energy from?”

“Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

(Colossians 1:12) giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.”

Oh, here's the phrase,

(Colossians 1:13) “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness...”

And He will.

Wonderful promises in Scripture, that clear “If...Then.” God is the giver. If you'll seek His face, if you'll pursue, if your discretion, your purpose, your focus, your intent will be right, because you're framing something. Whatever that intent is, you're framing something, and before long you find that the only thing you're framing is a house built on sand. It's no wonder people wake up and are disappointed.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we come before You today, and we just ask that You begin to work in our lives as we begin to get stirred about what You want, but more than that, about what frees us; about what saves us, about what brings stability and security in our lives. All these things are gifts from You, and it begins simply by the intent of our hearts.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I'll just simply ask you, what's your intent? What's your purpose? What are you pursuing? When you wake up on a given day, what's the first thing on your mind? Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose intent is fully trusting in

Him; steadfastly pursuing nothing else. Scripture says if I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me. Do you know what iniquity is? It's the fundamental root word which means "idol." If I framed another idol in my heart, what makes you think that God would talk with somebody that's unfaithful? That He would listen to somebody that's not genuine? If you'd be genuine, you'd be real, just watch. How amazing it is that God can keep; God will keep, He will deliver. In some cases, He'll literally snatch you away from the evil. You don't have to know everything. You do need to know Him.