

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 8:32-36

32 "And now, O sons, listen to me: blessed are those who keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction and be wise, and do not neglect it.

34 Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors.

35 For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the Lord,

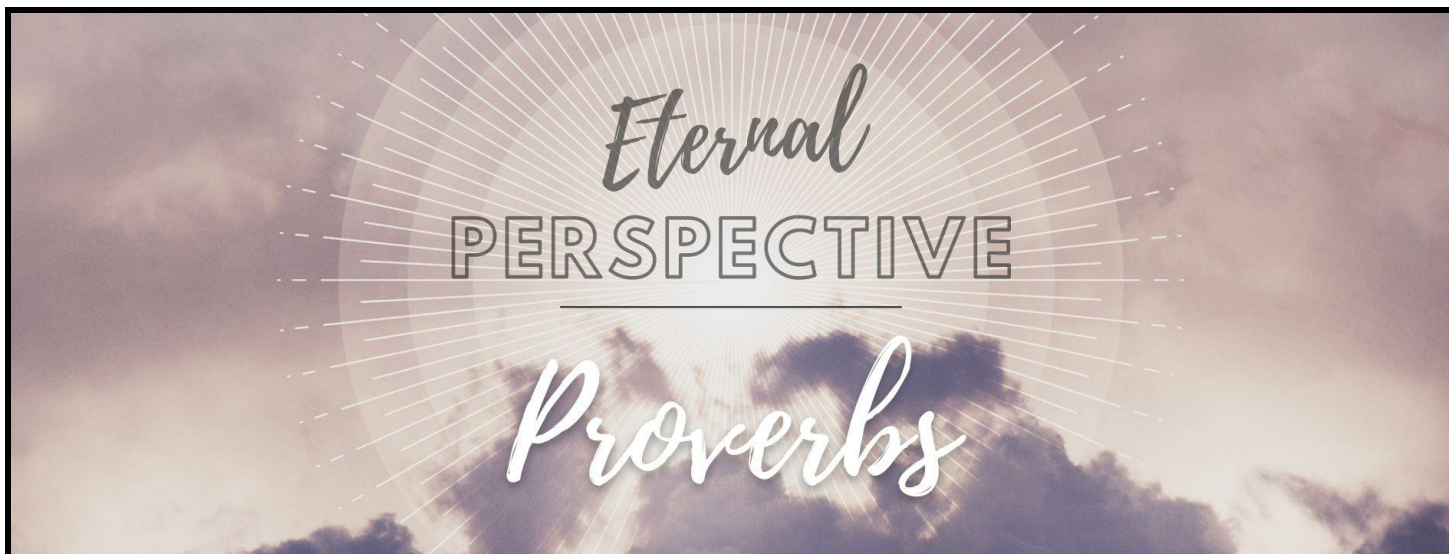
36 but he who fails to find me injures himself; all who hate me love death."

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 8:32-36

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I'm sure most have heard the phrase "the pursuit of happiness" and have had many different thoughts of its meaning. To Thomas Jefferson, who used the phrase, it meant "the pursuit of a meaningful life", of a life that provides a person with a sense of satisfaction that what they are doing is worth living for (Daniel Greenberg; vol. 44 of the Sudbury Valley School Journal, Spring, 2015). Many can hear this phrase and immediately think of pleasure, contentment, good fortune, or blessings. What many do not realize is that not all blessings in life are of happy origin or pleasing to the heart and mind. Some blessings come in the form of pain and suffering. The most important blessing a Christian can ever receive was provided through Jesus' immense pain and suffering on the cross.

Proverbs 8:32-36 speaks of being blessed by listening and hearing, watching, waiting, finding, and obtaining. All of these actions are related to pursuing the Lord in every way, longing for Him, His wisdom and His word. We are blessed when we keep His ways, the ways that are not of the world, ways that often receive ridicule and condemnation for not being of the world. We are called to listen to His instruction, but only truly hear it when we hear the Word and open ourselves to understand and accept it so that it transforms us. "Those who have "ears to hear" allow the Word to bear fruit to the glory of God. It is up to the hearer to decide whether to take the Word seriously and pursue understanding" (GotQuestions.org). Blessedness comes when we pursue God daily, watching, waiting,



and finding, enduring the trials, tribulations, temptations, and persecutions of this world. "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:10).

Everything in this passage is about doing work, heart work. It takes us committing and willing to endure the evil of this world for the glory of our Lord and Savior. We are to seek Him diligently and earnestly in all that we do, not to neglect Him when things in our life become hard or our path takes us in a way we ourselves had not expected or wanted, but to draw nearer to Him in prayer and worship and in reading His word. When we are "watching daily at [His] gates, waiting beside [His] doors" (verse 34), we are standing guard, protecting our hearts against the evil one and his lies and schemes. We guard and protect our hearts with wisdom from His word. The only pursuit in this life, in this world that we need to make is the pursuit of Jesus. "For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor (blessing) from the Lord" (verse 35). "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well" (John 14:6-7). To pursue and find blessings of the Father we must pursue the Son and His Word.

Questions:

1. Are you taking action?
2. Do you listen or hear?
3. What is it you are pursuing?