

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”

November 26, 2016

2 Kings 17:6–18:12. Hoshea and Hezekiah.

Ephesians 1:1–23. Prayer just is our communicative 2nd person relationship with God.

Proverbs 8:9–18. Wisdom and beauty.

COMMENTS.

2 Kings 17:6–18:12. Chapter 17 describes Hosea’s evil reign in Israel (17:1-2), Shalmaneser’s attack on Samaria (17:3-6), and Israel’s captivity (17:7-41). Chapter 18 begins with Hezekiah’s good reign. It points out Hezekiah’s goodness (18:1-8) followed by a second account of the fall of Samaria (18:9-12).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. The point in 17:34-41 is that Israel did not learn her lesson. It’s often been said that the one thing we learn from history is that we don’t learn from history. Despite the way the Lord had warned them and chastened them, the people continued to worship the Lord along with the other gods, and they did it their own way. They ignored their history as the people of God delivered from Egyptian bondage. They forgot God’s laws and covenants, especially God’s commandments concerning idolatry. Like Laodicean Christians today, the people of Israel worshiped the Lord where and how they pleased, but they also paid respect to the false gods of the other nations, like Mammon and immoral values. There are a plethora of reasons to love and worship God with all that we are. We not only have His great love and salvation to respond to. We have plenty of examples throughout the Bible of what happens when believers put things of this world above the Lord when the priority in life is the temporal things rather than the eternal truths of God (cf. darkness and slavery in Matt 6:19-24). The Christian life is not a life that can be lived in half measures. Christ is to be all and have first place in everything—this is the ultimate in walking with God *by knowledge and by love* as Christ is the greatest manifestation of the knowledge and love of God. Romans 5:8 *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.* Hebrews 1:1 *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person.*

Ephesians 1:1–23. Verses 1-2 provide the introduction; verses 3-14 is one long Greek sentence that surveys the redemptive activity of the Triune God with focus on His grace; and verses 15-23 in an extended prayer. Paul prayed that his readers would have the spiritual insight to perceive the truth that is hidden in God. It can be unlocked only in the experience of life and fellowship with Him—for only in God is there light. The prayer issues from his opening section, constituting a request that believers may appropriate all that is contained in that beautifully rich sentence.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Walking with God by *proper knowledge and proper love* takes place in a direct unmediated *second-person* relationship. And the only communicative *second-person* relationship we have with God in this life takes place in prayer. Note the fourfold prayer of Paul in this section for believers: (1) to know and experience God. (2) to know the hope of His calling, (3) to know of His glorious inheritance, and (4) to know of His great power. Paul expounded on this great power available to believers exhibited in Christ’s resurrection, ascension, rule, and headship. The workings of grace are real but they are hidden and must be revealed by God. God, in grace, always makes the first move. We can only respond to His light.

Proverbs 8:9–18. Note the list of wisdom’s rewards both positive (prudence, knowledge, discretion) and negative (avoidance of pride, arrogance, and evil).

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Note the condition and promise in Proverbs 8:17, *I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me.* It is one thing to know something as “true.” To go deeper is to see the “good.” To go even deeper is to see transcendent “beauty.” Factual knowledge (“true”) is one thing, wisdom is something altogether different. Wisdom, like transcendent beauty, requires a very broad and wholesome capacity to enjoy goodness at a foundation level. Consider the three levels of truth about your existence. It is one thing to factually know that you are alive. To know that your life is a good gift from God is to go deeper into reality. But to understand that your life is a most beautiful gift of God requires not only a depth of wisdom (which requires right thinking about a host of issues), but a breadth of understanding from a soul that has a full capacity of many attributes. Apart from right-thinking a person can know the truth that life is a gift of God, but also think that his life is wretched. One must go deeper into truth to see the beauty of all life. God promises this wisdom to all who seek it diligently. To find wisdom is to find the beauty of life that is only illuminated by the light of life in God *by proper knowledge and proper love.* To find wisdom is to find the divine plentitude in life and all that exists as one walks on the path of life with the Light of life.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and by proper love.

Pastor Don