

Session 5

How to Experience Wholeness in God

Proverbs 3:1-10

Memory Verse

*My son, don't forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commands;
for they will bring you
many days, a full life,, and well-being.*

– PROVERBS 3:1-2, CSB



HOW TO EXPERIENCE WHOLENESS IN GOD

THEOLOGICAL THEME: The key to flourishing in our health is living wisely, in step with the Lord.

CALL TO ACTION: Consider where the Lord is calling you to pursue greater health and take steps of obedience.

The topic of health is a big one in our culture today.

We're getting 10,000 steps every day (sometimes with weighted vests).

We're drinking (what seems like) our body weight in water.

We're lifting more weights.

We're counting our macros and upping our protein consumption.

Prioritization of health is very in, and this trend has no end in sight. More than 72 million Americans have a membership to health clubs and studios. Health and wellness in America generates \$22.4 billion in economic activity.¹

Focus on mental health is also on the rise. Stigmas around talk therapy have lessened over the years and more Americans are seeking it out. From 2018 to 2021, the number of Americans receiving talk therapy increased by about 5.5 million.²

Trend or no trend, taking our health seriously is a good thing when it falls correctly in our priorities! God desires us to take care of our bodies and He calls believers into this industry to help others! When we take care of ourselves, we are better equipped to go out and walk in the calling God has placed on our lives (and do this for more years than we would in poor health).

But, Scripture's bigger idea of "flourishing" in our health differs from what culture has to say. It's less about cramming more tricep dips into your workout to strengthen your body and more about trusting in the Creator who crafted your body in the first place.

Today, we're going to explore Proverbs 3 to see what it has to say about our well-being, and how we can't truly flourish in health apart from the Lord's help.

? How important is physical or mental health in your life?

? Why is it important that we acknowledge these things matter to God also?

Session Summary

Proverbs' idea of flourishing in health is living well and wisely, in step with the Lord. This complete trust and surrender is the key to a full life!

To flourish, we must actively follow the Lord and invite Him into every arena in our lives. We must hand over control of our lives to Him, trusting Him to lead us on the right paths, and knowing that He will take care of us and bless us.

1. A Full Life (Proverbs 3:1-4)

? What does having a "full life" mean to you?

? How does this compare to what the world says gives one a full life?

Proverbs is wisdom literature that teaches, on the personal level, how to live wisely and well (which requires us to live in step with the Lord). This was primarily written by the famously wise Solomon and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We can trust in the truth in these pages (1 Kings 4:29-34)!

Proverbs repeatedly urges the wise reader to heed the teachings and commandments it holds. Solomon said doing so will: "Bring you many days, a full life, and well-being" (v. 2b).

Merriam-Webster defines well-being as “the state of being happy, healthy, or prosperous”³ and Proverbs teaches that the key to well-being is living wisely and well, which requires us to live in close relationship with the Lord.

*For the LORD gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. —Proverbs 2:6*

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. —Proverbs 9:10*

As we talked about last week, rightly fearing the Lord means faithfully following Him. Walking in God’s ways, following His will for your life, behaving the way the Bible teaches us to, loving Him with your entire being (Jesus reiterated the importance of this in Matthew 22:37-40), and worshiping Him. The key to flourishing in our health isn’t adding another gym membership, but obediently living in step with the Lord.

Solomon noted that living this way will bring “many days” (v. 2). Living wisely certainly has the potential to lengthen our lifespan, though it’s not necessarily guaranteed. What is guaranteed, though, is a full quality of life and well-being. Can you look around and see how our society yearns for these things? How nonbelievers seek them in the wrong places? We cannot hope to truly have a full life or well-being apart from Christ.




How does living in godly wisdom give us a full life?

The Hebrew word translated as “loyalty” in verse 3 is *chesed*.⁴ We also see it translated as faithful love, fidelity, and kindness. It’s the same word God used to describe the incredible love He has for His people:

. . . but showing faithful love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commands. —Exodus 20:6

This type of loyal love and faithfulness is critical if we want to flourish in our health. They should be an integral part of our being (John 13:34-35). Solomon wrote this type of living earns a good reputation.

2. Healing For Your Body (Proverbs 3:5-8)

 What does it mean to trust in God with all of your heart?

 How does this lead to “in all your ways know him” (v. 6)?

Scripture offers us many tidbits of wisdom about where we should place ultimate trust:

*Anyone trusting in his riches will fall,
but the righteous will flourish like foliage. —Proverbs 11:28*

*The one who trusts in himself is a fool,
but one who walks in wisdom will be safe. —Proverbs 28:26*

Scripture also contains warnings about doing what we think is right, apart from the Lord:

*There is a way that seems right to a person,
but its end is the way to death. —Proverbs 14:12*

To flourish in any area of life, fully trusting in the Lord is critical. This means turning to Him when you're making decisions. Being obedient to what He is calling you to do versus doing strictly what you want to do. Our “own understanding” here simply means relying on our own reasoning instead of God's.

This can be tricky. How do we distinguish our own understanding from wisdom from the Lord? As a starting point, we pray and ask for help. This discernment also begins well before decision crunch time begins. The more we actively invest in our relationship with the Lord by studying our Bibles, praying, meditating, fasting, etc., the more tuned in we will become to the daily workings and nudges of the Holy Spirit. The best decision we can make for tomorrow's decisions is investing in our relationship with the Lord today.



What would it look like for you to prepare today to learn God's voice better for tomorrow?

Verse six says, "In all your ways know him" (v. 6a). In all our ways. The NIV translates this as "in all your ways submit to him" (v. 6a, NIV). To do this, we must fully and completely trust in the Lord, more than our own thoughts, opinions, and preferences. When we do this, we fully invite God into every aspect of our lives and give Him ultimate control.⁵

Making our paths straight doesn't guarantee success, and it certainly doesn't guarantee ease. If we had any doubts on that score, Jesus cleared them up for us:

"I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. You will have suffering in this world. Be courageous! I have conquered the world."

—John 16:33

The straight paths in view here are the paths of righteousness David wrote about in Psalm 23. This is the wise path of right living, which leads to God's will being walked out, which we know is for our ultimate good (Romans 8:28).

Solomon went on to advise us not to make the mistake of being wise in our own eyes (Proverbs 14:12), but rather "fear the LORD and turn away from evil" (v. 7).

When we live this way, it will be healing and strengthening to us. Sometimes God might offer us physical healing and strength, but not always. Have you ever trusted God over yourself and felt this type of healing firsthand? No matter the situation, the key to flourishing in true health is walking in step with the Lord.

3. Completely Filled (Proverbs 3:9-10)



What promise does this passage offer? What warning is included in verses 11-12?



What are some ways a person might misunderstand this promise?

Fully trusting the Lord with our lives includes trusting Him with our possessions. We've studied this concept in this series previously, and Scripture will continue to reiterate this idea!

The offering of the firstfruits was a part of God's law (Deuteronomy 18:4). This practice took immense trust of God's provision. A person wasn't to wait and see how much the harvest would yield, making sure they had enough to care for family and workers, and then offer some to God. No, they offered the, and, with a humble heart, trusting that God would provide for them and everyone they were responsible for. When we honor God with our blessings and wealth (all gifts from Him in the first place), it honors Him.



What does it look like for you to bring your first and best to God?

As a blessing for this act of obedience, God promises not just blessings, but overflowing, abundant blessings (Deuteronomy 28:1-14, Luke 12:31), a gift of flourishing from the Lord. This doesn't necessarily or even probably mean spiritual wealth, but it is the type of soul health and flourishing that all people seek deeply.

Conclusion

Proverbs teaches us how to live wisely and well, a task we can't hope to accomplish when we aren't in relationship with the Lord (the source of wisdom). Living in close relationship with the Lord, with our very lives characterized by Christlike love and faithfulness to the Lord, is the key to "a full life, and well-being" (v. 2). This is how we truly live in health.

This requires us to place our full and complete trust in the Lord (with ourselves and our possessions). When our desires diverge from His will, we must lay our own understanding aside and commit to following Him. Any "wisdom" apart from God will ultimately fall apart, but when we fully rely on God, inviting Him to be an active participant in every arena of our life, He will lead us on the paths of righteous living (where He has good things in store for us). When we fully turn to the Lord and away from evil, God offers healing and strength. He can and does offer physical healing, but always, He offers spiritual healing and strength. This may be a balm for our soul when we grieve, peace in a situation where it makes no sense, strength to walk through the darkest valley of our lives, or comfort when we face the consequences of our mistakes. When we walk in step with Him, we flourish.



How do you focus on well-being in your life, and how does that compare to what Proverbs instructs?



When have you trusted God in a situation that went against your normal logic? What happened?



How do we offer God our firstfruits today? What steps will you take toward that?

Memorize

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but let your heart keep my commands;
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- Proverbs 3:1-2, CSB

References

¹healthandfitness.org/the-fitness-industry-is-worth-22-4-billion-to-the-u-s-economy-says-new-report/

²npr.org/sections/shots-health-news/2025/05/05/nx-s1-5387204/talk-therapy-psychotherapy-ssri-psychiatric-drugs

³merriam-webster.com/dictionary/well-being

⁴David K. Stabnow, "Proverbs," in CSB Study Bible: Notes, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Holman Bible Publishers, 2017).

⁵Ibid.