

Choices and decisions

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[0 : 00] Well let's think together then about this matter of choices and so on.! Help us again as we consider the teaching of your word together.

That we may all be helped and instructed by you. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. So we've been looking at the general sort of heading of starting as a student.

We looked at what it involved. We thought about all the things that somebody coming to Brighton as a student might be considering.

And then last week we looked at the courses that Adam might have signed up for. Do you remember we looked at what it was to be human. The world that God had made for Adam.

And how Adam had been made. The tasks that he'd been given. And we came up with quite a range of things that he could have studied. And that are proper human activities.

[1 : 25] Proper things that we should embrace as God calls us and enables us. And not wish we were doing something else. But get stuck into what God has enabled us to do as made in his image.

And we'll look this evening at choices and decisions. Because this is one of the things that was thrown up in the first session.

That students find themselves in a position to make responsible choices that they never had to make when they lived at home. Or when they were younger.

So I thought of things like this. Choices and decisions. What to study.

Well that's one big area of choice. Then more practically how to use time. And I don't think it's only students who face an issue about how to use time. How to spend or save money.

[2 : 29] Well I think most of us face that as an issue. Who to align with. That is probably something that students face particularly.

Because when you're new to a situation. If you suddenly find yourself in a new accommodation block. The question do I make friends with these people?

Do I go along with them? Do I say no I won't go along with you? Who do I align myself with? That's a very big question. And then of course I've put at the bottom church and Christian stuff.

Although I put it at the bottom it sort of covers everything else as well. So those sorts of choices and decisions. Does that make sense? Yeah. So I've got two points.

Although I split the second point into 2A and 2B. Just to make it more complicated. And my first point is a bit studenty.

[3 : 37] But I think perhaps worth pondering. The very idea of making choices. And making responsible choices. Is fits in to the Bible view of the world.

Choices and decisions are genuinely meaningful. In the world of the God of the Bible. It's a foundational idea. It'd be easy to skip over that.

But it's worth pointing that out. Because there are other world views. Which speak to us. And they do not contain.

A reason. And an understanding. Of the importance of choices and decisions. So in an evolutionary world view. Which let's face it.

Many if not most people around us. Will embrace. What on earth are choices and decisions? In an evolutionary world.

[4 : 42] There is time and chance. And this. So we are supposed to believe. Accounts for the existence of people. I don't think it does. I think you'd need an enormous amount of faith.

To believe. That time plus chance. Equals people. It doesn't even make sense. But in a new evolutionary world. That we're told is what there is.

Time and chance. And how on earth do meaningful decisions. Ever. Fit into that. So on the one hand.

You could. Put the emphasis on the randomness. And say. All we have is random. It just happened to be there. It's just fallen into place.

In such and such a way. And therefore. Any choice that I make. Can't be anything more than that. It just. It might seem to be grand. It might seem to be important.

[5 : 37] But really. If you analyze it down. It's just another throw of the dice. What does it matter? And if you begin to think that way. As some philosophers have done.

It's a route to despair. Think. Well what does anything matter? Does it matter if I live. Or if I die. If I'm just a collection of atoms. That have randomly happened to.

End up in the particular jumble. That they are at the moment. So. Randomness. Tells me that.

There is no value in anything. There is no meaning in anything. It might seem that way. But really it isn't that way. Or alternatively. You might go down the route of saying.

In a very scientific way. Everything. Is worked out by. Equations. So if you imagine. When they're playing snooker. You know how.

[6 : 34] If you get the angle right. You can tell where that ball's going to go. And that ball's going to go. And if that one hits another one. Then you can tell where. That ball goes. And that ball goes. And if that hits another one. You tell where that ball goes. And that ball goes.

And that's what life is. It's just atoms whizzing around. And if you knew enough. You could calculate everything. And all our thoughts are just made of atoms. And electrons whizzing around.

And if you knew enough. You could calculate all that. So it's just a big machine. And where does choice come into that? How does freedom come into that?

We're just a machine. And you get that sort of idea. When people say. Ah well. Such and such a person. They're not actually a criminal. Well. They're just addicted to stealing.

It's just the way they are. It's just a medical condition really. And of course. I'm sure there are medical conditions. That damage people's lives. But if you reduce everything.

[7 : 32] To just a medical condition. You can't really blame people for it. You know this person's. Unfortunately addicted to. Knocking people over. And this person's addicted to something else.

And you can't really blame them for it. It removes the idea. Of meaningful decisions. But in the world of the Bible.

Where human beings are not random. And in the world of the Bible. Where human beings are made in the image of God. And therefore not just machines. In the world of the Bible.

There is meaningful choice. And there is such a thing as praise. For good choices. And there is such a thing as blame. For bad choices. That's the sort of world.

That we really live in. And interestingly of course. Even the most hardened evolutionist. Even Professor Dawkins himself. Lives as if. We live in a world.

[8 : 28] Of praise and blame. Although I doubt very much. Whether he could explain. Why he should do so. So let's think of the biblical world view. Let's take it back to thinking about God himself.

The God who made everything. We could say in a nutshell. Is infinite. And personal. So he is not a machine.

He is not a vegetable. He is a person. And we know what we mean by person. Because we can say he speaks. We can say he. We can attribute to him rightly.

Reactions such as. Compassion. Mercy. Faithfulness. These are all personal qualities. And we see them particularly in the Lord Jesus.

Don't we? We could add qualities like courage. Tenacity. Kindness. All these personal qualities. So the God whom we worship. The God of the Bible.

[9 : 30] Is an infinite personal God. And Christians spend a lot of time. Praising him. For being that. Now you think about it.

Just think about that. We are praising him. For being the person. Whom he is. God is totally free. We don't take that to mean.

That one. That tomorrow God could wake up. And say well I'm free. I'll choose to be cruel. And unfaithful. It's not that sort of freedom. Our God is.

In his character. Free. And compassionate. And just. And it's perfectly right. For us to praise him. For being like that. And we as human beings.

Are made in his image. Granted it's more complex. But human beings. Are made in his image. We are not infinite.

[10:27] We are finite. But we are personal. We are personal. And we are fallen. And therefore we could. In the same way. Attribute to human beings.

Praise. Gratitude. Thank you for keeping your promise. Thank you for. Dealing honestly. Thank you for forgiving me. In compassion.

We can praise people. For. Meaningful responses. And we can blame them. If they do something. That's wrong. You told a lie. That's well out of order.

You stole. My iPad. Please give it back to me. And so we live in a world. In which praise.

And blame. For choices. Make sense. And is part of the dignity. Of being human. And this only makes sense. In a Christian world view. And if you were a thoroughgoing evolutionist.

[11:27] I don't think there's any. Any. Any meaning. To these ideas. So let's look at. Some Bible references. Which. Embed us in that.

So. Let's first of all. Look at Ecclesiastes. Ecclesiastes. And I have to say. That one of the reasons. I chose Ecclesiastes. Was so that I could put Eccles. Up on the. Up on the screen. So.

Ecclesiastes. Chapter 12. Ecclesiastes.

Being a book. Which reflects. On the strangeness. Of life. In this world. Life under the sun. C77.

Thank you. 677. So. Martin. Please could you read us. Ecclesiastes 12. 8. Meaningless.

[12:36] Meaningless. Says the teacher. Everything is meaningless. Okay. That's a very typically. Ecclesiastes thing to say. And. What he's saying is.

That on some views. Of this world. You look at it. And you say. Well that. That's. Frustrating. Unsatisfactory. Unresolved. Pointless.

And he's quite capable. Of saying. Yeah. Don't. You know. Nobody's pulled the wool. Over my eyes. I look around. And I can see things. And I could well describe them. As meaningless.

Meaningless. So we'll give him credit.

For that. And then. Let's look. At. Verses. 13. And 14. When he rounds off. A total view. Of everything. He's been saying. So this is.

Ecclesiastes. 12. 13. And 14. Perhaps. Mark. Could you read us that. Please. Now all has been heard. Here is the conclusion. Of the matter.

[13:33] Fear God. And keep his commandments. For this is the whole. Duty of men. For God will bring. Every deed. Into judgment. Including every hidden thing. Whether it is good.

Or evil. Thank you. This is interesting. Isn't it? Because having said. In some way. You could say. Everything's meaningless. And unresolved. And never quite as simple. As you would like it to be.

He does say. Now here's. Here's the bottom line. That God will. Judge everything. And he will do so. In his capacity.

As. The creator. The maker of everything. The lord of everything. And he will look at every deed. And weigh it up.

And he will say. That is good. That is evil. That is very good. That is very evil. And he will weigh and judge deeds.

[14:31] And I think this is saying. That this is the sort of world. That we live in. And in one way it's scary. But in another way. It's very comforting. To know.

That we don't live in a world. Which is just random. And totally pointless. Yeah. Let's look at. Romans 2. 6 to 8.

Romans 2. Romans 2.

This is Paul. Talking. About. A doctrine of judgment.

McCullough. Can you. Could you read us. Romans 2. 6. 2. 8. Please. Thank you.

[15:47] As Paul confirming. The same idea. That God. Will. Judge everything. And he will. Judge rightly. And fairly. He will give to each person.

According to what he's done. So. The things that we do. Are not. Pointless. And. Lost. In history. As soon as we've done them. They count for something.

The stakes. For which we live. Life. Are real. And. High. Do you see what I'm saying. We. The things that we do.

Matter. So. Choices. And. Responsibilities. Matter. A couple more. Verses. This time. From. John's gospel. In some ways.

These. Texts. Raise. Other questions. That. I'm not. Necessarily. Going to look at. But. John. Chapter 3. Verses.

[16:49] 19. To. 21. So. This is another. Crisis. Text. This is the.

Decisive. Division. This is the verdict. If you like. John. 3. 19. To. 21. Wes. Could you read that for us please. This is the verdict.

Life has come into the world. A man loved us instead of life. Because of their deeds. What we want. Everyone who does evil hates the light.

And will not come into the light. Or fear that. These deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth. Comes into the light.

So that. It may. It's simply. That what. Has done. Has been done. Through God. Thank you very much. Again. That's a text about.

[17:49] Life. About what we do. About our deeds. And it divides humanity. Into two sections. Wood lice.

And moths. And the wood lice. Hide away from God. Because their deeds. Are evil. And they don't want their deeds. To be shown up. Before God. And the other.

The moths. Come towards the light. Not saying that people. Are perfect. Not saying that they're sinless. Not saying that they're saved. By the goodness of their deeds.

But saying that there's something in them. That wants to get close to God. And this shows. Not only in their inclination. But in actually. What comes out of their lives. In terms of activity.

Whoever lives by the truth. Comes into the light. So that it may be. Plainly seen. That what is done. Has been done through God. So again. I think that's talking about. The importance of deeds.

[18:44] And let's look at John 5. Verse 28. And. 28 and 29. John 5.

28 and 29. John 5. 28 and 29. So. Archie. Are you up for that?

Or do you. Shall I pass? 28 and 29. Do not be a mate. Do not be a mate. Do not be a mate. Condemned.

Condemned. Thank you very much. Yeah, okay. Again, it does raise questions, but what it's certainly saying is that deeds matter. And I think it's making the same distinction as it was before, that there are those whose life, in terms of what they've done and the motives for which they've done it, are in fact evil.

And those who, although they were not perfect, but because they've been born again and have a new motive and a new capacity, not that they've done perfect things, but they've done things which are good and which, when held up and tested, show that they belong to God.

[20:19] So my basic point is that deeds matter. So that's my introductory point, that in choices and decisions, choices and decisions are genuinely meaningful in the world of the God of the Bible.

So that's point number one. Anybody want to ask for clarification or make any comments about that? No? Okay.

Let's see if I can... So I'll go a little bit further. If you want to come back and ask, please do so. So let's think about making choices and decisions.

So I've got 2A and 2B. So 2A is, when it comes to making decisions about who I align with, what course I do, how to spend my time, how to spend my money, or not spend it, God can direct people over and above and bypassing human capabilities and capacities.

So God can direct people in those, if you like, supernatural ways. Let's look at some examples.

[21:38] So Genesis chapter 12, verse 1 is to do with this very famous person in the Bible, somewhat unique person in the Bible, Abraham.

And the Lord dealt with Abraham to, in terms of his alignment, in terms of where he would be, and things like that.

So we're looking at... Oh, that should be Genesis 12, verse 1. Abraham Lindsay. Could you read that for us, please? Genesis...

I didn't... It was Genesis 12, verse 1. Thank you.

It's as stark as that. It just comes out of the blue. The Lord says to this guy, Abraham, who is living in such and such a place, who hasn't been sending out his CV to different gods.

[22:51] You know, I'm looking for a change of career. Would you like to put me on your short list?

He hasn't been doing that. But just suddenly God says to him, leave your country, leave your people, leave your father's household.

You go somewhere. You don't know where it is. I'm going to show you. So that's out of the blue. God just says that to him. I don't know how he said it. I don't know what it sounded like or looked like.

But Abraham knew that it was God. And the thing is that he went off and trusted God and followed God, even though he didn't know where he was going.

So there's a large amount of faith in that. And there's obedience. And it came out of the blue, over and above a human capability and capacity. He hadn't planned it.

He hadn't sat down and looked at his options. He hadn't gone through, you know, the Jerusalem Chronicle looking for openings. Of course, there wasn't such a thing as Jerusalem. At this point, there wasn't such a thing as the Jerusalem Chronicle.

[23 : 49] So it's out of the blue. And God just said, this is what you're supposed to do. So let's look at David in 1 Samuel 16, 6 and 7.

So did David sit down and, you know, did he have a careers advisor that he booked time with?

Now, what would you be good at, David? Well, sheep, yeah. Anything else?

Anything political in your mind? No inclination towards politics? No, not really. So 1 Samuel 16. 1 Samuel 16.

What do I put? 6 and 7. I don't think I meant 6 and 7. Did I mean 6 and 7? Yes, I did mean 6 and 7. 1 Samuel 16, 6 and 7.

Tim, could you read us that, please? Yep.

[24 : 51] Yeah, keep going.

Thank you very much. And it ended up with the choosing of David. And this is Eliab, David's brother. And humanly speaking, Samuel would have said, he's a good choice.

Looks good. You know, tough appearance. And the Lord says, well, that's what you might think humanly, but I'm doing this a completely different way.

I'm not looking at the outward appearance. I'm looking at the heart. And my choice is his little brother, David. And then it's David who gets anointed. And this comes as a complete surprise to David.

David had not been planning this. He had not been asking for it. But God took him from looking after sheep and plonked him in a career which would end up as him being king.

[26 : 07] Yeah? So I'm giving this as a second example that the Lord can direct people over and above and bypassing human capabilities and capacities. Yeah? Let's look at the example of Saul of Tarsus.

Saul of Tarsus did have a career plan. He did have a to-do list. He did know what he was planning on doing. And what he was planning on doing was going to the next city to arrest as many Christians as possible and give them an extremely hard time.

And in Acts 26.19, the risen Jesus appears to him and tells him different.

And Acts 26.19 sums up this bit of guidance. Chris, could you read us that, please? So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.

Thank you. Just a snapshot of it there. He's giving his testimony to King Agrippa, telling him what happened when he became a Christian. And he described a vision from heaven, just completely unexpected.

[27 : 21] And he says, I did not disobey the vision from heaven. So I've given you three examples when God can direct people over and above and bypassing human capabilities and capacities.

So I think those are genuine examples. They're quite unusual, aren't they? Each of those is a very key and special person. But nevertheless, God did that.

So that was point 2A. But my point 2B is that far more often God, who made us sons, is pleased for us to act as rulers and stewards and caretakers, which is what he's made humanity to be, in making wise choices, depending on God as our guide, and making those choices in the company of others. So do you see? My point A is God can say to somebody, do something you were not thinking of and it's completely out of your, off your radar. But, we are not told to wait for God to do that to us.

But we are told, as a more general rule, to make our choices as rulers. You remember we're told to rule creation?

[28 : 48] So, God has sort of delegated that authority. You know, so we don't pray, Lord, how often shall I, here's a cow, does it, should I milk it today or not?

Well, the Lord says, you know, you know you've got to milk a cow, just get on and do it. See what I mean? You know, there's a very bizarre story about a lady who pray to the Lord for guidance every morning whether she should put on her right stocking first or her left stocking first.

And I think the Lord probably got a bit fed up with that. Just get dressed. So, we are rulers.

A steward is somebody you say, there you are, there's the keys, there's the budget. You think how to use it, I'm giving you that responsibility. And that's the predominant picture of the way God has put us into this world.

Or caretakers, again, the caretaker doesn't have to refer back to the principle for every decision.

The principle says, look, I want you to make sure there's enough toilet paper, I want to make sure it gets locked up at night, I want you to make sure that the lights get switched off, all those things, just go and do it.

[30 : 03] And my thesis, that is the large emphasis of what the Bible says about guidance.

So, making wise choices, so wisdom is an important idea. Depending on God, so I'm not saying that we just don't bother to pray about things, but I think we pray and then we act.

And I've put in the company of others because wisdom tends to be a communal attribute. And if you go off on your own on things, it tends to lead to unwisdom.

So, the idea of communing together, taking advice, is a biblical idea. So, I've got some references and then I've broken that down into some more bullet points.

So, what have I put? So, depending on God as our guide, here's a couple of references. Exodus 13. Exodus 13. Exodus 13.

[31 : 29] 21 and 22. This, to me, gives a, a sort of iconic picture of God and his people. This is in the time of Exodus.

Exodus 13. 21 and 22. So, Angie, have you got that on your machine? Could you? By day, we've all met ahead to them in a pillar of clouds to guide them on their way.

By night, in a pillar of time, give them light so that they can try by day or by night. Could you give us the next one as well, please?

Either the pillar of clouds by day or the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

Thank you very much. So, here's a particular form of guidance where God guides with a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire.

I think the important theological principle is that God does guide his people without saying exactly how he does it, but we can trust him. So, when we come to a perplexity, let's not think, I don't know what the answer is, nobody does, God certainly doesn't, I'm completely stuck.

[32 : 50] Let's rather think, I don't yet know the answer, maybe none of my friends knows the answer, but God certainly does, and he will make it his business to, you know, as I depend on him, he will make it his business to lead me the next step forward.

Sometimes we don't see much more than the next step forward, but it is part of what being a God is to guide his people. Yeah? That's what gods do.

They might do it better or worse. Idols are totally useless at guiding, although they promise that they can do it, but they can't. The God of the Bible is a reliable guide, and there he is in Exodus doing that sort of thing.

And here's Psalm 23, 2. Psalm 23, 2.

The bit I'm aiming for is sort of in the middle. No, I mean Psalm 23, verse 3, is the bit I'm aiming for is in the middle of verse 3. But Aaron, could you give us something on that one?

[34 : 11] He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness. For his name's sake. Thank you. Have you got leads? He leads me in the paths of righteousness. Yeah?

NRV's got guides, but I think it comes to the same thing. Here's a very important psalm, classical statement of a relationship to God. He's the shepherd. What does a shepherd do?

He leads his sheep. That's his business. He would be negligent and incompetent if he just sat and let his sheep wander off all over the place. And the Lord is a good shepherd.

So basic things about depending on God as our guide. And here's one about the company of others. Acts, is it 16? Let's look.

Yes, it is. Acts 16, verse 10. We looked at this as a church just the other week.

[35 : 09] There's been a vision. There's been some sort of providential barrier to various different courses of action and the vision of a man saying, come over in this direction and help us.

And Acts 16, 10, Maria says, Thank you.

Do you notice what he says there? So there's a variety of things have happened and the Apostle Paul is there and he could say, guys, I've had a vision. Follow me.

But in fact, what they seem to do is discuss it because he uses the we. We got ready at once to leave for Macedonia concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

So the concluding word is a rather lovely word about battling things to and fro. So we battled it around and came to the conclusion that yes, God was calling us.

[36 : 23] So I think it's an example where there is wisdom in the company of other people. So that's an example of that. So here are my final bullet points on wisdom from the book of Proverbs or most of them from the book of Proverbs.

So let's go to the book of Proverbs. What sort of wisdom then do we, what sort of principles of wisdom might we expect to put into the mixing pot when we are making choices and decisions? Acts 20 verse 4 I'm saying that biblical wisdom is very happy with there being cause and effect in this world.

It says you're very stupid if you don't think, if you think you can have an effect without a cause or vice versa. Things, there is a cause and effect and here's a rather classic example of it.

Proverbs 20 verse 4 could you give us this one please Catherine? Okay a sluggard does not plough in season so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing.

[37 : 38] So here's the slugger. The slugger is just a wonderfully comic character in Proverbs. He's so stupid you would not believe it. So here he is it comes harvest time and he goes out to his field and he looks around I cannot believe it there's no harvest what is this country coming to?

And he so and he says did you actually plant anything? Oh never thought of that. And you have to plant things.

A sluggard does not plough in season so at harvest time he looks but finds nothing. Well that's not wisdom is it? There is cause and effect that's the way God loves the world to work that's the way he works it and if you want to reap something you've got to sow at the right time.

There is cause and effect. You know if you want a first in your course you actually have to read the books. If you you know that sort of thing.

If you want your car to run smoothly you have to put air in the tyres and petrol in the petrol tank.

Things like that. If you if you want your gas spill at the end of the year to be within reach of a non-multimillionaire you actually have to be careful when you turn the gas on not to have the heating too high during the cold months of the year.

[39 : 10] You know just to think ahead and it all begins to make sense. So there is cause and effect. And that covers a whole multitude of things. Second principle I think from the book of Proverbs is that moral wisdom works.

That God has made a moral universe and even though it doesn't always work as well as you'd like it to and even though you could say there are exceptions as a fundamental rule if you live according to the maker's instructions life will go much more smoothly than if you don't follow the maker's instructions.

It is a moral universe and moral wisdom works. So here's Proverbs 14 1 Martin could you read that to us? Yeah the wise woman builds her house but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.

So here's the wise woman here's the foolish woman here's the wise woman who works with wisdom and it's successful she's wise and it works she builds her house and here's the foolish woman and it isn't smart to be foolish if you see what I mean it isn't even productive because this lack of wisdom all it does is actually destructively tear her life and her house down so moral wisdom works 1118

1118 1118 McCullough could you read that to us please thank you the wicked man earns deceptive wages but he who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward and I'm putting this in a category with other things in proverbs about fruitfulness and about productivity which is saying if you operate in an honest straightforward yeah an honest way it yields results he who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward but if you're cheating and trying to cut corners in a moral universe it's all deceptive your wages are deceptive it doesn't really work do you see what I'm trying to say here so I think there's a very simple but very profound principle there through business would I be right in saying that Martin from your experience in business if you do it honestly and work hard it doesn't always succeed in every way but as a general rule it works yeah yeah yeah thank you 1215 other people's wisdom helps Wes could you give us Proverbs 1215 thank you yeah interesting there isn't it the way of a fool seems right to him so that the fool says yeah this is okay but the wise man says well I think

it's okay but what do you think I know that can you can overdo that but he's saying it's a wise thing to listen to advice it's a wise thing to get somebody else's view what do you think a helpful thing other people's wisdom helps now this strays outside

[43 : 27] Proverbs into Hebrews good choices may not yield their reward in this life that's an important characteristically Christian angle so as the writer to the Hebrews looks back on Old Testament heroes he says in fact they are examples of the Christian virtue of faith and also of the Christian perspective that you might not gain in this world that doesn't mean it isn't worthwhile the reward might be in the world to come and it's actually quite a strong Christian teaching so Hebrews 11 24 to 20 24 25 and 26 so this is Hebrews 11 24 25 26 RG could you do that one for us oh you haven't found it right okay let's have

Mark let's have Mark thank you so there's an interesting choice that he made he chose to reject the pleasures of sin for a short time and he chose to align himself with the people of God who as we know in those days were slaves and he made this alignment not because of the treasures that he would amass in his lifetime but because he was looking ahead to his reward interesting and rather testing factor in choices and finally on wisdom the foundation of wisdom we've gone back to proverbs now the foundation of wisdom is to put

God first so this is not a technique this is a costly dedication of life proverbs 1 1 to 7 Lindsay could you read that to us please to know wisdom and instruction to receive words of understanding to receive the instruction of wisdom justice judgment and equity to young man knowledge and discretion wise man will hear increase love in that understanding between wise counsel to understand the problem and make up the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge for the things to size the instruction of instruction thank you so he puts a very big advertising blurb at the beginning of proverbs doesn't he he said this gives you wisdom this gives you understanding this is how to live this is really really worth having see you through life and he says bottom line the fear of the

Lord is the beginning of knowledge yeah that's in there verse 7 the fear of the Lord fear meaning taking God seriously putting him as number one that the largest thing on your horizon is the Lord big thing to ask but that's what he says that's step number one if you take that step and follow that through really everything else in this sense falls into place put God first when you're deciding this or that be it large or small put God first finish any thoughts comments reflections objections any