

Favor and Happiness

Favor and Happiness

- Those who follow God will find blessing and favor with God and man.
- Proverbs 3:3–4; 8:32–36; 16:20; 28:14; 29:18.
- Those who fear the Lord are the “wise,” as defined by Proverbs.
- Wisdom isn’t about accumulating knowledge but about following God’s wisdom.
- Today we will look at the blessing or favor that come from following God.

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- Proverbs also tell us that the wise will gain the favor of man (3:4).
- It is logical that those who follow God gain the favor of God.
- God is pleased when we follow His ways and reflect His character, just as our earthly parents are pleased when we live the way they want us to live.
- But Proverbs also teaches that a practical result of following God's law is gaining favor with other people

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- On the other hand, Jesus told His disciples that those who follow Him will be persecuted (Matthew 24:9), and Paul said that “all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus” will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12).
- Proverbs speaks generally about how to live wisely.
- If you live by God’s law, doing good and not evil, you will earn people’s respect.
- This could be true even while you’re being ridiculed for your faith.

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- We can be both persecuted for our faith and respected for our character at the same time.
- These Proverbs address how the world will see us when we live with character and integrity.
- “Favor with man” doesn’t necessarily mean worldly success such as becoming a CEO, a political leader, or the most popular kid at school.
- It means having the respect of others for your character.

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- That he grew in “favor with God and man” is a phrase used of both the prophet/judge Samuel (1 Samuel 2:26) and Jesus (Luke 2:52).
- It’s also one of the biblical requirements for elders.
- Besides being godly men, they must also have a good reputation with the outside world (1 Timothy 3:1–7).
- Why is this important? When we call ourselves Christians, our lives are a witness to Christ, for better or for worse.

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- When we are respected in the community for our work ethic and moral character, we are a positive witness for Christ in the world.
- When people see our good works, they will glorify our heavenly Father (Matthew 5:16) because it will make them see how great God is (Deuteronomy 4:5–8).
- The Proverbs also repeatedly tell us that those who follow God will be blessed (8:32–36; 16:20; 28:14; 29:18).

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- These proverbs use words such as always (28:14) and keep (8:32) to describe what is a lifestyle of trusting in the Lord. Not just going to church on Sundays, praying a prayer of salvation, or “talking the talk,” but walking with Jesus every day.
- Proverbs uses covenant language – “steadfast love and faithfulness,” “bind them around your neck,” and “write them on the tablet of your heart” – to emphasize the covenant relationship God’s people have with Him.
- It is a lifelong commitment to center your life on Jesus as not only your Savior but also your Lord.

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- Those who gain wisdom gain favor and blessing.
- Proverbs 3:13–15; 4:5–9; 19:8; 24:23–25; 28:23.
- What we gain from wisdom is better than silver, gold or jewels (3:14–15). Solomon described it as a blessing for the soul (19:8). Like our relationship with Jesus, the wisdom itself is the blessing.
- Being wise is itself a blessing worth far more than any tangible item or any earthly status or power, not only from a spiritual standpoint but also from a practical one.

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- Wise people make sound choices in their finances. They make wise choices with their spouse and children. They make wise choices in the relationships they build at work and with family and friends.
- In every area of life, wise people make lives better by the choices they make.
- Proverbs gives us one specific example – one who rebukes will find more favor in the end than one who flatters (24:25; 28:23). This may not always feel true; it may feel as though people love flattery. But in the long run, most people appreciate hearing the truth spoken with love and good intentions.

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- Solomon said wisdom will place a graceful garland and a beautiful crown on our heads (4:9).
- In ancient Israel, this was marriage imagery. These are the traditional symbols a bride (wisdom) placed on her groom.
- This imagery emphasizes the covenantal relationship of wisdom to the people of God.
- The language of “getting” wisdom, of loving and not forsaking wisdom, also creates an image of pursuing the person you want to marry.

Favor and Happiness

- Those who bless others will be blessed.
- Proverbs 11:23–28; 14:21–22; 22:9.
- These proverbs all describe how those who are generous to others will be blessed themselves.
- A beautiful way of saying this is found in 11:25: “Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed” (NIV).
- The Hebrew here literally means to “drink your fill” or be saturated with water. It’s not just giving but giving lavishly.

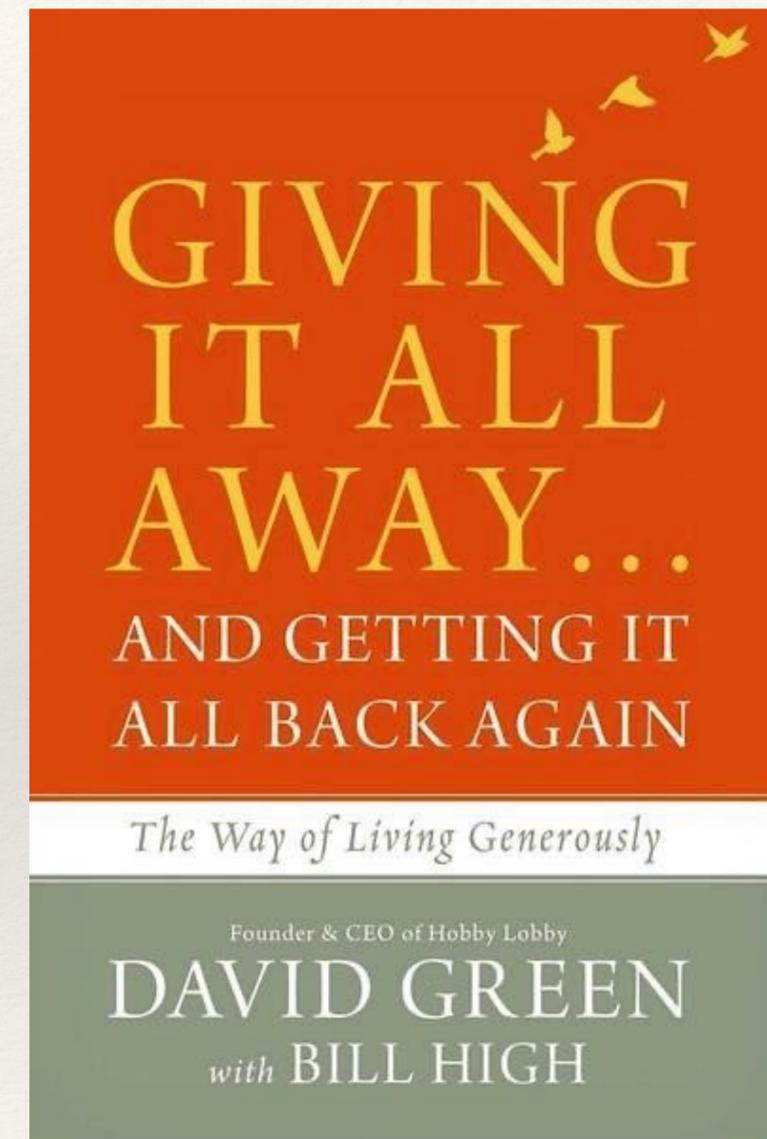
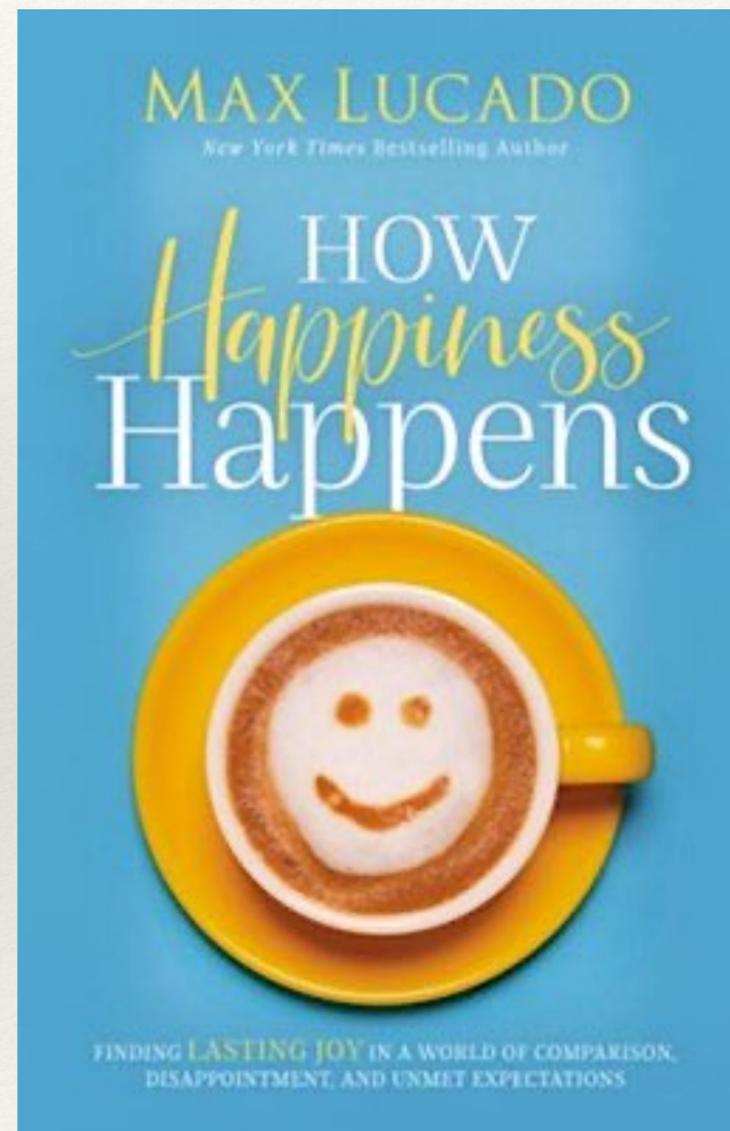
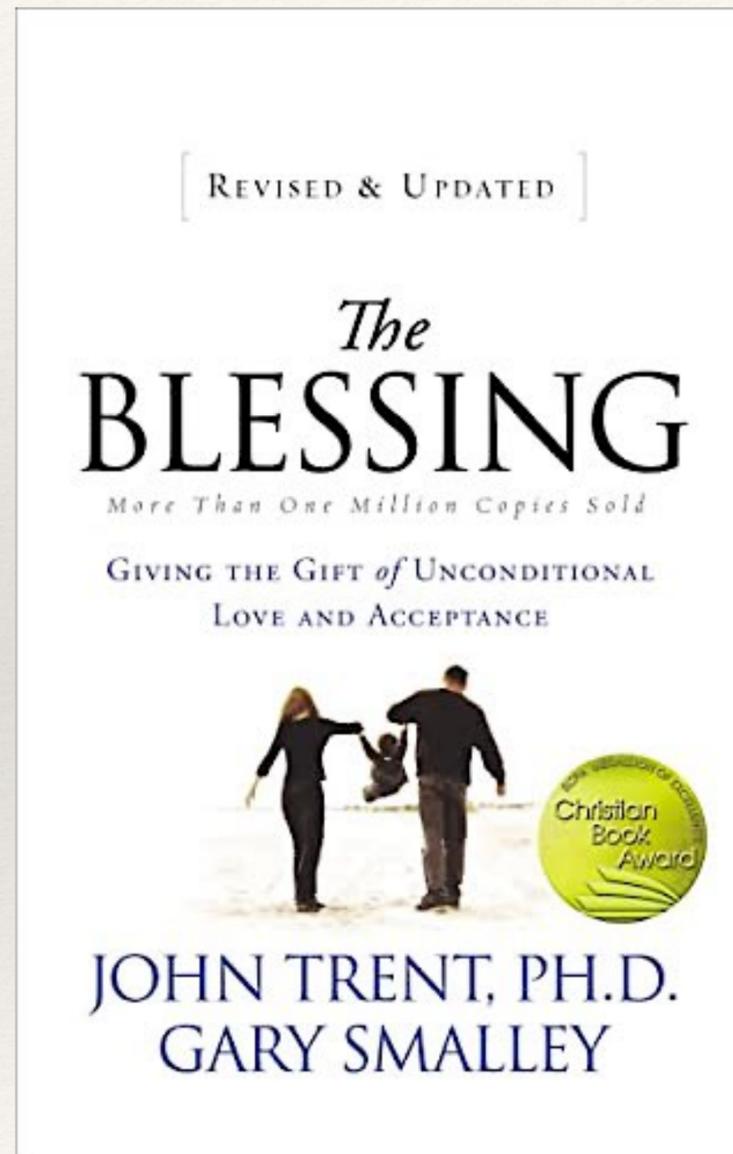
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- Proverbs 11 also gives us several contrasts.
- Not only the general righteous and the wicked (v. 23), but more specifically, the one who gives freely and the one who withholds unduly (v. 24).
- The one who hoards grain and the one who is willing to sell (v. 26). The one who seeks good and the one who seeks evil (v. 27).
- The one who trusts in riches and the righteous (v. 28).
- These examples describe a difference of heart in those who are generous.

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- Generous people really enjoy giving to others.
- They don't do it out of obligation or guilt or to get a heavenly reward.
- They truly want to. This is what Paul meant when he said the Lord loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7).
- When we bless others, whether with our money or time or even with our words and love, we experience blessing ourselves.
- Because the way to get more joy is to give it away.

Resources



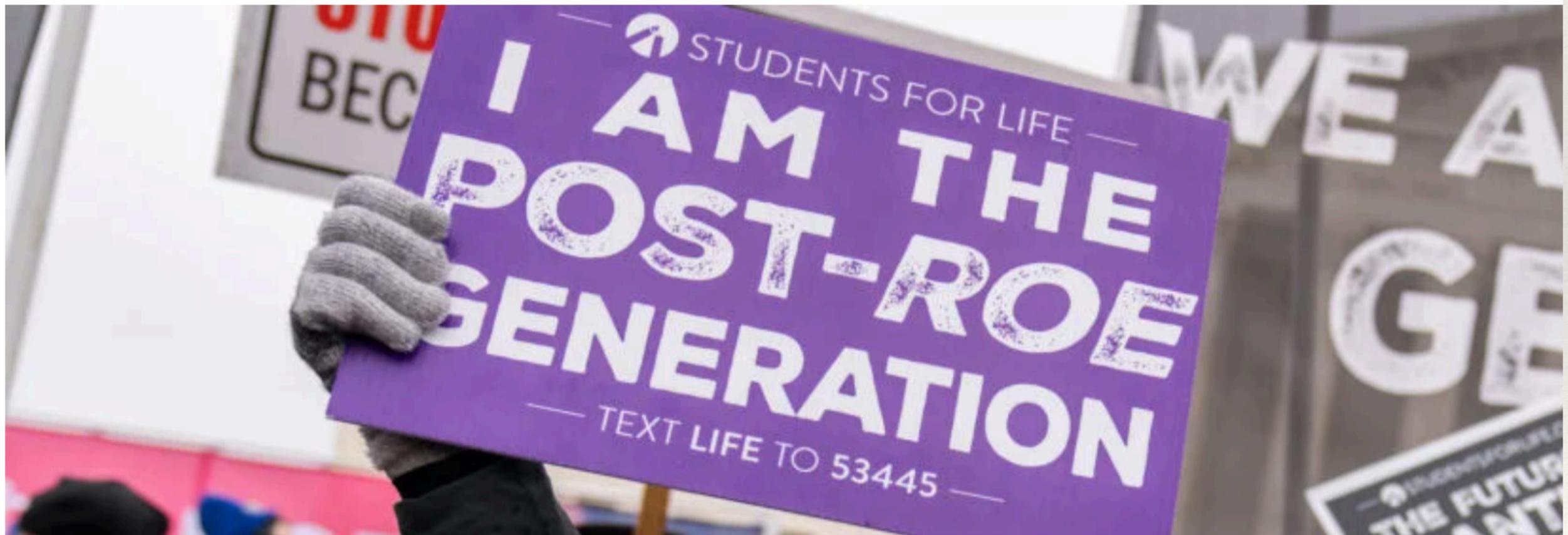


Last Sunday we talked about what America would look like if *Roe v. Wade* is struck down.

SOCIETY / COMMENTARY

5 Pro-Life Strategies for Post-Roe America

[John Stemberger](#) / [@JohnStemberger](#) / May 16, 2022



Post Roe America

- First, to care for women and children. A significant change will be the increase in abortion-minded women who will not have easy access to abortion in many states.
- The pro-life community must be “prepared to serve them by helping them decide to parent their baby or place the child for adoption.”
- Second, focus on law and public policy. Abortion will no longer be considered a federal “constitutional right” and will be returned to the states. The state legislatures will now be the battleground for pro-life initiatives.

Post Roe America

- Third, focus on elections. Candidates and elected leaders for state office will no longer have excuses for inaction on abortion since Roe will no longer be “existing law.
- Fourth, will be a focus on education. Most pro-life organizations focus their time on education. This will be an important priority “to educate the public, and especially the church”
- A fifth priority will be direct action. This would include the ongoing ministry of pregnancy resource centers along with other pro-life ministries. It could also include undercover projects to expose lies, fraud, and abuse.

Support Pregnancy Centers





How were the canonical books of the Bible decided upon?

Canon of Scripture

- The canon is a list of Biblical books considered to be authoritative as Scripture.
- Although the term was first coined by Christians, the idea is found in Jewish sources.
- The early Church Fathers all accepted the canon of the Old Testament, and began to establish the canon for the New Testament (for example, The Muratorian Canon listed all the books of the Bible except for 1 John, 1 and 2 Peter, Hebrews, and James around A.D. 180).

Criteria for Canonicity

- Apostolic Authority - direct apostolic appointment or on behalf of one with apostolic authority.
- Antiquity - writing must belong to the apostolic age.
- Orthodoxy - theologically consistent with the apostolic faith.
- Inspiration - were considered authoritative (inspired, God breathed).

Apocrypha

- The apocryphal books were written between 250 B.C. and the time of Christ.
- They include such books as: Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Esdras, Tobit, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Bel and the Dragon. Were written not in Hebrew but in Greek, during the “period of silence” from the time of Malachi.
- Roman Catholicism recognizes these fifteen books as authoritative in addition to the sixty-six books of Scripture.
- The Council of Trent in 1546 officially decreed the authority of tradition as well as Scripture.

Apocrypha

- The Jewish OT canon consisted of twenty-four books that match the thirty-nine books of the Jewish and Protestant Bibles of today.
- The Jewish historian Josephus lists twenty-two books (Ruth appended to Judges and Lamentations to Jeremiah).
- Jesus never quotes from the Apocrypha. But Jesus does quote from nearly every one of the twenty-four Old Testament books.
- Jesus places the limits of inspired history from the martyrs Abel to Zechariah (Matthew 23:35).

Resources

