

INTRODUCTION

Today we will be looking at the first ten verses of Proverbs 3. This is the final message in a series entitled, "Are You Ready for the New Millennium?" December 19, I preached about "God's Impeccable Sense of Timing." Then the day after Christmas, we talked about "Jesus, the Man who Divided History." Last Friday night, we talked about "Where Are We *Now* in the Book of Revelation?" Today, we are going to finish this series by talking about "2000, Now What?"

Starting next Sunday morning, I am going to preach through the book of Daniel. I hope you will be reading the book of Daniel, all 12 chapters, to prepare for that series. In May, God willing, I will preach a series on the family. Starting in June, I start preaching a series, verse by verse, through the gospel according to Luke. That will take us into our new building.

Let me read to you the words that Michael Hyatt wrote two years ago in his book, *The Millennium Bug, How to Survive the Coming Crash*. He wrote, "It is 12:01 a.m., January 1, 2000. Your electricity goes off, phones aren't working, the computer at your local bank crashes, police and 911 are nowhere to be found. Military defense systems will fail. The Federal Reserve will be unable to clear checks. Your employer will go out of business."

And on and on he went, *ad nauseam*, predicting the great meltdown of our society. Y2K has come. I am kind of Y2 sick. I am kind of tired of it all. I want to visit it one more time and ask a question, "What is it about our culture that caused us to become so enamored or concerned about that?" I believe it is because in the 20th century, which we have all just lived, we have seen such a tremendous advance in technology, but morally, spiritually, we just have not been able to keep up with it. You see, man has created his own cybergod named Pentium 3, but he discovered that it will not save him, it will not help him, and we cannot really trust that cybergod he has created. Technology has just outpaced us spiritually.

Some of you can remember earlier in this century reading the comic strips about Buck Rogers and Flash Gordon, space travelers. Today we have lived in a time when men have left footprints on the moon. We have lived during a time when NASA has launched unmanned probes to the planet Mars. And some of them even get there, we discovered. We have lived through a time when man has split the atom and released enormous energy, either energy to destroy life or energy to power lives and make life better. We lived through a time when we coined the word "computers." If you remember, in the '50s the first computer, Univac, filled up an entire office room. Today if you are wearing a digital watch, there is more computing power on your wrist than there was in all of Univac.

So mankind stands back and looks at this past century and says, "Wow, look at what we've done." Yeah, look what we've done. Morally, spiritually, relationally, we are still a bankrupt culture, because in the same time that all of these great technological advances have occurred, the rate of divorce in America has increased over 1,000 percent. The rate of violent crime in America this past century leaped ahead over 700 percent.

Even though technology just keeps on advancing and it will continue in the years to come, people are still the same. They still need God and they still need to hear from God. Today people

are still basically lonely. A recent poll was taken. Do you know one of the messages that people love to hear these days in America? It is that little phrase that some of you hear when you turn on your computer, "You've got mail." Why? Because when we hear that, it means that somebody cares enough about me to send an e-mail.

As we begin the year 2000, do you know what God is saying to each one of you today? He is saying, "You've got mail. I have an e-message for you, and it is an eternal message, and the eternal message is this: I love you, I care for you, I have a plan for your life, and my plan for your life is that you might succeed. I really do want you to succeed."

God's formula for success in life

Today I'm going to talk to you about God's formula for success. Now, those of you who are in business know that the word success is a catchword. People are interested, "How can I succeed in business? How can I succeed in life?" There is even a magazine entitled, *Success*.

Let me read to you a classic quote from a book written by William Cook, a Christian businessman. He has written a book, *Success, Motivation and the Scriptures*. He writes, "A correct definition of success is important from two dimensions, from the side of having God in it and from the side of having achievement in it. If you define success without having God in the middle of the definition, it leaves you without the blessing of God upon your life. But if you have God in your life, but you still aren't achieving anything, it is like adding insult to the infinite."

God really does want you to accomplish great things. He wants you to succeed. As we stand here at the beginning of this new year, I want us to look right here in the word of God. There is going to be five personal, practical, powerful principles from Proverbs 3 that will tell you how to find success this year or any year.

1. OBEY GOD! (1-2)

We are going to read each passage as we talk about it. Number one, obey God. That is the first thing. Obey God. Let's read verses 1 and 2. God speaks to us like a father, as he is, and we are his children. He says, "My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity." That word prosperity can be translated success.

Now, we are going to be looking at all five of these principles today, and in all five, there is a pattern. It is a two-verse couplet and in it God tells us what to do, He tells us how to do it and then He tells us what He promises to give us if we do that.

How? Treasure His word

How do we obey God? We do it by treasuring His word. We treasure, cherish His word. That is why He says in 3:1, "Don't forget my teaching, keep my commands." Where do you find the teaching of God, the commands of God? In the Bible, His holy Word. Folks, as much as we would love for God to shout out of heaven with an audible voice that we could all hear, He is just

not doing that much. As much as we would love for God to write a personal message to us across the sky or drop some little personal note that drifts down and we open it up and it is a letter from God, He is just not doing that much. He doesn't have to. You know why? Everything we need to know about God and about life is found in this book, the Bible.

I want to ask you as we stand at the beginning of this year, "How much do you cherish the Bible? How much do you study and read the Bible? Do you read the newspaper more than you read the Bible? Do you read magazines more than you read the Bible?" I can't believe this, but I am told that there are some churches where people go and they do not take their Bibles with them. I am told there are churches that when the preacher stands up, he really doesn't use the Bible. I just could not even imagine that, folks. Have you noticed and learned that I do not preach sermons? I teach the Bible. If you take away the Bible, I wouldn't have anything to say.

Sometimes people ask me to speak at some clubs or organization and when I accept an invitation, I'll say, "I have to tell you this. I am going to have to use the Bible, because I don't have anything to say without the word of God." I am not some after-dinner speaker or public speaker. I am a teacher and preacher of the Bible, because I believe when the Bible speaks, God speaks.

2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is God-breathed." It is inspired of God. In other words, every single word of it is God's message to us. He is trying to tell us something.

God's promise: You'll live long and prosper

Do you treasure His Word? Here is the result. God promises to do this if you obey him. You will live long and prosper. Look at verse 2. If you do that, He will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

Do we have any Star Trek fans out here who remember when Mr. Spock said, "Live long and prosper." That is right out of the Bible. That is what verse 2 says, God wants you to live long and prosper. That doesn't mean that you will have all the money that you want, but He says, "I want you to have success in life; I want you to have everything that you need." And God not only says, "I want to add years to your life," he says, "I want to add life to your years." There is a difference.

2. LOVE GOD! (3-4)

Number two: love God. Let's read verses 3-4. "Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

Now, what's amazing about this is that if you study history, ancient pagan man built these idols, and they worshiped these pagan gods that were no gods, but they feared them and tried to appease them. They offered sacrifices to these gods. Many of them killed their children and offered them to these gods. The idea of loving that God was totally foreign. The idea of that idol loving you was totally foreign.

How? Be consistently faithful

Then the real God of the universe, the living God comes along and delivers a revolutionary message. He says, "Listen, not only am I the living God, I want to love you and I want you to love me." That idea just was totally revolutionary and it still is today. That is why the scriptures say that one of the greatest things we can do beside obey God is love God. How do we do it? Be consistently faithful.

Look at verse 3. "Let love and faithfulness"—do you know what faithfulness is? Faithfulness means staying true to God day after day after day. Now, as you are making your New Year's resolution—and I don't like to use the word resolution. I just call it commitment—perhaps some of you ought to say, "This year, God, I want to be more consistent in my faithfulness to you." Many Christians have the kind of relationship with God that is on again, off again, high, low, hot, cold, week to week, when what God really wants us to do is walk faithfully, consistently, day by day.

It was interesting to watch around the world as the year 2000 dawned, to see the fireworks in Sidney, fireworks in Tokyo and Hong Kong and Madrid and London. I love watching fireworks, but the problem is, there are a lot of Christians that I call "Firework Christians." They sort of explode and pop off, and there is beautiful excitement and faithfulness for a while, but then there is nothing but a puff of smoke that soon blows away. That is not the Christian life. The Christian life is not some emotional spasm that you go through. The Christian life is walking in the Spirit day after day. You see, friend, it is not how high you jump when you get saved. It is how straight you walk when you come down. Be consistently faithful in the basic things of the Christian life—reading your Bible, praying, going to church, worshiping, serving God, fellowshiping with believers, those basic things. They may not be exciting, but that is what consistent faithfulness is.

God's promise: You'll enjoy His favor

What is God's promise if you love him and are faithful? He says you will enjoy His favor. God says, "You will enjoy my favor." You know, I want to be in favor with God. But the Bible says not only will God favor you, but it also says in that same verse, also people will show you their favor.

Where did we ever get the idea that if we were favorable to God or pleasing to God, we would be obnoxious to people? Have you ever met a Christian like that? Have you ever met a Christian that is basically so rude, crude that they are basically obnoxious and you can't stand to be around them? I know some like that. You know what their excuse is? "I'm not trying to please you; I'm trying to please God." No. Friend listen. When you are pleasing to God and you have His favor, you also have the favor of other people. That is what it says, "favor of God and man." What it means is, like the Lord Jesus, you will have such a winsome kind of personality that people can't help but like you. That is the way Jesus was, wasn't it?

The Bible says that the common people heard Jesus gladly. They loved to be around Jesus. Jesus enjoyed being with people, and people enjoyed being with him. The only people Jesus didn't get along with were those straight-laced religious hypocrites called the Pharisees and nobody can get along with those people. There are some of those obnoxious people around today. When you love God, you will receive His favor and the favor of others.

3. TRUST GOD! (5-6)

Here is the third thing to do: Trust God. Verses 5 and 6 tell us to trust God. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart (It doesn't say with half your heart or some of your heart or most of your heart, but with all your heart) lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways, acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

That verse is a very important verse to my family. When my wife, Cindy, graduated from high school two or three years ago, a friend of her family prepared a beautiful calligraphy of this verse in the King James Version and it was framed. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart. Lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

Cindy took that framed verse with her to college and kept it hung in her dorm room the whole time she was in college. She said there were many times when things were tough and she was confused and didn't know what to do with her life. She said she would sit there and look at that verse and read it and claim it and pray.

When our oldest daughter, Jenni, went off to school a few years ago, she took that framed verse with her. She will give it up, because Laura Grace is heading off to college this next fall, and she is going to take it with her. That is a message that the women in my life have claimed and prayed over the great promise of God. If you haven't claimed it yet, friends, it is yours. Claim it. If you trust in the Lord, He will guide you.

How? Don't lean on your understanding

How do you do that? Well, don't lean on your understanding. Because see, when you are trying to lean on your own understanding, you can't trust God. Think about that word "lean." It actually is the exact same word used in the book of Judges when it talks about Samson. Remember, after he had his haircut and then it grew back and he is there, leaning on those pillars at the Philistine temple. He was such a good entertainer he brought the house down. It is the same word.

One pillar is your own understanding. If you lean on that, you are not leaning on the other pillar, which is trusting God. You can't lean on both at the same time; it is either one or the other.

What does it mean to lean on your own understanding? It means, friends, when things aren't going exactly right in your life, you sit there and you try to figure out in your own intelligence what is going on. Have you learned folks, that there are some things in life you just won't figure out? I don't know why bad things happen to good people. But there are a lot of people who waste a lot of time and energy trying to figure it out in their own understanding. I don't know why

good, godly people contract cancer and die, while wicked people just live sometimes to be a ripe old age. I don't understand that. But you know what? I'm not leaning on my own understanding.

Some of you football fans remember the great player for the Kansas City Chiefs, Buck Buchanan. After Buck Buchanan retired from a successful career, even at a young age, he contracted a deadly form of cancer and died soon after. After he died, they replayed a radio interview he had given just a few weeks before. In this interview, Buck Buchanan, who had cancer, was asked this question, "Buck, do you ever stop and say, 'Why me, Lord?'" I want to read you his answer. Buck said, "I used to say, 'Why me, Lord,' until I started going for treatments and I met a seven-year-old girl who had the same illness I have. She shook me up so much that I began to ask, 'Why not me, Lord?'"

Have you been going through a tough time and you are saying, "God, why? What's going on?" Are you trying to figure it out in your own understanding? May I say again, folks, there are some things in this life we will never understand. Instead of trying to lean on our understanding, it is a time for us to trust God.

God's promise: Your path will be smooth

Then notice God's promise if you will lean on Him. He says, "Your path will be smooth." Now, here is what happens. When you know God and you love God, then you can trust Him. You cannot trust someone that you don't know and love, or at least you shouldn't. Let me give you an example. If a total stranger came up to me and said, "David, would you do me a favor?" And I asked, "What is it?" The stranger said to me, "Well, I'm not going to tell you what it is, just trust me. Tell me you'll do it, and then I'll tell you what it is I want you to do." Would I do that? Would I trust a stranger? No. I hope you wouldn't either. I don't know this guy. I'm not going to trust him.

But if my wife came to me and said, "David, will you do me a favor?" I ask, "What is it?" She says, "Well, I'm not going to tell you. I just want you to trust me, just tell me you'll do it, and then I'll tell you what it is." That may be an unusual request and maybe some of you husbands that wouldn't do it, but I would say to my wife, "All right, sweetheart. You don't have to tell me what it is, because when I married you, I just gave you a blank check and said, whatever. So all right, I'll trust you. I'll do it. What is it?" The reason I can say that to my wife but I wouldn't say it to a stranger is because I know her, I love her, and I know that she would never ask me to do anything that would embarrass me or be harmful to me. Because of my love for her, I can trust her.

See, folks, some of you have a hard time trusting God, because to you God is some stranger on the back side of the universe. When God says, "Trust me," you say, "What is it you want me to do, Lord?" God says, "Trust me." You say, "Huh-uh, tell me what it is first," because He is a stranger to you.

Folks, those of you who know God, love God, have known him for years, when God says, "Just trust me, do what I tell you to do," you say, "Yes, sir, I can trust you." Then God says, "I'll make your pathway smooth." Do you know what that means? It is a word that literally means level.

See, you have just started a new road called the year 2000. You have your personal little path, and have you discovered that sometimes your road is littered with speed bumps and potholes, and you have to slow down and stop and detour?

When I first moved to Tyler a few years ago, I was driving down Dulse Street going toward Broadway. I was going along at a moderate rate of speed when all of a sudden, I hit one of those things you call "dips." We don't have those in Alabama—the road is level over there. I hit one of those things, and next thing I knew I was Evel Knievel. You can see all the gouges in the pavement, so I'm not the only one to do that. I learned that when I come to one of those dips, I had better slow down or I am going to be in trouble. I discovered that sometimes our lives are like that. We get going along pretty smooth for a while and suddenly we hit a dip or a big speed bump and we have to slow down. It is just like a barrier in our pathway. Can you look back on 1999 and think of some of your speed bumps and potholes and dips that you wish had been smooth? God is saying here, "If you just trust me with your whole heart, acknowledge me in all your ways, I will make your way smooth." I think you can trust His word.

4. FEAR GOD! (7-8)

Here is the fourth principle—Fear God. Would you look at verses 7-8? "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones."

How? Hate every kind of sin

How do you fear God? You hate every kind of sin. That is how you fear God. You hate sin. Because you see, God hates sin. God despises sin. Sin is an abomination before God. You cannot love God if you are hanging onto sin and you are still messing around and playing with sin. The Bible says in Psalms 66:18, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord won't hear me." The words "regard iniquity," mean to cuddle sin. I might as well not pray, because God won't hear me. When you hate sin in your own life and you hate sin in your community and in your culture, when you begin to despise sin that is when you will fear God.

When it says to fear God, it doesn't mean you will stand before Him in terror. It means you have a holy respect for Him. Those men who work with electricity, electricians, have learned to respect electricity because it will kill. They don't fear it; they respect it. Pilots of airplanes have learned to respect aerodynamics and respect the weather and respect the equipment. There is a saying among pilots that says, "There are old pilots and there are bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots." They have a respect for flying.

God's promise: You'll have health and strength

The same is true with God. We must have a holy respect of Him. It is like when Mike leads us in singing that little chorus that says, "I stand, I stand in awe of you. I stand. I stand in awe of you. Holy God, to whom all praise is due, I stand in awe of you." It means to stand before God and realize what an awesome God He is, and it causes us to respect Him to the point that it is almost like a loving fear. Here is His promise if we do that. Look at God's promise of health and

strength in verse 8. That is what he says, "It will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones." By the way, did you know even many secular studies have shown there is a connection between spirituality and prayer and physical health? Duh. As if they came up with something new. There is a connection between your spiritual self and your physical self.

Sometimes people ask me, "Do you believe in divine healing?" I say, "Yeah, I think any time somebody is healed, God does it." I'll take it a step further. I also believe in divine health. There may be some of you that say, "I can't think of a time God healed me." Praise the Lord. Have you ever thanked God that He is giving you divine health right now? It is a gift of God, so fear Him.

5. HONOR GOD! (9-10)

The last principle is to Honor God. Let's read verses 9-10. "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine."

I want you to hang on to that thought for just a moment—honor God. For you teenagers and children, if you want a great video to rent, *Chariots of Fire* is a great choice. A few years ago, Hollywood kind of made a mistake, because they produced a movie that was morally sound and pure. It is the story of Eric Liddel, who is a runner from Scotland. In the 1924 Olympics, he was there to run in the 100-meter dash for the gold medal, but because one of the preliminary heats was going to be run on Sunday, and he had some personal religious convictions about not participating in sports on Sunday, he refused to run.

People said, "Listen, you're giving up your chance for the gold medal for your country." He refused to compromise his convictions. Then it was learned that one of the other runners from Great Britain could not compete in the 400 run, which was not Eric Liddel's event, so they substituted Eric Liddel. The race is getting ready to start, and the runners are down on the track. There is an American runner who comes up to Eric Liddel, because everybody knew about his decision not to run on Sunday. The American athlete handed a small note to him. When Eric Liddel opened it up, it was this verse from I Samuel 2:30. God says, "Those who honor me, I will honor them." Think about that. We are talking about honoring God.

"Those that honor me," God says, "I will honor them." He took off running, and even though it wasn't his event, he won the gold medal. You know, the best part of his life was not the Olympic gold medal but the gold crown Eric Liddel received in heaven. Later Eric Liddel became a missionary in China and was there before the Japanese invaded in World War II, and died as a Christian martyr. The crown Eric Liddel will receive in Heaven is much greater than the gold medal Eric Liddel received in the Olympics.

How? Give Him the first of your wealth

God says, "If you honor me, I will honor you." I can't imagine anybody listening to me this morning who wouldn't want to be saying right now, "Yes, I want to honor God." Proverbs 3:9 is the only specific place I know in the Bible that tells us exactly how to honor God. Here it is. Give him the first of your wealth. That is what it says. Honor the Lord with the first fruits of your

wealth. Now, we are going to do a little experiment here in just a moment. I really want you to do this. If you can put your hand on a dollar bill, whether it is in your purse or in your wallet, get it out right now. We will talk about it in a moment.

Some people say, "I don't like to talk about money in church." Well, Jesus talked a lot about money. Did you know he gave 38 parables, and 16 out of 38 parables all had to do with money and possessions? There are 288 verses in the four gospels that deal with money and possessions. That is one out of every ten verses. Jesus had a lot to say about money. What this verse is all about is that you give God the first fruits of the financial income He gives to you, and in doing that, you are honoring Him.

How am I honoring God that way? You are saying, "God, I'm returning to you the first and the best of my finances, because I recognize you are my provider, you are my source, you're the one who's giving this to me." I practice, preach and believe what it says in Malachi 3:8-10. God says, "How can a man rob God?" God says, "You robbed me by withholding your tithes and offerings." Then God said in Malachi 3:10, "Put me to the test, bring the whole tithe into the storehouse." I think that means the local church. He says, "Test me; see if I will not open the windows of Heaven and pour out a blessing so big you can't even contain it."

Now, at Green Acres Baptist Church, I preach one sermon a year on giving money, but I remind the people several times I only preach one sermon a year. In 2000, I'm not even going to preach a whole sermon. I'm preaching one point of one sermon about giving money. You know why? I think you don't have to preach on giving money. You just have to teach people to love Jesus, and when people love Jesus, they are just going to give. They are going to obey God when it comes to storehouse tithing.

The problem with the way some of you give is that every month, or twice a month, or whenever you do it, you start writing your bills. You pay your house payment, your car payment, your insurance, utilities, and all those things. You look at the balance in your check register, what have you got left?

"Can I give any to God this week, this month?" You are giving God the leftovers. You honor God not by giving him the leftovers but the first fruits. What does that mean? Back in Bible times when they would harvest a crop, the very first and finest would be taken first to the house of God. That would promise a tremendous harvest. Are you doing that? I really think the first of every month or first of every two weeks, however you do your bills, if you will sit down and write a check of at least ten percent of your income to God, I think God will bless you this year more than you have ever been blessed before. I used to tell people to give money to the church so our bills can be paid. I left that years and years ago. I tell people now, "Give money to the Lord so He can bless you."

Now, here is my challenge. I make it every year. I have made it probably for 25 years as a pastor. "If you are not yet a storehouse tither, start in the year 2000. Do it for twelve months. Do it with the right motive, with the right spirit. At the end of twelve months if you are not more blessed than you are right now, come and tell me about it and let's talk about it. My friend, if you can

prove to me that you are not blessed from having obeyed God, this is my promise to you: I will close this book; I will walk out of this pulpit, this church. I'll never preach again."

You know why? Because if Malachi 3:10 isn't true, then I don't think John 3:16 is true. If God lies about tithing in Malachi 3:10, how do we know He's not lying about salvation in John 3:16? My friend, He is not lying. It is true. God says, "Test me." So I am just telling you what God is telling you to do. Friend, I'm just the spiritual U.P.S., I'm just delivering it, okay? There it is. Take it and do it. See what God does.

Take your dollar and look at it. Did you hear the story about the hundred-dollar bill and the one-dollar bill that got next to each other in the cash drawer? The hundred-dollar bill said to the one-dollar bill, "It has been a great year for me. I have been all over the world, in all the great cities all over this world. It has been a great year." The hundred-dollar bill said to the one-dollar bill, "How about for you? Has it been a good year?" The one-dollar bill said, "Same old, same old. Church, church, church."

Turn over your one-dollar bill and look at the back of it. Above the word "one," there are four words there. I want you to read it out loud with me. "In God we trust." First of all, it is amazing that some secular organization hasn't lobbied to get that off our money. But it is ironic to me that on money would be printed that testimony, because the truth of the matter is this. Are you ready? Either you are going to trust this dollar or a multitude of them, or you are going to trust God. You can't do both at the same time.

God's promise: You'll have more than you need

Now, if you aren't tithing, if you aren't giving your first fruits to the Lord, do you know what you are saying to God? "God, I can't trust you. I'm going to have to trust these. I've got to pay my bills, meet my commitments." You might as well write on the back of your dollar, "In money I trust." My friend, if it is true that you trust God, go ahead and give Him the first fruits of your wealth, as the word of God says right here, and see what happens. Here is God's promise. Write it down. It is the promise right there in verse 10. He says, "Your barns will be overflowing, your vats will be brimming over." God says you will have more than you need. He did not say you would have more than you want. He says you will have more than you need.

Folks, all I'm saying is, "Do you want 2000 to be a great year for you? Obey God. Love God. Trust God. Fear God. Honor God."

George W. Truitt was a great preacher, and one day he was visiting a rich Texas oilman. As they stood on the second-story outdoor porch after a great evening meal, the Texas millionaire said to Dr. Truitt as he pointed in the direction of several oil wells. He said, "I own everything in that direction as far as you can see." He pointed in another direction where there were thousands of heads of cattle. He said, "Pastor, I own everything in that direction as far as you can see." He pointed in another direction where there were beautiful, rolling grain fields. He said, "Pastor, I own everything in that direction as far as you can see."

George Truitt looked at that man and said, “Sir, how much do you own in that direction?”
(Pointing up) Jesus said, “Don’t lay up treasures for yourselves on earth. Lay up treasures in heaven, for where your treasure is, that is where your heart is.” Let me ask you, “Is your heart in Jesus? Is your heart in heaven? Or is your heart in some kind of investment, some kind of job, some kind of savings plan, some kind of annuity or is your heart in Jesus?”

OUTLINE

God’s formula for success in life:

1. OBEY GOD! (1-2)

How? Treasure His word
God’s promise: You’ll live long and prosper

2. LOVE GOD! (3-4)

How? Be consistently faithful
God’s promise: You’ll enjoy his favor

3. TRUST GOD! (5-6)

How? Don’t lean on your understanding
God’s promise: Your path will be easier

4. FEAR GOD! (7-8)

How? Hate every kind of sin
God’s promise: You’ll have health and strength!

5. HONOR GOD! (9-10)

How? Give Him the first of your wealth
God’s promise: You’ll have more than you need



DISCLAIMER: These messages are offered for your personal edification and enrichment. There is no legal copyright on this material. I have used many sources, and I have always attempted to cite any exact quotations. Any failure to cite a quote is simply an oversight on my part.

If you are a preacher or teacher, I encourage you to use this material to stimulate your own Spirit-driven imagination. Additional study beyond this material will benefit both you and your listeners. You have my full permission to use any of this material as long as you cite the source for any substantial amount used in your message.

If you borrow the majority of a message or outline, I encourage you to simply preface your remarks by saying something like: ***“Some (or “much” as the case may be) of the ideas I’m sharing in this message came from a message by Pastor David Dykes in Texas.”*** This simple citation may prevent any criticism that may be directed toward you.

To put it in Texas terms, “You’re mighty welcome to use any and all of my ingredients; just make your own chili!”

For the Joy...
Pastor David Dykes