

God's instructions for living a long, meaningful and fulfilling life

A Bible Teaching by Jack Hartman

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In this teaching we will study what the Bible teaches about living a long and fulfilling life. I am not saying that every person who lives a long life obeys these instructions from God. However, it is *impossible* to live a long life that also is totally meaningful and fulfilling without obeying the following specific instructions. (All of the following Scripture references are from *The Amplified Bible*.)

THE WORD OF GOD EXPLAINS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING AND OBEYING GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS AND LIVING A LONG LIFE. "Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of your life shall be many." (Proverbs 4:10)

These words that King Solomon spoke to his son many years ago also are God's instructions to you today. If you learn and obey God's instructions that we will study here, "the years of your life shall be many."

THE BIBLE SPECIFICALLY EXPLAINS WHAT YOU SHOULD DO TO LIVE A LONG, MEANINGFUL, AND FULFILLING LIFE. "My son, forget not my law or teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments; For length of days and years of a life [worth living] and tranquility [inward and outward and continuing through old age till death], these shall they add to you." (Proverbs 3:1-2)

Once again, King Solomon's instructions to his son are God's instructions to you. Your Father does not want you to forget His Word. You will not make this mistake if you faithfully obey His instructions to study His Word each and every day (see II Corinthians 4:16) and to meditate day and night on the holy Scriptures (see Joshua 1:8 and Psalm 1:2-3).

Please note the words, "years of a life [worth living]" in Verse 2. Your Father does not want you to just live a long life. He wants your life to be meaningful and worthwhile. This verse goes on to promise a life that is filled with tranquility and peace through your old age until you die.

CHRISTIANS WHO TRULY FEAR AND REVERE GOD WILL LIVE A LONG AND MEANINGFUL LIFE. “The reverent and worshipful fear of the Lord prolongs one's days, but the years of the wicked shall be made short.” (Proverbs 10:27)

When you fear God, you revere Him. You hold Him in constant awe. Christians who truly fear and revere God are much more likely to live a long and meaningful life than unbelievers or Christians who only have a surface relationship with God or no relationship at all. “He will fulfill the desires of those who reverently and worshipfully fear Him...” (Psalm 145:19)

If you truly fear and revere God, your life will revolve around Him instead of revolving around yourself. God promises that He will “fulfill the desires” of His children who truly fear and revere Him.

A DEFINITE RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN FEARING GOD, RECEIVING WISDOM FROM GOD, AND LIVING A LONG AND FRUITFUL LIFE. “The reverent and worshipful fear of the Lord is the beginning (the chief and choice part) of Wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight and understanding. For by me [Wisdom from God] your days shall be multiplied, and the years of your life shall be increased.” (Proverbs 9:10-11)

This passage of Scripture explains the relationship between fearing God, receiving wisdom from God, and living a long life. If you fear God and receive wisdom from Him, the years of your life will be meaningful and fulfilling.

The Bible teaches that your likelihood of living a long and full life will increase if you truly fear and revere God and consistently seek God's wisdom. The same God Who created you knows exactly how he wants to live your life. The more that you turn away from the wisdom of the world to receive wisdom from God, the more likely you will be to live a long and fulfilling life.

GOD WILL GIVE WISDOM TO HIS OBEDIENT CHILDREN. “...to the person who pleases Him God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy...” (Ecclesiastes 2:26)

How do you please God? You please God by obeying His instructions. "...the [true] love of God is this: that we do His commands [keep His ordinances and are mindful of His precepts and teaching]. And these orders of His are not irksome (burdensome, oppressive, or grievous)." (I John 5:3)

If you truly love God, you will consistently learn specific instructions from His Word that explain how He wants you to live. You will live your life in obedience to these instructions. Some people think that obeying the instructions in the Bible is difficult. The final amplification in this verse says that loving God is not "burdensome, oppressive, or grievous."

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT A DEFINITE RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN FEARING GOD, LIVING A LONG AND MEANINGFUL LIFE AND THE WORDS THAT CONSISTENTLY FLOW OUT OF YOUR MOUTH. The psalmist David said, "Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you to revere and worshipfully fear the Lord. What man is he who desires life and longs for many days, that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit." (Psalm 34:11-13)

God teaches you here about the definite relationship that exists between fearing Him and living a long and a full life. The words "that may see good" in verse 12 refer to your life not only being long, but also being meaningful and fulfilling.

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT A DEFINITE RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN LIVING A LONG AND FULFILLING LIFE AND NOT DEVOTING YOUR LIFE TO THE PURSUIT OF WEALTH. "...he who hates covetousness and unjust gain shall prolong his days." (Proverbs 28:16)

Your Father does not want you to put the pursuit of wealth ahead of Him in any way. You will "prolong your days" if you do not focus your life on attaining wealth and the possessions that can be obtained with this wealth.

The Word of God contains many instructions to live a life of giving instead of living a life of taking (see Luke 6:38 and II Co 9:6-8). If you obey God's instructions to put Him first, other people second and yourself last, you are much more likely to live a long, meaningful, and fulfilling life. You cannot live a long and meaningful life if you are greedy and dishonest.

We believe that many Christians do not know and obey the specific instructions that I have given in this month's teaching. I want to emphasize that these specific instructions from God *do* work.

At this time, I am 85 years old and Judy is 77. At an age where most people are completely retired, we still are very active doing what God has called us to do with Lamplight Ministries.

Our health is excellent. We recently completed our annual physical exams. The doctor gave each of us an excellent report.

I have lost more than 40 pounds since Judy and I were married. I now weigh what I weighed when I was in college more than 60 years ago. Judy and I both exercise regularly. Neither of us take any medications. This statement is extremely rare for two people our age.

I am *not* saying that our long lives and our good health are due to us studying these verses of Scripture and planning to live a long life. Over the years we have done what these verses of Scripture instruct us to do. As a result, we each have lived a long life and we look forward to many more years of serving the Lord. Our lives are meaningful, fulfilling, and satisfying.

We are NOT in any way bragging. We give all of the glory to God for our long lives and the fact that we still are serving Him at ages 85 and 77.

We pray that the scriptural contents in this month's teaching will be very helpful to you. We pray that you will live a long, healthy, meaningful, and fulfilling life serving the Lord.