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PROVERBS 3:11-35

Proverbs Series

Proverbs 3. I think that a lot of people today feel overwhelmed or feel rundown. They go about in their lives feeling tired, feeling like they just don't have enough energy. So their life is basically this kind of existing or moving through, trying to get through the day.

Some people take vitamins, which I think is a good idea. Or they do exercising, they go to the gym. That's another good idea. They eat right. That's another good idea. They get plenty of sleep. That's a good idea. They do other things that are not such good ideas as they're trying to move forward to try to rejuvenate themselves or move forward.

But I would suggest that as we see in our passage today God is going to show us how we can have life rejuvenation inside by tapping into who He is. That's what we want to look at in Proverbs 3.

We started this message last week and we ended with this slide. We are going to continue today in looking at nine different truths that are in Proverbs 3, nine different applications for our lives, ten different Hebrew words. I ended with this slide last week which obviously isn't from Proverbs 3, but it's from Proverbs 16 which says that *there is a way, a derekh (derekh is the manner of living), there is a manner of living that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.*

Now what that ought to do for all of us is we ought to step back and say, "Wow. I think I'm doing the right thing, but maybe I'm not." Every one of us should be asking the question, "I wonder if my path in life, the way I'm living is the right way?" Maybe I ought to start questioning some things. Maybe I ought to question the way I deal with finances, the way I deal with religion, or the way I deal with my relationships with people. Maybe I ought to think about how I'm dealing with my own self. Maybe I need to consider those because they seem right to me, but they are taking me in the wrong direction. And when that happens we could end up with some significant problems in our lives. We have to be able to ask the question, what is God doing? What are His ways?

We talked last week about this word *derekh* which is 'way.' The way in which, the manner in which we live. So as we see that word used in several different places, we're drawn to our own manner and what needs to happen in our lives.

In Proverbs 3:5-6, a verse that many of us have memorized since we were young, it says *trust in Yahweh*. Now you have to understand the word Yahweh, *LORD*, there is capitalized. It means

God's personal name. That means this is a very personal God that we're trusting our lives unto and *lean not on your own* – there it is again – don't lean on *your own understanding*. Why? You better be careful because your own understanding, the way you're living may not be the best.

In all your ways (that's derekh) submit to him and he will make your paths straight. So if your life is filled with brokenness or your life is filled with stress... I think that psychologists are frustrated today because they see so many people under stress and they're trying to bolster them up and get them on the right path using all kinds of techniques. God has strategies. The strategy comes under this idea of wisdom that's described in Proverbs that we're going to learn more about. We're going to understand it.

And he will make your paths straight. The idea is that it would make our paths easier to walk on. Instead of the paths that some of us feel like we're walking on are just like really tough. God wants to make those paths straight. So we trust in Him and we trust in these things that He's teaching us.

We're going to continue on now and we're going to look at another principle, the sixth principle. If you didn't get the first five, you might want to listen to them. We set up an RSS feed now so you can automatically get the podcast on your phones, sermons if you want. They can automatically come to you if you sign up for the RSS feed. But go back and listen to the first five.

We're going to pick up in number six and the sixth one is to value correction. Let's read the verses from Proverbs 3:11-12. *My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline, and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.*

Now does that sound to you like correction is good or bad? I would suggest that it gives the impression that correction is good. It's something that God wants to do in our lives that's helpful. So we want to be able to value that correction and recognize that it is something that's important.

I was working with and counseling a young lady who's thirteen years old some time back. At the end of my time, which I like to do with young people, I like to give them an idea of what's going to happen the next time they come to interest them in coming back to see me the next week. So I said to her, "Next week I'm going to share with you something that's going to change your life. I'm going to share with you the stupid verse in the Bible." Oh she was shocked. She grew up in a Christian home and that I would use the word 'stupid' is one thing, but to say that stupid is in the Bible? That was amazing to her. So I said, "Remind me next time when you come."

Well the next week she walked in the door – "You were going to tell me about that stupid verse!" I said, "Yeah and I was going to tell you something that's going to change your life." I gave her my Bible and I said, "Look up Proverbs 12:1 because here's what Proverbs 12:1 says. It says whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but whoever hates correction is stupid!" She starts laughing because she sees the word 'stupid' in the Bible.

I asked her, "Does it say there that the person who's corrected is stupid? No it doesn't. This is going to change your life because you believe that sometimes. That's why you're having a hard

time with your mom because every time she corrects you you just get angry with her because you have this problem with correction. You don't value correction in your life and when you don't value it, you react to it. What does this say? This says that the person who hates correction is stupid." Light bulbs start to go off in her mind. She starts to realize something very important about her response to correction isn't right.

I would suggest that all of us sometimes have a tendency to react to correction. Sometimes it's because of the person who's correcting us. "I wish my mate wouldn't correct me." "I wish my child wouldn't correct me." "I wish that boss would mind his own business." So the person sometimes correcting us is what sets us off. But this idea of correction is valuable because we learn something very important. When we're corrected we learn some valuable things.

So in Proverbs 3:11-12 it's talking about a particular kind of correction, the Lord's rebuke. And how does the Lord rebuke us? Sometimes it comes from a child, sometimes it comes from our mate, sometimes it comes from the police officer as we're driving too quickly. And sometimes God uses those situations in our lives to help us to make changes. And so we need to learn how to value correction. Because our way, the way that we're living, seems right to us. But in the end it leads to death.

Now the word 'death' in Proverbs is a quality of life. In other words you've lost the quality of life, the vitality of life. Not so much does it speak in Proverbs about life and death being physical life and physical death. It talks about a quality of life and a quality of death. You want to have a better quality of life? Then you're going to follow wisdom that he talks about in the book of Proverbs. You're going to listen to what God has to say. You're going to pay attention to His instruction. But if you don't and you stray from that, you think your own ideas are the best, then some of those are going to lead to death, a loss of a quality of life in your person.

God says, "I'm going to send little things into your life to correct you. It might be a mate, it might be a child, it might be a boss, it might be a police officer that's going to come in and I'm going to adjust your thinking. I'm going to adjust the way you operate, the manner in which you live." We want to value that correction and it becomes a key piece of what God wants to do to move us forward. It is a gift I would suggest.

Go onto to the next verses. Open your Bibles, if you haven't already, to verses 13-18. You got them there? Verses 13-18. I want to ask you a question about the text and I want you to answer me.

What is the first word in verse 13? *Blessed*. Okay, what's the last word in verse 18? *Blessed*. You've got to know what that word is.

Let's look at the Hebrew word because the Hebrew word is *osher*, which translates blessed, which means to make someone happy. This is going to be really interesting for some of you. I'm not one of those prosperity gospel people who preach that "God wants you to get rich and God wants you to be healthy and God wants you to be prosperous." I don't tend to preach those kinds of things, but I want you to look at the passage. Let's let the passage speak to us today because of what it is saying about this idea of happiness.

I'm going to read verses 13-18 because I want to say today that God wants you to be happy. Save that thought. Let's read that passage and then I'm going to make comment on it.

Verse 13: *Blessed (or happy) are those who find wisdom.*

Notice it's coming to that sense of wisdom and understanding what that is. We have to understand wisdom is not just another good idea. Wisdom in Proverbs is unusual insight resulting in skillful action and the unusual insight means I'm connected to the fear of the Lord and recognizing that God designed this world, that God put things in place, that God has a plan that makes all this work, and I'm tying into that and what God is doing in my life.

Blessed are those (or happy are those) who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, for she (that's personifying wisdom) is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.

When you get that, here's some results. Just look at these. Verse 16: *Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.*

Interesting that it's talking about riches and honor and long life, things that we desire. Those are great things to long for. But he's saying you're finding those in wisdom.

Now let's ask the question does God want you to be happy? I would say yes. God wants you to be happy. But if you think that being happy means playing on your iPad instead of working on your homework assignment that's due in two weeks then you're misunderstanding the concept. God does not want you working on your iPad when you've got this other project you need to get done. You need to get done the project so you can complete it and then you'll have this sense of accomplishment. I'm done and I've completed it. That happiness is what we're looking for.

If you're thinking, "Oh I can be happy. I can just eat junk food all the time. Ooh junk food. God wants me to be happy so I'm going to keep eating these..." we won't call it out because people have their different favorites about junk food. But "I'm going to keep eating that." No. That is not what God wants us to do. That's not what He means by be happy. He wants us to be able to get healthy. He wants us to do the exercise, the eating healthy so that we can have that.

See, in the New Testament the Bible says that God has called us to suffer. Does that mean we have to go around sad all the time? No. He's called us to suffer like Him. He's the example. He's called us to suffer as well. We're going to suffer for doing the right thing. We're going to suffer because we want to have the character that God wants. In order to do that it's going to be a challenge for us sometimes, it's going to be hard. If you think of short-term happiness, you're missing what he's saying here. This is a happiness that comes as a result of doing what God wants us to do and obeying Him.

Romans says that *suffering produces perseverance*, a very important quality that we all need to be able to hang in there after we feel like quitting. *Perseverance* leads to *character* and that

character leads to *hope*, something very positive. You want the hope? You want the happiness? Then you do what God is calling you to do. God does want you happy.

It's interesting that in the book of Proverbs we have these tendencies listed here that when you do these things you will tend to be blessed with prosperity or honor or long life because you're doing the right thing. That's what he's talking about here in the terms of this happiness.

Now notice that in verse 18 it says *she* (that's wisdom) *is a tree of life to those who take hold of her; those who hold her fast will be blessed.*

When you hear the words *tree of life* that ought to connect with you. You ought to think of a Bible story that uses the word *tree of life* in it. Take you back to the story of Adam and Eve who were in the Garden of Eden and there were two trees, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which they were not to eat of, and then there was the tree of life which would give them life perpetually. When they sinned God then told them they couldn't go back in the garden, they couldn't eat of the tree of life, they could not live forever like that.

But God now is saying here in the book of Proverbs that we, Adam's children, can participate in some of the blessings of that immortality as we're pursuing wisdom. This concept of getting connected to God and who He is. You've got to know more about what this wisdom is and that's why I think he enters this passage in 19 and 20.

I want to take you back to our study where we're learning about these three words – knowledge, understanding, and wisdom – often used in combination in these first few chapters of Proverbs. Because they're all to be used right now in our verse 19-20. So I want you to be looking at this.

Notice the Bible says knowledge, understanding, wisdom. I suggest that they bring us out of the noise of life, all of the confusion that's going on. Instruction and advice are going to move us in that direction. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*, says Proverbs 1. Proverbs 9 says that *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*. So we know that that's all part of this.

Now go to 19. Let's read that together. In verse 19 it says, *By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations*. Whoa. This is big. Let me read that again. *By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place, by his knowledge the watery depths were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.*

First of all, you've got all three words – knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Where were they? At the very beginning of the world they are used in creation. What God is saying is He embodied these three words into His creation so that they are there. They are part of the way creation runs. They are part of the working rules of how our earth operates and how relationships operate. He built them in there. So when we're talking about wisdom we're not just talking about having a good idea, we're talking about tying ourselves into the God of wisdom who has created our world and figuring out how relationships work. A gentle answer tends to turn away anger. That's a principle embedded in creation that God has.

The words that we read in here about wisdom are tendencies that God has built into the whole system. We're not talking about getting an advanced degree and therefore being smarter than other people. That's not what we're talking about here. We're taking all of that information, the knowledge, the understanding, the wisdom, and getting to know God and how God operates His world, and strategically and skillfully maneuvering through that in ways that are just above what other people are doing. They are designed as part of the creation of the world. When we seek wisdom we are seeking to align ourselves with the God of the universe who has a plan. He has guidelines and He has standards and He has ideas. All these things – knowledge, understanding, and wisdom – are what we're seeking.

We're going to get those because we know that's what's going to help us be successful because we're lining ourselves up now with the God of the universe who says you live this way, you're going to have these benefits. So let's go figure out what those things are and let's do what He's saying here.

We're tying ourselves to the greater plan and you've got to see that the plan in verse 19 says the *wisdom of the LORD laid the foundations of the earth*. It's a personal plan.

Some people when they think about God they think about a cosmic influence or they think about an energy source. So when you say the word 'God' to someone they don't always know what you're talking about. But when Proverbs is talking about God, it uses His personal name for God, Yahweh, which is going to drive us forward so we know who God is, what He's done, and we want to tie into that on a larger front. That's what we're talking about here as we move forward and we understand the idea of wisdom and what it looks like.

Notice the results in verse 21 as we continue on. *My son, do not let wisdom and understanding out of your sight*. They should always be in the forefront of your mind. Don't let them out of your sight. It's just like having a toddler and you're in a busy area. You never let that toddler out of your sight. You're watching him. You're seeing what's going on. Don't ever *let wisdom and understanding out of your sight, preserve sound judgment and discretion*; (you ought to underline these words in the text here) *they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck*.

I'm going to spend some time talking about this word *life for you*. This is our next Hebrew word that I want to introduce you to. Now you have a sheet that has Hebrew words and on your sheet these are reversed. Just switch the two words on the page for yourself, if you would, so it says *chaya nephesh*.

The word *chaya* has a hard 'h' at the front. "Hah-yah." In fact maybe you've heard in Jewish tradition they'll say, "L'Chaim!" To life! *La* means 'to' and *chaim* is plural of *chaya*, emphasizing how important it is and how valuable it is. The word *chaya* means life. It is an important word because it describes the quality of life that someone has.

The verse says this wisdom and understanding, *they will be life (chaya) for nephesh*, for your soul. Literally it means *nephesh*, your soul. Your soul is that inner place where you feel rundown. It's that inner place where you experience weariness or weakness. It's your inner place

where you feel burdened at times about something. And when you feel that, God wants you to have that *chaya nephesh*. He wants to renew your soul.

The first time these words are ever used is in Genesis 2:7. In Genesis 2:7 this is in the creation of man. When man was created it says, *Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being*. He is now alive. This is different than an animal. This is different than a piece of clay that's getting ready to be a man because He breathes into his nostrils and he becomes a living soul, a person, a living being, a *chaya nephesh*.

When you experience that feeling where you say to yourself, "I need a vacation," your soul is asking please give me *chaya nephesh*, please give me life for my soul. And so you engage in recreation, recreation of some sort in order to try to bring into that *chaya nephesh*, that life for your soul. You look to restore your soul somehow. You might take a nap and go to sleep. And that's fine. Because often the physical benefits help us to be able to do that.

But we want not only the physical benefits; we want to hear the Lord speak in the midst of that. When we are seeking wisdom and understanding they will be life, *chaya nephesh*.

When God created the law for the Israelites He included a very important piece in there for them to preserve the *chaya nephesh*. He called it the Shevat or the Sabbath. So every week on Saturday they would cease from all of their work and they would have one day on the Sabbath day where there was no work, where they would get this new soul, this *chaya nephesh*.

It even says in Exodus 31 that God worked for six days and *on the seventh day he rested* so He could be *refreshed*. Very interesting statement about God. And we are to respond to that and we too take that day and rest.

Now in our understanding, because we have Jesus Christ in the New Testament, Hebrews 4 tells us that the Sabbath now comes through Jesus Christ. We have peace and life inside of our souls because of what Jesus Christ has done for us. But if we think that we can then work seven days a week without rest we're missing something. We've lost something from the Old Testament tradition that they had from the laws that were given because that rest sometimes allows us to hear the voice of God. Doesn't it? Sometimes we're so busy and we're so tired we can't hear God speak and we need to rest.

It reminds me of the story of Elijah because Elijah went and did this great miracle where the fire came down from heaven and burned up the whole altar. He killed all of these prophets of Baal and ran thirty miles. He ran, on foot, beat the chariot thirty miles to Jezreel, and announced to Jezebel, "We just killed all your prophets," and Jezebel says, "I'm going to kill you."

All of a sudden Elijah gets discouraged. He starts pouting. He runs away and goes by this brook and says, "God, I'm the only prophet left in all of Israel." He's feeling discouraged. He's lost his *chaya nephesh*.

What does God do to him? He doesn't give him a lecture. Forty days he lays down by that brook and he's fed. God just takes care of him for forty days. Physically he was depleted. He needed this. And then he needed to hear the voice of God, so after forty days God says, "I want you to go up in the cave and I want you to hear my voice."

He goes up in the cave and he's in the cave and this big earthquake comes, but God was not in the earthquake. And then a big wind comes, and God was not in the wind. Lightning and thunder came, but God was not in the storm. And the Bible says then a small whisper came and that was God speaking.

Elijah needed to realize, he needed to get himself whole physically so he could hear the voice of God. God said to him, "You are not the only prophet left in Israel. There are many other prophets who have not bowed the knee to Baal." And He encourages Elijah moving forward.

I would suggest that we need the *chaya nephesh* in our hearts. We need that. In Psalm 23 the Good Shepherd psalm (you know that psalm) where what happens is the Good Shepherd *leads me beside still waters*. What's the still waters for you? Maybe it's going into a certain room in your house or going into your backyard or maybe going for a walk somewhere or driving in your car. There's that still waters where God is able to speak to you.

And what happens in those still waters? When He leads you by those still waters, that special place, what happens in that moment? In the psalm it says *he restores my nephesh. He restores my soul*. Wow.

If you feel like you need a vacation, your soul is crying out for the *chaya nephesh* that God wants to give you. You need to be connected to God and understand what that looks like. It's such a powerful thing.

I love these words because they just resonate within me and I know I need that. I want that. And so if you are weary today, if you are burdened by something, you need to understand what Jesus says to you. Because He says this: *Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest*. There is this *chaya nephesh*.

Those words are Hebrew words not used in the New Testament where this passage comes from, but I think Jesus is referring to that rest that our soul needs. He's referring to that deep need in our hearts that we come before God regularly every day and we get restored so that we are not the people that are under the pressure of all the stress and allowing it to cause us to be run down but rather we are the people who are walking on straight paths because our understanding is coming from God. We're trusting in the Lord with all our hearts and not leaning on our own understanding. We're allowing Him to work on every part of our past so that we can walk in a straight way.

That's the *chaya nephesh*, a very powerful part of what I think God wants to do in each one of our lives is to refresh us and to remind us who He is.

There are people who try to fill this in different ways. There's the religious side of yoga that people try to grab onto thinking that that's going to give them this peace inside. There's some who go to other kinds of Eastern religions to try to figure out what this is. There's lots of different ways that people try to find the *chaya nephesh*, but it comes from the breath of God before that garden was even there that God breathed into Adam.

That's what you want. "God, breathe into me. God, I want you to breathe into my heart. I want you to give me what I need so that I have the strength to move forward so that I can be refreshed in my heart." If you're not refreshed today, I'd encourage you to consider these words that are here.

Let's put them back into the passage so that we can see where they are in verse 22. When you're pursuing wisdom and God's understanding of wisdom, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, you're following these principles. You're trying to get to know the God of the universe and what it's all about here. Then *they will be chaya nephesh for you*. They will be *chaya nephesh* for you. You'll feel like a million bucks. You'll be dressed like a million bucks, *an ornament to grace your neck*.

Now I want you to see what happens to you when you receive this *chaya nephesh*. It's going to deal with some issues inside of your soul, inside of your heart.

Look at verse 23. *Then you will go on your way (derekh) in safety, and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid*. If you have a problem with anxiety, here's a solution right here. Get in touch with the *chaya nephesh* that God wants you to experience in your life.

When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Having sleep problems? Let's look at it here. You want the *chaya nephesh* to reign in your soul so that you can have sweet sleep.

Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for Yahweh will be at your side and will keep your foot from being snared.

Wow. The idea of this anxiety and fear that people experience is really important. In 1 Peter 5:8 we have this picture of Satan as *a roaring lion, seeking whom he can devour*. But we know that when Jesus Christ died on the cross He de-fanged the lion so that lion has no more power over any of us. But that lion still roars. And when someone starts giving themselves up to anxiety or fear that lion gums them to death and it makes them feel anxious and worried and concerned.

Don't let that happen in your life. You have the power of God in you if you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Wow. Powerful stuff.

Let's go to the next principle. I'm going to move through these last ones pretty quickly here because I want you to see there were nine different principles in chapter 3 and we're now at number 7. It is the idea of being kind. Let me read verses 27-28. Being kind as a characteristic of your life. Are you a kind person? Would someone characterize you as a kind person? That's what we're saying here.

Verse 27: *Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.* When you're standing at the door and you have a choice to let that person go first or not, what do you do? Because it's in your power at that moment. This week you will have several different opportunities where it will be in your power to act. Will you use that power for kindness? That's the idea here.

Do not say to your neighbor, "Come back tomorrow and I'll give it to you"—when you already have it with you. You want to be characterized as a person of kindness. That's one of the principles that we see in Proverbs 3. It will be developed more in the book as we continue on.

The next one has this idea of revenge or malice. Malice is planning evil. Don't do that, He says. Look at verse 29. *Do not plot harm against your neighbor.* That's lying on your bed and saying, "I know how I'm going to get him back." I find myself doing that sometimes. "Oh I can't believe that person did that. I hope I can get to the next corner before he does," or whatever it is. We're starting to think about ways we're going to get this person back.

Do not plot harm against your neighbor who lives trustfully near you. Do not accuse anyone for no reason—when they have done you no harm. Be careful of revenge. We just need to guard ourselves against that.

One more principle I want to share today and that is the one starting in verse 31. It's this idea of being content with righteousness. Be content with righteousness, living a righteous life.

Notice verse 31 – *Do not envy the violent.* In other words, don't wish that you could have or do what they do. Don't wish that you could be like them.

Don't envy the violent or choose any of their ways. For the Lord detests the perverse but takes the upright into his confidence. The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but (and notice these words) he blesses the home of the righteous. Do you want God to bless your home? We're going to come right here. *He blesses the home of the righteous.* Let me read the rest of this and I'll come back to those words.

He mocks proud mockers but shows favor to the humble and oppressed. The wise inherit honor, but fools get only shame.

Let's go back to that statement *he blesses the home of the righteous.* I want to show you two Hebrew words. I already showed you one for *blessed*, but this is a different word. The word *osher* is happy. That's the word used in Psalm 1. *Happy is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.* It's a great word. It's used many times about blessing that we have, that makes us happy when whatever the passage is saying in that context.

But this word *blessed* is a different word. It means to bow the knee. It means to honor someone, to raise them up. So when we say, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is in me,* we're saying, "Lord, I want to bow my knees before you and I want to lift you up and I want to bless you. I want to raise you up in my life." That's what *baruk* means.

Take it back in the passage now. Because in the passage it says that God is the one who's going to do the blessing of us. You see that? In verse 33, *he blesses*, that means he lifts up *the home of the righteous*.

That takes us to another word. This is a word you're going to see all through the Bible. The word righteous is the word *tzedek*. *Tzedek* means righteous. It means to be a righteous person. It means to do right things. That's what it means.

Remember *the way of the righteous*? In Psalm 1 it says God observes *the way of the righteous* – the *derekh* of the *tzedek* – *the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish*. The *derekh*, the way that the wicked operate, it's going to perish. There's a way to live this righteous way and God wants us to know what that looks like.

This is where we're going to take off next week. I'm going to take you on a tour next week of righteousness in the Bible and I want you to see what it looks like in proper perspective. The book of Proverbs outlines *tzedek* in a number of different ways. Righteous – opposite of wicked certainly. But there's a way of the righteous that we want to understand.

I'm going to talk to you more about that next week when we go into that because there's some neat insights in chapter 4 about the righteous person and what happens and what that looks like. And then we want to take it into the New Testament and look at what the righteousness is as well. But this is the last of our principles – be content with righteousness – in chapter 3.

I want to come back now to that one principle about the *chaya nephesh* as we close today because I want you to know that God offers that to you. In the New Testament we have another way of talking about this concept of life. Jesus uses these words when He's talking to the people. He says, *I have come that you may have life and that you may have it abundantly*. See, the New Testament word for *chaya nephesh* it appears is abundant life. It's this ability to live life to the fullest.

Are you living life to the fullest? You can live life to the fullest today. And it means that if you're going to do that, you're going to go to Jesus, who's the one who is the author of these words, and you're going to say, "Lord, I know I need you because I have a problem in my life. I know that I am a sinner. I know that I have a problem inside of my heart that makes me unacceptable to you because of my sin. But that's why I need a Savior." And when you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior He does something inside your heart. He builds something inside of you that makes room for this *chaya nephesh* that's unbelievable.

If you've never trusted Jesus Christ with your whole heart – remember *levav*, the operating principles – if you've never trusted Christ with your whole heart, I invite you to do that today. Because when you ask Jesus Christ to come into your heart you have abundant life. You don't have to live a life of weariness or a life of discouragement. You now have Christ and He offers life to you in that deepest part of your heart. Amen?

Man, this is a great truth. Every time that we take this, we want to take it back to our home. In that passage where it says *he blesses the home of the righteous*, you want to take Jesus home to your own life – and that may be your house, it may be your workplace, it may be your neighborhood, it may be your car, it may be your own private life. But when you leave here, take it with you when you go. Take it with you so you have principles that you can embrace into your heart and this week you'll be a different person than you were last week.

If you've never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior then I want to invite you to do that today. We're going to sing a song. This is a lively song because it proclaims that I'm alive and I just want you to confess that before the Lord today. "Lord, thank you for what you're doing. I'm alive in you." That's what we're going to sing. But in the midst of that God is speaking to you and if you've never trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior then I want you to just go over here to the side, down the stairs, around the corner there where a prayer counselor will be waiting for you to pray with you and help you understand and help you come to that saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Are you alive today? Come on. Let's stand up and let's sing together.