

Chapter 13: Almost Skipped This Chapter But Decided Not To...

Life Application Verses:

Proverbs 3: 5-6. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

Are you one of those people who look at life with a bit of trepidation towards things that are 'unlucky?' You know, like the Number 13 or a Black Cat that crosses your path in front of you? Or you faint when you break a mirror because it will cause you to have 7 years of ~~good~~ bad luck? Or maybe if you see a ladder perched against a building, you would never consider walking under it because it will taint your ability to avoid unlucky situations. I think the number 13 has a 'chilling' effect on many people. But the bottom line in all of this 'stuff' is that luck is not what it's cracked up to be. IN fact, I almost skipped this chapter because I seldom use the 13th question on my quizzes, exams, or other items in my classrooms. Now, I'm not superstitious or anything, just out of habit, I don't use it! Besides, if you are Heavenly Minded and doing Earthly Good for God, witnessing to people about Jesus, and you are studying Scripture and Praying, there's no such thing as luck, right? Right!



In the Life Application Verses, how would you correlate that Holy instruction to what we do in our lives when it comes to unlucky things? Let's try it this way: the key words in Proverbs are trust, understanding, and paths (don't miss the Truth that every word in these verses is/are key to our lives). To reiterate, try it this way: if we trust God, and we have understanding, and our paths are made straight as we travel down this Life-Road, are we to seriously consider that events in our lives are a luck-of-the-draw? If we keep our dental appointment on Friday the 13th, will we be unlucky and lose all our teeth to dentures in the weeks that follow?

Or, will we throw salt over our shoulder at times because we fear what may happen in life? Let's think this thing over a bit...

Have you ever been indoors and someone is about to open an umbrella? You might do a couple of things: inquire why this is happening; suggest that it is dangerous to open an umbrella in the house; you might want to warn the 'offender' that it is bad luck to open an umbrella inside; or, you might simply smile and think to yourself, 'The silly superstitions that we have made for ourselves.' Are there any Laws of Nature that come to your mind about opening an umbrella in your house? Like, for example, that pointy thing on top—might poke someone with it; or, the big canopy might sweep valuable and non-valuable things from tables and other surfaces; or, it might rain inside your house! Or---Mary Poppins might Poppins out and sing, "dum-dillelee-dum-dillelee-dum-didle-do." The thing is...the umbrella is not the catalyst for bad luck, folks; it potentially might do damage if you wield it incorrectly, but bad luck? Nah...



Our lives might seem to be an unlucky event at times, but I believe that God gave the anti-venom to 'bad luck.' He tells us this: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight." If you look at these verses, you will not see the word luck anywhere in it. In fact, these verses are 180 degrees in the opposite direction of what we might consider as unlucky. Before we go further, allow me to say something: I believe that God created the rules of the Universe, and these rules govern our wind, water, Earth, air, and all living things. A good example is that if you are trying to nail something together, it is possible and probable that if you miss the nail, you just might hit your thumb. Hoooooie...does that hurt! Was that unlucky? No, you missed the mark is all that happened. The Laws of Hammering took over! Did you enjoy less pain because you missed the mark? Can you say, "Yeooooowwwwwiiiiieeeeeee!"

Think of it this way: to be Heavenly Minded, we must understand that when God created all things, He gave all things His natural laws. For example, have you ever noticed on National Geographic that when they film the whales of the oceans that every single one of them has a GPS tucked under their big flipper? Every notice that? And to think—all these years I thought these whales had some sort of God-GPS-built-in-to-their-DNA-navigational-matrix? Then again, you do realize that being facetious is what is happening right about now, right? Right! God's laws

dictate the whales travel plans. How do they know to travel thousands of miles and end up at 1200 Ocean Drive, Oceans, World, 77777, precisely? It ain't because they are using GPS! There is only one logical, rational, and natural reason this can even be discussed when it happens year-after-year: God imbedded His Natural Laws in the makeup of whales, birds, and all other living things—including man. The problem we face is that we sometimes accrue our strings of bad luck to just that—bad luck! Sometimes it might be our decisions that created the “bad luck” and other times, it seems that we are having “bad luck” whether we caused it or not. In reality, as a humble ordinary Christian going about his daily life in Prayer and attempting to do the best I can, I sometimes fall down. When I do, sometimes I have had the attitude of “why me?” Was it that I fell on the Number 13 at the time I fell? Or did I allow the situation or enable it somehow?

I don't know the answers to all the questions. But I know the Author of All Things and He knows every question, answer, and the “wherewithalls” that are part of the process. But bad luck? I just don't see it that way. If you are not a believer in the Son of God, Christ Jesus, then you might believe anything that floats by your radar screen—including the notion that “if it weren't for bad luck, I wouldn't have any luck at all.” Or when you walk by a Cemetery, you sing loudly! For those of us who have accepted Jesus as our most Precious Lord and Savior, we might sing when walking by the graveyard, but I bet it's something like *Standing on the Promises* if you are of the Baby Boomer generation or something like *Redeemed* by Big Daddy Weave if you are in between both or of the Millennial, Gen Y, or 'what generation are we in now' generation. The thing is: Christians don't sing from fear of being alone, but from Praising God to take us through the Valleys of the Shadows. If you know not God, you sing for any number of reasons—with fear driving your reason for the melody.

Luck is not how we live our lives. I've heard it often said that if you pick up a penny that is “tails up”, you are going to have something bad happen to you. Well, if I run a stop light, I can almost—no amend that—I can guarantee that the results are going to more than likely turn out bad. Would it be luck if I didn't hit anyone? No, it would be that the Laws of Time and Motion created by God have ordered themselves such that my passing through without hitting anyone is simply the ordering of my leaving my original point at a time while everyone else did the same, including stops and other things that altered my timeline. It's not



luck, but the natural order of things. And God made them all. And God can alter them to protect His Children! I say Glory to God in the Highest! So, what's the point of this chapter?

When we read Proverbs 3: 5-6, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight", our lives are not to be concerned with how lucky we are, but in how we Trust in our God. He tells us to Trust Him with all our hearts, not to lean on our understanding because our understanding can sometimes become foggy in how we see the situation. Moreover, it tells us that if we will acknowledge Him, He will make our paths straight. So, when I see a penny that is tails up, I think about what Benjamin Franklin said, "A penny saved, is a penny earned" and I pick it up! And then Give God the Glory for the gift. If it were a precious penny that someone lost, I would try to find the owner; then again, we never know when someone loses a penny how precious even that one penny may be to them.



Do you ever walk around when you're outside looking for that one-in-a-million four-leaf-clover? Why would we do that as Christians? I have one somewhere in a book—you know, you place roses and clovers in books so that they will be pressed and become a keepsake? I don't remember that in any verses in the Holy Word of God, so why do it? Instead, when we are outside, why not look up at the wind-driven clouds and Thank God for lungs to breathe the air? Or eyes to see the clouds? Or ears to hear the bird songs? Is it luck that I was able to find the right amount of air to breathe to enable me to remain conscious? The air is there because God made our world that way. He provides the warmth of the sun, the light of the moon, and He causes grass to grow. In the Summer months, I might feel "unlucky" because I have to cut the grass almost every 5-to-7 days, but that's not luck at all—those blades of grass grow because of the Natural Laws God placed into existence long before I set foot on that spot in the yard. As I think on this, that makes the grass pretty smart, doesn't it?

What about people who create dire situations—does it make you feel bad for them? Is it just bad luck that causes so many lottery winners to go broke after becoming independently wealthy or was it that they simply never checked in with God to see what Earthly Good they might do with some of their fortunes? Take the example of Lara and Robert Griffith:

Before they won a \$2.76 million lottery jackpot, Lara and Robert Griffith hardly ever argued. They bought a million-dollar house, a Porsche, and a Lexus. They sent their children to a private school costing thousands of dollars a year. But six years after their win, Robert drove away in the Porsche after Lara confronted him over emails suggesting he was interested in another woman. Their 14-year marriage was over, a freak fire gutted their house, and every penny of their fortune was gone.

Just bad luck! No, actions speak louder than words and when we keep God out of our lives, we invite “bad luck.” Or, think of it as ‘Breaking the Law.’ If a Hurricane is coming towards your home, which is the better of two choices: 1) stay and ride the wind; 2) get out of harm’s way. If you chose Item #1, please get some help! Just kidding, a little bit I suppose! What are the Heavenly Minded principles that produce Earthly Good outcomes?

1. Trusting God blows luck-of-the-draw right out of the water. Has it sunk in WHO we are trusting? God, Creator of all Things; Father to Christ Jesus; Holy God to ALL who Trust Him; Giver of Life; Sustainer of Life; Giver of Jesus Christ on the Cross for our Salvation, Forgiver of Sin, and Sovereign God of the Universe. Trusting God is Divine! I don’t care whether you play carps (sorry, craps) or spin the wheel, Trusting God pays Heavenly Dividends that can’t be equaled on this Earth. So, be Heavenly Minded and Trust God, then let His Word permeate you like a sponge as you perform Earthly Good in all that you do.

2. If there were such a thing as ‘bad luck’, we instigate the process by our actions. Two things to consider here: a) if we know not Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we are going to have the ‘worst luck you can imagine.’ If we continue to reject Jesus until that final breathe leaves our body, we will have “the worst luck that Eternity can offer”; b) If we know Jesus, we might make mistakes—which is going to happen so get over it—the mistakes we make cause things to happen. We Trust God in all things, yet we make errors in a choice (too much foot on pedal!) and we get a speeding ticket—oops, bad luck—no, no, no! Bad choice! Not bad luck! We intend to be on time to work, but we turn on that computing device and get involved in something when we should be getting ready—oops, we’re late, bad luck—no, no, no! Bad time to sit down and start texting! Not bad luck! So, be

Heavenly Minded and Trust God, then let His Word permeate you like a sponge as you perform Earthly Good in all that you do.

3. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight."

About all that is left to say for this one is: Amen and Amen! Trust God, not your Luck!



This chapter has been sort of goofy, off-the-wall, and just plain silly at times. Even so, the underlying premise of the words here are to encourage you to live Proverbs 3: 5-6 to gain as much Heavenly Mindedness as you can muster and then turn that Wisdom into Earthly Good living for God. When you feel "unlucky", what is the best

antidote? Prayer. Seek God. Shout out your feelings and hurts to Jesus as Lord and Savior. Tell God what's on your heart. Don't hold back, but remember to seek God in Honor and Boldness before the Throne of Grace and Mercy. If God was a God of luck, our existence would be **chance living**. And, I don't know how you feel about that type of living, but it would Truly be a Hell on Earth. Can you imagine getting up each day to wonder what might confront you just on the whim that you have a 50-50 chance of getting fired every day or robbed or whatever may befall you? Those things might happen, but when we Trust God, we are never alone and we will never be forsaken because we were unlucky! Trust God with all of you and you leave nothing to chance.



Question of Curiosity:

Which is better?: To have a 50-50 chance that Jesus **might** save us if we accept Him, or a 100% chance that if we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, we **WILL** be saved? For the latter, God guarantees those odds...which is a deliberate choice to Accept with a guaranteed outcome!

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"God doesn't play dice." ~ Albert Einstein ~
"Luck is the residue of design."¹ ~ John Milton ~

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¹ Design here is when we intentionally seek the Face of God in our lives and the residue is not luck at all, but The Hand of God through Christ Jesus in our lives.

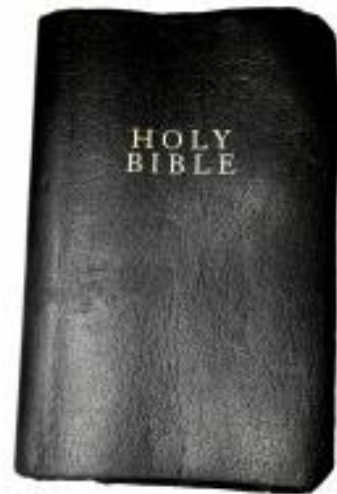
My Prayer For You:

Our Father in Heaven, I am but a man of limited means outside Your Guidance and Wisdom. Only You know all Things of the world in which we live. You alone have the Heavenly Power to guide us away from relying on luck to live our lives towards the reality that You are our God and You Alone have the power of Heaven and Earth to guide us by Faith. May we be examples of an active life lived in Obedience to our God before a lost and dying world. There is no luck-event that leads us to the Lost; rather, it is the Will of God across this planet that leads us to the lost so that we might share the Good News of Christ Jesus. I pray for those Lost Souls around us every day who think this world is a place of chance and that their lives are hopeless and in turmoil because they feel that everything they do is due to 'bad-luck.' Those of us who Follow Jesus Christ know the Truth and only Your Truth, O God, will set a man or woman free from doubt, chance, and solitude. I pray that we would "Trust in the LORD with all your [our] heart, And do not lean on your [our] own understanding. In all your [our] ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your [our] paths straight." May these words be used by You to fulfill Your Will across the entire lands and seas of this world, as You see fit in Your Wisdom and Mercy. I pray for those who think life is a gamble and they roll the dice at the start of every day in hopes that they will be lucky enough to survive. May we serve You by giving these people Hope in the Love of God, in the Saving Knowledge of Christ Jesus. In Christ's Name, Amen.

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Which one of these do you think has the
GREATEST benefit to your Eternal Life?