

Felicitous good fortune can be of various types and can refer e.g., to the possession of children, beauty, and honor, to the discovery of wisdom, as well as to the forgiveness of sin and trust in God, yet it is generally true that the person congratulated does not violate God's established order but conforms to it.⁸

7. This noun *'eshet* is used numerous times in the Old Testament and is the cognate of the Greek **μακάριος** (*makários*):

Those who stand fast are called blessed in James 1:12, for their earthly endurance brings them eternal salvation. The thought of a sure reward is also present when the righteous doer is called blessed in James 1:25. In all these verses the light of future glory shines over the sorry present position of the righteous.⁹

8. With these definitions and descriptions of *'eshet* and *makários*, the English word “happinesses” is clearly intended and refers to the ninth problem-solving device. Therefore, we now turn to this word's definition in English.
9. I have chosen to reference Noah Webster's dictionary which he first published in 1828 with a second edition in 1840. First some background on Webster:

Noah Webster (b. October 16, 1758, West Hartford, Connecticut—d. May 28, 1843, New Haven, Connecticut. U.S. lexicographer. Webster was instrumental in giving American English a dignity and vitality of its own. Both his speller and dictionary reflected his principle that spelling, grammar, and usage should be based upon the living, spoken language rather than on artificial rules.

While teaching in Goshen, New York, in 1782, Webster became dissatisfied with texts for children that ignored the American culture, and he began his lifelong efforts to promote a distinctively American education. His first step in this direction was preparation of *A Grammatical Institute of the English Language*, the first part being *The American Spelling Book* (1783), the famed “Blue-Backed Speller,” which has never been out of print. The spelling book provided much of Webster's income for the rest of his life, and its total sales have been estimated as high as 100,000,000 copies or more.

His early enthusiasm for spelling reform abated in his later works, but he is largely responsible for the differences that exist today between British and English spelling.

⁸ M. Sæbø, “אֵשֶׁת,” in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, eds. Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 1:197.

⁹ F. Hauck, “μακάριος,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. and ed., Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 4:369.



The first edition of *An American Dictionary of the English Language* was published in two volumes in 1828, when Webster was 70 years old. It comprised 2,500 copies in the United States and 3,000 in England, and it sold out in little more than a year, despite harsh attacks on its “Americanisms,” its unconventional preferences in spelling, its tendency to advocate U.S. rather than British usage and spelling, and its inclusion of nonliterary words, particularly technical terms from the arts and sciences. The dictionary contained about 70,000 entries and between 30,000 and 40,000 definitions that had not appeared in any earlier dictionary. The *American Dictionary* was relatively unprofitable, and the 1841 revision was not successful. The rights were purchased from Webster’s estate by George and Charles Merriam.¹⁰

10. Here are Webster’s definitions for the words, “happiness” and “happy” in the first edition of his *American Dictionary*:

HAPPINESS [from *happy*] The agreeable sensations which spring from the enjoyment of good. *Happiness* therefore admits of indefinite degrees of increase in enjoyment, or gratification of desires. (1:97)

HAPPY 2. Being in the enjoyment of agreeable sensations from the possession of good; enjoying pleasure from the gratification of appetites or desires. The pleasurable sensations derived from the gratification of sensual appetites render a person temporarily *happy*; but he only can be esteemed really and permanently *happy*, who enjoys peace of mind in the favor of God. To be in any degree *happy*, we must be free from pain both of body and of mind; to be very *happy*, we must be in the enjoyment of lively sensations of pleasure, either of body or mind.¹¹ (1:97–98)

11. “Peace of mind in the favor of God” may only be accomplished by the believer who uses his Law of Freedom to consistently inculcate, facilitate, and apply Bible doctrine to his life and circumstances.
12. It is in this context that the believer has the esteemed privilege of taking refuge in God’s grace and protective care. The final word of Psalm 2 is the Qal active participle of חָסָה (*chasah*): “to seek refuge in Him.”
13. Other English translations of this word include, “shield,” “under His wings,” “take shelter,” and “trust.”

¹⁰ Raven I. McDavid, Jr., “Webster, Noah,” in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed., (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2010), 12:550–51.

¹¹ Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1828), 1:97–98. [repr., *Noah Webster’s First Edition of An American Dictionary of the English Language* (San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1995).



14. Mature believers form the power of the Pivot during the time of a client nation's existence. In the Church Age, the first client nation was the Roman Empire but eventual loss of positive volition among its resident believers led to the pivot's move westward.
15. Subsequent client nations each experienced the sequence of original positive volition among the pivot followed by the gradual loss of thought within succeeding generations leading to further "journeys" westward.
16. Ultimately the client nation moved across the Atlantic to the American Colonies and eventually the United States of America. This process is discussed in the book, *Gospel's Missionary Journey*.
17. The current Zeitgeist of the United States indicates a significant loss of divine thought among large segments of its people. The continual drift away from divine viewpoint to human good and evil indicates a significant downtrend in the client nation.
18. The Second Commandment warns the Jews that when deviations away from doctrinal truth increases with each succeeding generation, then divine discipline systematically intensifies on that client nation.
19. Hosea illustrates these downtrends with the formation of a whirlwind, its tornadic or cyclonic force's ever-increasing power depicting the population's loss of thought leading to the eventual collapse of society.
20. Two current titles address these subjects and are available here at church, by mail order, or by download from the Web site: *Gospel's Missionary Journey* and *Whirlwind: Four Generation Curse*.¹²

D. Preoccupation with People

1. It is impossible to be alive and not have associations with others of various categories: family, social, professional, romantic, marriage, and fellowship with fellow believers.
2. These associations are normal and objectively there is nothing wrong with these associations. Problems occur when they become your top priority.
3. The problem-solving device for believes is to put your complete trust in God, not people. People have sin natures which cause varying amounts of instability including unrealistic expectations.
4. The more you depend on people the more you deviate from the source of unwavering power found in the immutable principles contained in the Word of God.

¹² Joe Griffin Media Ministries, 1821 S River Rd, St. Charles, MO 63303; www.joegriffi.org.



5. The leader of the household, by biblical mandate, is the husband. He may delegate some of his responsibilities to his wife but outside of her biblically stipulated areas of responsibility the husband is held responsible for her decisions.
4. The “excellent wife” is described in Proverbs 31:10–31, but the passage is actually a summary of the doctrine of wisdom developed throughout the book of Proverbs.
5. The actions, leadership, accomplishments, functions, production, and personal character traits are attributes rarely found in the human race, male or female. Therefore, the passage takes many of the virtues discussed in the book and extols them through the personification of the “excellent wife.”
6. In short, the word, “wisdom,” the feminine noun, **חֵכְמָה** (*chochmah*), is the subject of Solomon’s collection of phrases that define human virtue developed from principles and doctrines revealed in Scripture.
7. A study of this passage reveals the attributes retained in the stream of consciousness which possess an advanced inventory of divine wisdom.
8. When the believer becomes an independent decision-making machine by virtue of personal wisdom, then he is no longer preoccupied with people, but rather occupied with Christ.
9. This status of spiritual growth allows the application of divine thought sustained by absolute confidence that God honors His Word wherever it is found.
10. With confidence that this is absolutely true, then giving priority to the Word results in being justified, or vindicated, by works, first before God and secondarily before others.

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus says the Lord, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the Lord.
(NASB)

1. Trusting in others is a curse because it relies on fallen mankind for one’s source of strength. This leads to frustration since human viewpoint becomes the primary problem-solving device.
2. It is virtually impossible to change others so one’s policy must depend on the power of the Word of God to change himself.
3. Allowing others to dictate one’s spiritual status is like placing one’s faith in “The one who wanders from the way of wisdom” (Proverbs 21:16 NET).

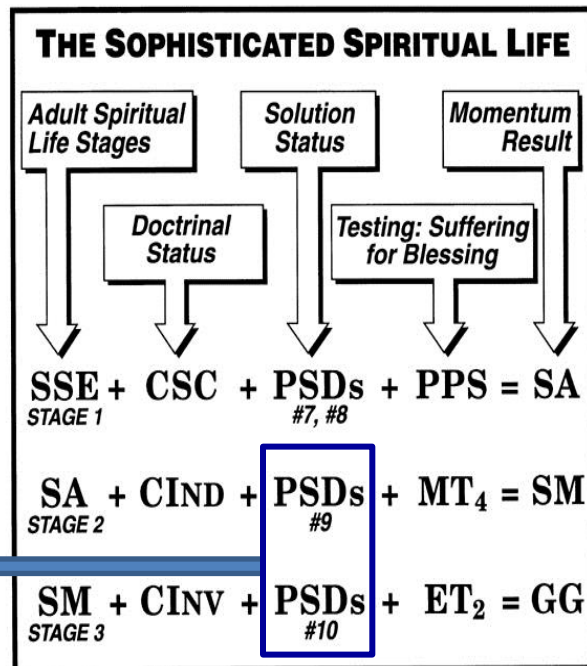
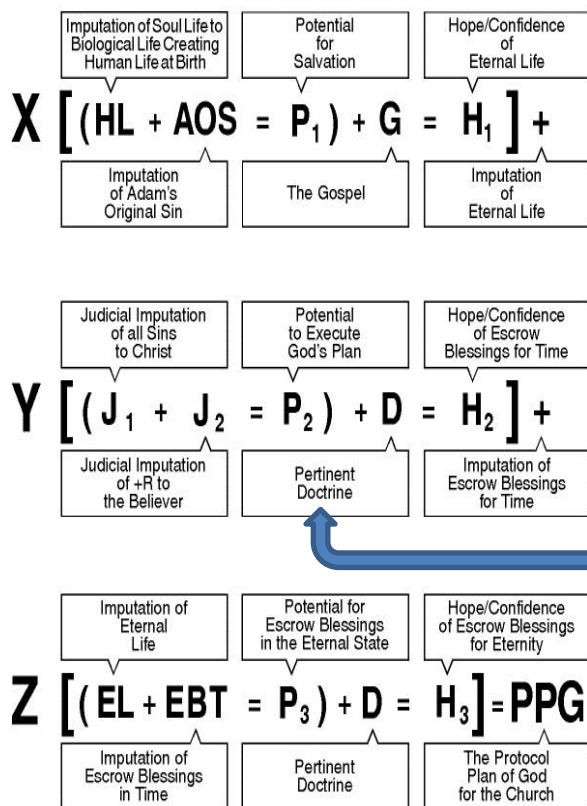
Jeremiah 17:6 “For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant. (NASB)

1. A desert bush has no deep roots and uprooted blows where the wind carries it. People with unrealistic expectations have no capacity for life.
2. Even though losers are provided logistical grace support, their personal talents and energies can produce prosperity, they have no capacity for it.

Jeremiah 17:7 “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord. (NASB)

1. Sharing the happiness of God is the problem-solving device that quickly results in one’s occupation with Christ.
2. The combination of personal love for God, sharing the happiness of God, and occupation with Christ complete the third radical in the diagram:

THE EQUATION OF HOPE



SSE = Spiritual Self-Esteem/Stage 1
 CSC = Cognitive Self-Confidence
 PSDs #7, #8 = Problem-Solving Devices #7 (personal love for God the Father) #8 (impersonal love for all mankind)
 PPS = Providential Preventive Suffering
 SA = Spiritual Autonomy/Stage 2
 CIND = Cognitive Independence
 PSD #9 = Problem-Solving Device #9 (sharing the happiness of God)

MT₄ = Momentum Testing in 4 categories (people, thought, system, disaster)
 SM = Spiritual Maturity/Stage 3
 CINV = Cognitive Invincibility
 PSD #10 = Problem-Solving Device #10 (occupation with Christ)
 ET₂ = Evidence Testing in 2 categories (relationship with God, relationship with life)
 GG = Glorification of God to the maximum

For a detailed explanation of this equation see R. B. Thieme, Jr., *The Integrity of God* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1998), 160-71. Philippians 3:12
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1992 Spiritual Dynamics Series
Philippians 3:4-21

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¹³ Diagrams by: R. B. Thieme, Jr., “The Equation of Hope” and “The Sophisticated Spiritual Life (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1994, 1994). All rights reserved.