



# Celebration of Discipline

—Life Hacks II, Week 4—

*Proverbs 12:1 (NIV)*

I. \_\_\_\_\_ Your \_\_\_\_\_

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,

but whoever hates correction is stupid.

II. \_\_\_\_\_ Your \_\_\_\_\_

**Vision of the “Good Life” in Proverbs:**

3:1-18

**Vision of the “Good Life” in the New Testament**

Matthew 6:33

Matthew 25:19-21

1 John 2:15-17

Philippians 3:7-12

## The Bottom Line

\_\_\_\_\_ Your \_\_\_\_\_!

...by recalibrating your \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
to \_\_\_\_\_ for “the good life” of \_\_\_\_\_.

...by recognizing that \_\_\_\_\_, you are offered an opportunity  
to \_\_\_\_\_ “good life.”

...by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ of “the good life.”

### Summer Suggestion for Proverbs

Either read one chapter a day (with chapter corresponding to each day of the month: for example, tomorrow on July 22 read chapter 22) or memorize this week’s verse and reflect on it daily this week.

“You lack discipline!”



## Orienting Desire: The Quest to be Human

(James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 10-12)

To be human is to be on a quest. To live is to be embarked on a kind of unconscious journey toward a destination of your dreams. As Blaise Pascal put it in his famous wager: “You have to wager. It is not up to you, you are already committed.” You can’t *not* bet your life on something. You can’t *not* be headed somewhere. We live leaning forward, bent on arriving at the place we long for.

The place we unconsciously strive toward is what ancient philosophers of habit called our *telos*—our goal, our end. But the *telos* we live toward is not something that we primarily know or believe or think about; rather, our *telos* is what we *want*, what we long for, what we crave. It is less an ideal that we have ideas about and more of a vision of “the good life” that we desire. It is a picture of flourishing that we *imagine* in a visceral, often-unarticulated way—a vague yet attractive sense of where we think true happiness is found. It is the vision of which Cosette sings amidst the squalor of Victor Hugo’s *Les Miserables*, her “castle on a cloud.” Most of us travel through life with less fanciful visions luring us onward, but such tacit, unconscious visions are no less powerful. To be human, we could say, is to desire the kingdom—*some* kingdom. To call it a “kingdom” is to signal that we’re not talking only about some personal, private Eden—some individual nirvana—but that we all live and long for a *social* vision of what we think society should look like too. That’s why there’s something *ultimate* about this vision: to be oriented toward some sense of the good life is to pursue some vision of how the world *ought* to be.

To be human is to be animated and oriented by some vision of the good life, some picture of what we think counts as “flourishing.” And we *want* that. We crave it. We desire it. This is why our most fundamental mode of orientation to the world is love. We are oriented by our longings, directed by our desires. We adopt ways of life that are indexed to such visions of the good life, not usually because we “think through” our options but rather because some picture captures our imagination. Antoine de Saint-Exupery, the author of *The Little Prince*, succinctly encapsulates the motive power of such allure: “If you want to build a ship,” he counsels, “don’t drum up people to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.” We aren’t really motivated by abstract ideas or pushed by rules and duties. Instead some panoramic tableau of what looks like flourishing has an alluring power that attracts us, drawing us toward it, and thus we live and work toward that goal. We get pulled into a way of life that seems to be the way to arrive in that world. Such a *telos* works on us, not by convincing the intellect, but by allure.