



Daily Verse and Comment

Proverbs 29:18

(18) Where *there is* no revelation, the people cast off restraint;
But happy is he who keeps the law.

New King James Version

The first half of this verse could be paraphrased as, "When people do not have a godly vision to work toward, they run wild." This applies to everybody, of course, but it applies in spades to young people because they have not developed the internal restraints that the more mature have. Unrestraint surfaces more quickly in a child, especially if he does not have a set of rules to follow and a goal to work toward. His behavior is likely to be chaotic. It is the parents' job to place restraints on a youth's unruly nature and to guide him in the narrow way ([Matthew 7:13-14](#)) so that he grows into a happy, functioning adult in society—and, beyond that, into a well-loved and wise member of God's Family, the ultimate goal.

Notice, however, the last half of this verse: "Happy is he who keeps the law." Solomon shows us the most beneficial way to bring to pass true human happiness—true fun, real [joy](#): by getting our children to understand and keep the law. The word *happy* really means "blessed." As a result of keeping the law, we will be blessed. If children keep their parents' law as well as God's law, they will truly be happy.

However, most young people think that keeping the law—doing what is right—is "uncool," "square," "boring," and "nerdy." This is another of those devilish misconceptions. In this age, virtuous young people are paragons, heroes! [God](#) certainly does not consider those who do well to be weird or strange. On the contrary, they are "the apple of His eye" because they please Him.

Unfortunately, a young person in [this world](#) is constantly beset by negative peer pressure, and one who worries about what his thrill-seeking peers think of him probably will not do what God says. He is too worried about "being cool" and fitting into his clique. Peer pressure has always been difficult for the young people in God's church to face. Five days a week, many of them are in public school where they have "friends" that they want to impress—and his cool friends are the ones that urge him to go to the game on Friday night. His most popular friends push him to go to the party at a friend's house where the parents have gone away for the weekend. It always seems to be members of the in-crowd who drink and smoke.

Yet, God says, "You will be happy if you keep the law." Parents must impress their children that this world's notion of fun is misguided, at the very least. Young people need to be taught from an early age that the first thing they should want is to please God, and they can do this if they also please their parents ([Exodus 20:12](#)). In this way, they can learn a more godly idea of fun.

— Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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