

Proverbs – Wisdom That Works - Part 5

Principles and Promises – Proverbs 3:1-12

Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – June 27th, 2021

Intro:

- God in His goodness and grace provides us with His wisdom in how we are to live our lives during our time here on this earth. He did not just leave us here to fend for ourselves or abandon us to figure life out on our own, but as a good Father, He provides His wisdom to guide and lead us. We then have the choice to learn, listen, and live these things out, or choose to follow another path. With each of God's principles, there is a promise attached. The wise person who honors, loves, and fears the Lord will put these principles into practice.
- Our passage for this morning gives us six pairings of two verses each. In each of these pairings are a principle and a promise: if you do this, then you will gain that. Each one of these pairings could be a sermon unto itself. However, I am going to present all of them to you as they are written for your consideration, investigation, and adoption. I want you to choose at least one of these pairings, memorize the verses, meditate on them, and live them out with your life. In living the principle, you will gain what is promised. My prayer for all of us is that we would have "ears to hear" and choose to honor the Lord by following His wisdom as an act of faith and love, and that we would give ourselves over to the obedience of faith, for the sake of His name, among all the nations.

The principle

Prov 3:1-2 ESV

My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments,

- Don't you love how the Lord addresses us as children? We are not slaves or servants, but sons and daughters. He is a good parent who loves us and is for us and wants the best for us. He is the One who has suffered and sacrificed for us. Those of you who have children and love them know what it is like to give them good and hard-won advice. You desire your children to learn what is good and right and helpful. God does not say "do this because I say so" but "do this because it will help you."
- God reminds us not to forget His teaching because we are prone to do so. This is one of the reasons why reading the Bible daily is so helpful. This is one of the reasons why coming to church is important, to be reminded of the teaching of God.
- Our heads must then be connected to the treasure of our hearts, where we keep our treasured possessions—the place where information leads to transformation. What we are to remember is His teaching. What we are to keep is His commandments. These are the greatest treasures of anyone's hearts, the purest gold of God's word. And if we remember and keep His commandments, we receive a promise.

The promise

2 for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.

- It is not the days of the life that matter most, but the life in the days. If we remind ourselves of God's word and treasure it in our hearts, God will "stretch out" the smallness of our lives and fill them with peace. This is an incredible promise. This does not mean that you will live to be 105, but it does mean that the time He has given to you—when you live by His word—will be full, satisfying, and meaningful.

The principle

Prov 3:3-4 ESV

Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

- God instructs us to be people who have steadfast love, a characteristic of God Himself. He wants us to love at all times and in all seasons, and to be faithful to live this love. Let this be something that is around your neck as a reminder and written as a permanent commandment on the tablet of your heart. There are people you know you can count on in any and every situation. If you are a person like this, then you will reap the promise.

The promise

4 So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.

- If you want to have the favor of God and people, then be a person who has steadfast love that shows your faithfulness, your consistency, and your perseverance. These types of people are favored by others, chosen by them. These types of people are favored by God and chosen by Him.
- If you are like this, you will have good success, and you will be successful. Yes, you will have to work, and you will have to sacrifice, but in your work and your labor—prompted by love—you will be successful in what you do. In this favor, you will have satisfaction and peace.
- This next principle and promise is one that my mom made me memorize when I was a young child. It was the second set of verses after I memorized John 3:16.

The principle

Prov 3:5-6 ESV

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him,

- The principle we see in these verses is that Jesus is the One we are to place our trust in. We are not to trust our own hearts and our own understanding. Our hearts and our thoughts are not trustworthy or true. We used to tell people to "trust your heart" or "follow your heart" which

seems like good advice. However, our hearts will deceive us and lead us astray. And our own understanding is extremely limited.

- If we are trusting in the Lord, He will lead us, He will guide us. If we admit in humility that we don't understand it all, and we choose to trust His way; if in our decisions and in our lives we consider Him, we acknowledge Him as the Lord of our life and the One in whom we trust and desire to please; if we consider what Jesus would have us do and trust His word and follow it, then we will receive the promise.

The promise

and he will make straight your paths.

- He will show you what to do. He will illuminate your path and show you the right, and safe, and good, and most direct way to go that will lead you into what is good, and right, and safe and satisfying. The crooked path, or paths that are crooked, what we think are "shortcuts" to get what we want, will lead us into great trouble, loss, and despair. The promise is that if we choose to follow the Lord, the path will still require effort for us to follow, but the way and the destination will be satisfying, right, and good.

The principle

Prov 3:7-8 ESV

Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.

- Being wise in your own eyes is another way of saying you are proud and believe that you can trust in yourself and your own thinking. Being wise in your own eyes is seeing yourself as the source of truth and wisdom, and believing that your thinking is the standard.
- Fearing the Lord recognizes that you are not the source of all wisdom, and there is One who is far greater than you. Instead of looking to yourself, you look to the Lord, knowing that He is the source of all wisdom and the true measure of what is good. If we fear the Lord, we will turn away from evil. This is done by default; the Lord never turns us toward evil, and in fearing and following Him, we will turn away from evil.

The promise

8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

- All types of evil are detrimental to your flesh, robbing you of sleep, of energy, of life itself. There are diseases we can avoid because of the choices we make. Being wise in our own eyes can lead us to choices that are truly unwise and can cost us.
- Following the Lord and His principles will help us to be healthy not just in a physical sense, but in an emotional, mental, and spiritual way as well. We will be refreshed, as in our bones. The core of who we are will be strengthened and regenerated. Those who "wait on the Lord will

renew their strength.” Pride and evil doing can take away from our lives, our energy, and our vitality. Following the Lord will give us strength, and focus, and the ability to persevere in doing what is good and right and satisfying.

The principle

Prov 3:9-10 ESV

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce;

- Honoring the Lord with your wealth means that with your hard-earned money and with your resources, you look to use these things to bring honor to Him. We do this by giving the Lord the “firstfruits” of all that we produce. This means that we think of God first and make Him the top priority, not giving to the Lord what we have “leftover” after we have spent what we have on other pursuits.
- Taking the tithe off the top is a way of honoring the Lord. This is the counsel the Word gives us, and in so doing, you will find that you can do more with the remainder than you could do with the whole. When your priorities are right, you will make good decisions with what you have and not waste it on foolish purchases. Giving to God from the start sets good precedent and sets the standard for what you do with the rest of your money. If you do so, then -

The promise

10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

- We will not just have what we need, we will have more than we need so that we can continue to be generous to those around us. Jesus spoke of this in similar terms in Luke 6:38 “give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” (ESV) This is true not just in our finances but also in forgiveness and love among other things.
- God will indeed provide what you need. He will honor those who honor Him. Trust Him with His principles, and He will honor His promises.

The principle

Prov 3:11-12 ESV

My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof,

- This principle has to do with our attitude toward the Lord when, in His love and goodness toward us, we see His discipline of us. Good and loving parents indeed discipline their children for their good. It is because when we love them, we choose to discipline them. When this

happens in your life, and believe me it will happen, do not despise the Lord for it or become worn out from his reprimand, because...

The promise

12 for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

- If Jesus is choosing to discipline you, it means that you are a child of the King. It is a proof of your family identity. He disciplines His own children so they can learn from it and improve. Discipline is not a word we associate with delight, however in its true form those who love us will help us and invest in us to steer us in the right direction. They give their special attention to us. So see the discipline of the Lord as a mercy and don't despise it, but learn from it. It is a far worse fate when you are not disciplined by the Lord.

Conclusion

- Again, as stated before, take the time to memorize, meditate on, and put into practice at least one of the principles and promises. All of these things are up to you. No one but yourself can stop you from following these instructions. To follow them or not is entirely left up to you. May we all have time to think about these things.
- I want you to look over this passage and look over these notes and commit yourself to at least one thing that is here. Give yourself to it, and grow from it, and benefit from it, and then grow into the other ones as well. These principles will serve you well, and the advice and counsel are from God Himself. If you choose His path and His will, He will walk with you in it, and from His counsel and His presence, you will reap great reward.
- Closing prayer