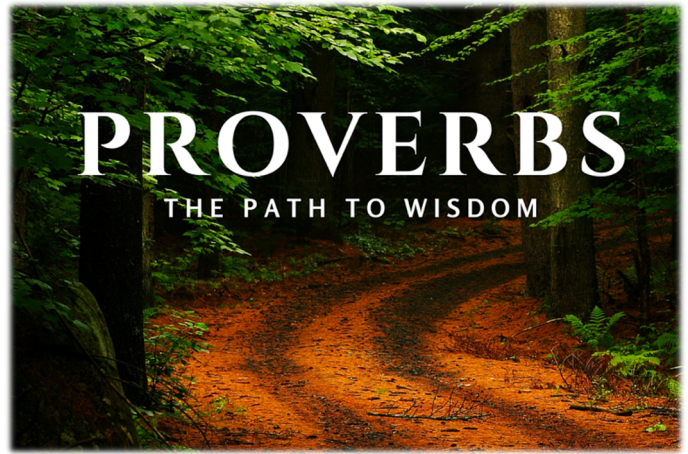


Direction Offered

June 14, 2020

Proverbs 3:1-12

Life is a journey. As we travel the road of life, we discover that the journey can be long, arduous, and sometimes confusing. There are many signposts along the way; but if those signposts do not originate with the Lord, they will serve only to misdirect us. As Solomon speaks to his son about navigating the journey of life, he gives clear directions.



In the Bible “law” is not meant to be understood as simple ordinances like a speed limit posting. Exceed the speed limit and you will get a ticket. Instead, the Hebrew word means “instruction” and carries the idea of allowing God (through His Word) to teach us what is right in His eyes. Only God has the perspective of seeing the entire landscape at a glance. And from His perspective, He can lead us in the right direction.

As we allow God’s Word to direct our journey, the next act is to allow God to teach us. We are called to relinquish any claim to self-understanding. The Bible says, *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.”* God desires to be our guide on the journey. He will guide us through His wisdom.

In dangerous territory, a guide can mean the difference between life and death. The sobering reality is that there are many dangerous obstacles, and even fierce enemies, on the journey of life. The Lord desires to lead us through life in order that His will for each of us may be fulfilled.

[excerpts from Travis Biller]

Remember (Proverbs 3:1-4)

- Solomon gives clear instructions about how to live wisely, but they are useless to the person who refuses to follow them. Wisdom from God leads to being successful, secure, and safe.
 - Humility in our walk with God shows up in our willingness to trust His wisdom.
 - God’s direction involves filling our minds and hearts with the Lord’s instruction.
 - Solomon encourages his son to abide by the commandments
 - We will not regret taking God’s commandments to heart.
 - Storing God’s commandments in our hearts enables us to put them into practice.
 - ***“For the length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee”***
 - This is not prosperity gospel. It indicates that the days we live will be filled with what matters most in life. A satisfying life is described in this verse as peace.
 - ***“Let not mercy and truth forsake thee”*** – We express our love to God by the way we love others.
 - To live with integrity means to be the same person inside and outside.
 - A life of integrity produces favour ***“in the sight of God and man.”***
 - In other words, when we put God’s commands into practice we cultivate a good name that’s worthy of respect.
- **Has your GPS ever led you to a dead end? Who can you trust?**
- **Why do we need to follow God’s commands to find favor with man? ... with God?**

Proverbs 3:1-2

“My son, **do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands;** for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you.”

Trust (Proverbs 3:5-8)

- Solomon continued to teach his son about integrity by bringing up trust.
 - To trust in God means to depend on His wisdom.
 - It requires us to acknowledge Him – walking with Him and making our decisions for Him.
- ***“healing for your body and strengthening for your bones”***
 - Solomon indicates that walking (living your life) with integrity and trust has a healing effect.
- ***“Lean not unto thine own understanding” – “Be now wise in thine own eyes”***
 - Foolish people place their faith in themselves and bank on their own wisdom.
- Having some success in life can make people arrogant.
 - Pride can set in and persuade us to think we can be wise without God.
 - Solomon warns to steer clear of this evil. Instead, trust in God.

➤ **Why do people find it difficult ... to trust others? ... to trust God?**

Honor (Proverbs 3:9-10)

- Solomon’s instruction to his son includes humility before the Lord.
 - An important way to display our humility is to honor God with our substance.
- The people of Israel depended on their fields and vineyards to produce what they needed.
 - God deserved to be honored at harvest because He owned the ground, and He provided the seed, the rain, and the sunshine for the crops to grow.
- ***“the firstfruits of all thine increase”*** - To honor Him, Israel had been commanded to offer the first part of every harvest to Him (Exodus 23:19; Deut. 26:1-11).
 - Their offering would be an act of worship that expressed their humility.
- ***“thy barns be filled with plenty”*** – **Caution:** This passage does not proclaim prosperity theology – ‘the more you give God the more He gives you’ – Instead, it simply states a reality about growing wise in the Lord. We can count on Him to provide for us when we honor Him.
- Farmers take a step of faith to plant seeds and be dependent on weather for their crops.
- When we honor the Lord with our possessions, we can have faith (we can rest assured) that He will honor us by providing for us.

➤ **What is harder for you, to trust God to give you wisdom or to honor Him with your possessions? Why?**

Accept (Proverbs 3:11-12)

- Solomon knew his son would have difficulty with God’s instruction at times.
 - Remember not all discipline is punitive. Think of the drill sergeant in boot camp. He is there to prepare us for future battle. At times God prepares us for His future purpose.
- When we find ourselves going through difficulties, maybe even growing weary of God’s correction, we do well to start with the unshakable certainty of God’s love - ***“the Lord disciplines the one He loves.”***

➤ **Why is it hard to accept discipline? Why is it hard to accept love?**

Biblical Truth: *God provides direction to those who place their trust in Him.*

