

Proverbs 3:1-18 Walking in Wisdom and What it Accomplishes

This summer we have embarked in a series in the book of Proverbs that we have given the title – **Wisdom for Life**

A) Because we need more than ethical principles. We need wisdom deep within

B) Hearts that are being impacted and moved and motivated by the Wisdom of God

C) Without God's wisdom, many difficulties in life will remain confusing and threatening.

- 1) But With God's wisdom entering our hearts,
- 2) we get the hang of how life really works, and we come alive more and more.

We began our series by spending 3 weeks considering the Subject of the Fear of the Lord

A) Because we are told in the book of Proverbs - **That the fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom** {Missed any go back....

B) Then last week we spend our time looking at what it means to **Trust God and not lean to our own understanding**.....

C) Today we are back in Proverbs 3 looking at what Wisdom looks like and how it operates in various areas of Life.

Here is Chapter 3 of the book of Proverbs we see an interesting Pattern

A) The Holy Spirit inspiring the writer presents before us – an interesting Pattern in V.1-12

B) We are given an instruction of how Wisdom is to operate,
1) that is then followed by an incentive or a promise.

C) Today we will see 6 instructions incentives

D) Then the whole section is followed by a wonderful description of blessing to the man or woman who finds wisdom

Instruction #1 Build your life on the right foundation

My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands;

A) Incentive or promise 2 For length of days and long life and peace they will add to you.

B) This reminds me of a Parable that Jesus told in Matthew 7 – Two builders - Rock and Sand –

1) Storms – one house crumbles the other stands in tact

C) Difference – Sand hears the word but doesn't do it – Result - his length of days his short

1) Peace is not existent –

D) In the midst of the storm he is worrying because he has no guarantee that his going to make it

The man who builds his house on the Rock

A) He hears the word of God and puts it into practice – he applies it to his life

B) Storm comes he is at peace – the storm crashes – makes noise – destroys things around him

C) But his life and house – stay in tack

D) So **Instruction #1 Build your life on the right foundation** **My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands;**

E) Incentive or promise 2 For length of days and long life and peace they will add to you.

Instruction #2 Live a life marked by Love and faithfulness

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you; **ESV - Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you;** - Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart,

A) The Key words here are **mercy and truth** – we have already established that those are the traits that embodied Jesus

B) **John 1:14 – ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14**

C) THAT IS who Jesus was – His life was marked by being full of grace and truth –

1) Seen in the way he treated others - The stands he took – perfect blending of those two things

D) Let not mercy and truth forsake you- Learn to treat others the way that Jesus treats us.

But this is more than a learned behavior – Bind them (Mercy and truth) around your neck – write them on the tables of your heart

A) This is describing that the blending of mercy and truth (**steadfast love and faithfulness**) are being etched into the very Fiber of your being

B) Being etched into the very Core of who you are as a human being –

1) and is being seen in the way you treat others.

C) Treating others the way that Jesus treats you

D) Greg O – Kick this kid out of the youth group – Have you ever rebelled? Knuckle head? – Did Jesus kick you out?

E) Can you imagine if Jesus responded to US the way WE tend to respond to others?

1) Have you given Jesus reasons to be disappointed with you? – Every day!

Treating others the way that Jesus treats you – responds to you

A) How does that happen? – the more you spend with Jesus – you gain his heart – his mind -

B) **Instruction - 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake you - Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart,**

1) **Incentive - V.4 And so find favor and high esteem, In the sight of God and man.**

C) Jesus grew in favor with God and man – Luke 2:52

D) Jesus was the friend of tax collectors and sinners – they were drawn to him they enjoyed his company.

1) Never compromising – but at the same time – He wasn't condemning – Like Sheep without a shepherd.

E) Imagine if we responded to those who are far from Christ with that same type of Compassion –

1) Beautiful blending of Grace and Truth – Not condoning Sin – but with God's help Loving the sinner – Imagine our impact

Sinners loved Jesus – were drawn to Jesus

A) You know who didn't like Jesus? The Religious legalist –

B) They called Sinners unclean / Gentiles – Dogs – fires of hell

Bb) They were the ones who didn't like Jesus

C) Think about your crowd – who is drawn to you? Closet to you?

1) Legalist – always down on others – Pharisee types

D) Or people who are struggling ?

E) That will be a good indication if you are walking in a good combo of mercy and truth

So Instruction #2 Live a life of steadfast Love and faithfulness

A) Incentive – YOU will find favor with both God and man

Instruction #3 Don't be wishy-washy in following Jesus

A) I admire people with strong convictions – even if I don't agree with them

B) I admire those who are willing to make a bold stand in their convictions

C) I don't think anyone likes those who are wishy-washy on things

Wishy-washy on Wedding Vows

A) I promise to love you always – except when my team is on – the diapers need changing – **the surf is up**

B) I promise to yield to your leadership – except when it doesn't line up with my plans -

C) Do you want your Boss to be Wishy Washy on Raise – Maybe – maybe not

The Lord doesn't want us to be Wishy Washy in our following of Jesus

5 Trust in the Lord with **all your heart,**
And lean not on your own understanding;
6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,

A) We are not going to spend a lot of time on this one – focus last week –

B) Total trust in Him – with all your heart
1) His credentials and proven track record

C) I was reminded of the story this week of a man who was trying to cross a frozen river on a cold winter day.

D) Since the man didn't know how thick the ice was he was gingerly crawling across the ice on his hands and knees

Right when he reached the middle of the River – he heard some clatter coming up behind him.

A) He looked back, and saw a wagon pulled by four horses, and the driver was whipping them along at a pretty good clip right across the frozen river.

B) The guy driving the wagon was a local. He knew how thick the ice was.

1) He was barreling across the ice with confidence knowing that it was going to hold.

C) Too many Christians are like the man down on all fours, creeping along, way too cautious.

1) Their trust in the Lord is half-hearted.

You know what wishy-washy and half-hearted following of Jesus does?

A) It creates escape routes and plan B's –

B) If Jesus doesn't come through in the time frame I have allowed – I have an escape... plan B

C) Trusting in Jesus with all of our hearts means – NO escape routes

“Pseudo-faith always arranges escape routes in case God fails it. Real faith knows only one way and gladly allows itself to be stripped of any second way or makeshift substitutes. For true faith, it is either God or total collapse.” A.W. Tozer

D) Trust in the Lord with all your heart – because of that – I am not going to lean to my own understanding – ALL IN

Because I am trusting in the Lord – I will acknowledge Him in all my ways

A) Acknowledge means to KNOW - seek to know and perceive his heart

B) Tuned into his voice – not the voice of culture – not friends – not my emotions

1) His voice His word

C) Promise or incentive

And He shall direct your paths. – Make your paths straight

D) Instruction #4 – natural follow up

Instruction #4 Be teachable V.7

7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.

A) There are two ways to learn – follow instructions or the hard way – learning from your mistakes

B) Instruction manuals people?

C) Our Society today is full of know-it-alls

1) The problem with our sound bite culture today

D) People who know a little about a lot of things –

1) Watched a 3 minute YouTube video and now they are an expert

Be teachable

A) Don't be afraid to listen to people who think differently than you do about things

B) Incentive V. 8 It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.

C) Who here has broken a bone because you were doing something –

1) Someone told you not to do and you got hurt?

D) Who has told don't play with fire – get burned – How many of you ignored that ?

Be teachable – You know what is at the heart of being teachable?

A) Humility – I don't know it all

B) Good Leaders are learners – willing to learn and grow.

C) Those who are walking in Wisdom – will have a teachable spirit

D) Be Those don't have to learn things the hard way – miss out on afflicting pain on themselves and others

1) When you learn things the hard way – you are not the only person who gets hurt – others around you do too.

Instruction #5 Invest in the Kingdom V.9

9 Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the first fruits of all your increase;

A) The Hebrew verb translated “honor” means “to treat the Lord as weighty.”

B) Jesus said where your treasure is – your heart will be there also

C) The things in our life that we treasure carry the most weight –

1) They get the brunt of our time attention and resources

D) Make Jesus and His Kingdom your #1 Treasure!

The first fruits were the best of the harvest

A) Exodus 23:19 says, “The best of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.”

B) So then, how do we honor the Lord from our wealth? By giving him *our first and our best*.

C) Too often the Lord gets 2nd best

A farmer told his pastor that one of his cows had unexpectedly given birth to two calves, “and when I sell them, I'll give the proceeds I make on one of them to the church.”

But A few weeks later the man informed his pastor, “I'm sorry to say it, Reverend, but the Lord's calf died.”

D) For many of us, it's always the Lord's calf that dies

“Wisdom is saying, Make the Lord famous and prominent by means of your wealth. Use your money to increase his prestige in your world.” Ray Ortlund

Interesting how many people spend all their time and energy building a Kingdom for themselves here

A) They die and leave it behind

Aa) Europe is filled with Huge Estates that no one lives in any more

B) People tour – or drive by – Wow – Left behind

C) Farmer – Fool – Not rich toward God - nothing to show in the next life –

1) The next life is what counts – LATER IS LONGER

D) Build up your spiritual riches before God by investing time, resources, heart and energy into His Kingdom

Incentive V. 10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.

A) Note this – this is not saying that We give in order to get –

B) However this is a reminder that God's capacity to give far exceeds our capacity to receive.

Jesus said, “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” (Luke 6:38).

C) Jesus was addressing his disciples – worrying about provision “Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33

D) Make Jesus your treasure – Your life and heart will be Satisfied

Instruction #6 Learn from Adversity

11 My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor detest His correction;

12 For whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.

A) Adversity is a part of life – Living in a fallen World –

B) IN this world you will have Tribulation – (Comes with being Human)

1) Path of struggle – But be of good cheer – I have overcome the world

C) Adversity is common to all – but sometimes the Adversity that we face comes directly from the Lord

1)It is a part of his chastening – his discipline his correction in our lives

When we are facing correction from the Lord – we need to not run from it

A)Don't despise it – learn from it – embrace it

B)Running lines in Basketball – Hated it the first year

1)Learned to like it after that – because I knew what it would produce

C)OUR FATHER– allows adversity to come – He wants us to learn how to row against the wind

1)Building up a Spiritual endurance in us – Stronger more effective

We need to understand – that the Correction in and of itself is the incentive

A)God is a good Father WHO– He loves us – delights in us/

B)Because He is committed to our growth – HE corrects us

C)His discipline proves we are his kids

1)Rebellion – no discipline – probably an indication – you really are not a child of God

D)There was a man who was trying to take off the blade from his lawn mower so he could sharpen it.

1)Turned it on its side and got the biggest wrench he could find – tried to loosen the bolt – it wouldn't budge

E)Put a pipe on the end of the wrench for more leverage – still would not move

He took a rock and started banging on the Pipe attached to the wrench -it still would not budge

A)His neighbor heard the racket and peaked over the fence to see what was going on.

B)What are you doing – trying to get this stupid bolt off of my mower so I can sharpen the blade. –

1)It will not Budge

C)That is when his neighbor informed him that the threads on the bolt went the other way.

1)As soon as the man reversed his exertions, the nut turned easily.

D)Are you forcing your life in the wrong direction?

E>Welcome the correction of your heavenly Father, who delights in you.

1)Who loves you as HIS child – LIFE WILL start making sense – flow in the right direction

So we have those Six instructions of what walking in Wisdom looks like – six incentives – the benefits and blessings of learning to walk in Wisdom

A)He sums it all up in this way – V.13-18

13 *Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding;*

14 *For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver,*

And her gain than fine gold.

15 *She is more precious than rubies, {Eternal Value – Can't take it with you - rubies fade – gold is the asphalt of Heaven*

And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her. {Nothing you desire compares with her - no earthly comparison

16 *Length of days is in her right hand, {quality of life – confidence and assurance*

In her left hand riches and honor.

17 *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, And all her paths are peace.*

18 *She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her. {Tree of Life*

Closest thing to life the way it was originally intended to be lived

Eternal Life is found in Knowing Jesus