An Expositional Study Through the Proverbs – Lesson #4

**Chapter 3: The Third and Forth Speeches from the Father and the Second Lesson From Wisdom**

**By way of reminder, we find the motto of the Proverbs in 1:7: *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”***

Paul said it this way to the church in Corinth:

*“7 But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (1Co 2:7-8 ESV)*

Here in Chapter 3:

**3rd Speech from Father to Son (Vs 1-12)**

2nd Speech (hymn) from Lady Wisdom (Vs 13-20)

4th Speech from Father to Son (Vs 21-35)

**3rd Speech from Father to Son**

Verses 1-12: This speech is a classic that contains some familiar verses. The father is really going to lay out the desired character qualities for his son. Equally, much of what the father says here in this third speech takes on the form of six traditional proverbs.

As you will see, each of them begins with a **call to act in wisdom** and then **the reason for doing**. All of this, as you will see is a call to live in light of the fear of the Lord.

The final proverb in the father’s fourth speech focuses on discipline. Men disciple has become a nasty word, but I would argue we need discipline in all areas of our lives.

***3:1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, 2for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.***

1. A Timely Warning
2. A Clear Command
3. A Beautiful Promise

The **timely warning** - Do not forget God’s teachings. We set under the word of God week after week, and yet if we are not careful, we can neglect and even forget what God is teaching us from His Word. This does not even include our own private reading. God is telling us, son, do not forget the lessons I am teaching you.

A **clear command – With all your heart keep God’s commandments**. Love God’s Word and ask him to build within you a **love for following Jesus’ teaching**. Keep his commands with all your heart. This not **rote obedienc**e, this is a heart that is being tuned to walk with God.

A **beautiful promise - I**n doing these things, heading the warnings and following the commands out of a love for God, the father says, it will **add length of days** and **years of life** along with **peace**. This should serve as a motivator to follow God’s wisdom in this world.

For sure it **adds eternal life** and for sure it adds **peace with God.** But I think God also means a chance at a better life now, avoiding many of the destructive habits and behaviors that can short-circuit the good life.

***3Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. 4So you will find favor and good successin the sight of God and man.***

1. The Negative Command:
2. The Positive Command:
3. A Surprising Reality:

**The Negative Command:** Here it is, in the negative, do not let steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you. We forsake love and loyalty when we stop operating by those principles, they do not leave us, we **leave them**. Yet these are virtues that find their root in Jesus, the ultimate **lover of our souls** and the one who is totally loyal to us.

Do not let love and loyalty slip. In your home, your job, or your church.

**The Positive Command:** Instead, hang them around your neck like a pendant. Instead **integrate love and loyalty at the heart level.**

**Let love and faithfulness be a banner** that waves over each of us. Imagine if others had only two words that they could describe us by and they chose love and faithfulness.

**A Surprising Reality:** ***So you will find favor and good successin the sight of God and man.*** We live in a day in age when loyalty or faithfulness is outdated. But if you want to find favor and good success in the sight of both man and God, let these two crowing jewels be the attributes that best describe your character. **Love lavishly** (like you are loved) and be **faithful**.

***5Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. 6In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.***

1. A Comprehensive Command:
2. An Important Prohibition:
3. A Precious Promise:

**The comprehensive command!** Trust in the Lord, with all your heart! Imagine with me, what that means. **To trust God with your whole being**. To be **completely reliant on God**. That is the clarion call for us this morning, that we might trust the Lord with every ounce of our being! To hold nothing back.

An **Important Prohibition!** DO NOT lean on our own understanding! Ahhh, but often we see ourselves as so **clever**, and we know so much. **NO!** We must place our trust and our confidence in God and His Word!

Then there is the **Precious Promise!** God will make our paths straight (morally)! He will direct our paths. We will be led by God. I want my feet following in the footprints of the Holy Spirit who is leading me. **Let us trust in Jesus with our everything, do not lean on my own understanding, and God will keep our paths!**This is not a promise that we will not have adversity. This is a promise that **God will be directing our paths.**

***7Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. 8It will be healing to your fleshand refreshment to your bones.***

1. A Warning:
2. Two Commands:
3. The Reason:

**The Warning:** We saw this principle a second ago, but do not miss the point. You and I must be **humble people**, we must be people who are **not wise in our own eyes**! It is our nature and the nature of everyone around us, **to marvel at our own wisdom**. But we must not be wise in our own eyes, rather seek the **חכמה (Chokmah)** of God!

**Two Commands:** Fear the Lord! **Reverence God**. You and I should have such a **reverence for God** that is what enables us, it helps us, to **turn away from evil**.

We could say, as we said in chapter 1 that **“the fear of the Lord”** is a synonym for **believing in Jesus.** For we **have not believed in Jesus** if we **do not revere God** and equally, we have **not a true fear of God** if we have **not accepted the sacrifice of His Son whom He sent on our behalf!** Who would ever want to stand before God and say I have feared your name, but I rejected your Son whom you sent, who died for my sins.

**The Reason: It will be healing to our flesh and refreshing to our bones.** That is not what Rich says, that is what God says.

***9Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; 10then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.***

1. A Pair of Overarching Commands:
2. A Promise of Plenty:

Many times, Christians we get wrapped around the axel over **does the tithe still apply to New Testament Christians**. That type of laser focus can cause us to **miss the bigger issue**. When we give to the Lord and to His work it **honors God**.

When we give of the firstfruits it represents that it all belongs to the Lord and it shows we are expecting and relying on God’s continued faithfulness for the rest.

Here the reward, the return for honoring the Lord with our money, our wealth, our income is that God will bless us, in this case materially. Our barns will be **filled with plenty** and our vats bursting with wine. Now we do not give to get, and that motivation comes from a heart that is **out of sync with God**. But when we give to **honor God** we should not be surprised that **He blesses us materially**. We know he has **blessed us spiritually!**

***11My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, 12for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.***

1. A Pair of Dire Warnings:
2. A Beautiful Explanation:

**A Pair of Warnings:** Problems can come into our lives for a variety of reasons, but when we are outside the will of God, we should **see troubles as disciplines** from on high and we should **not kick against them**. Equally, when we reside outside God’s will, we should **not grow weary or bitter** if **God’s persistence in our discipline** lasts as **long as our continuance in sin.**

This speech from the father, comprised of these six proverbs contains some of deepest wisdom, the most profound teaching we find in the entire Bible.

The **beautiful explanation**, God corrects, like a loving father, those who He loves. It is just like a father dealing with a son whom he loves with all his heart!

As we consider how profound these 12 verses are, I would submit that an individual sermon could be created for each of these 6 proverbs that make up this speech. This is deep stuff.

### 2nd Speech (in this case a hymn) from Lady Wisdom

**Verses 13-20:** This is a beautiful poem about the value of wisdom, personified once more as a woman. “She is more precious than rubies;” the author sighs, “nothing you desire can compare with her.” The poet paints Lady Wisdom as a haven, or a resting place. In fact, she’s compared to the “tree of life” from Genesis. Further in verses 19-20 we are told that God employed wisdom when He created the world.

**Blessed Is the One Who Finds Wisdom**

***13Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, 14for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. 15She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. 16Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. 17Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. 18She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her; those who hold her fast are called blessed. 19The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; 20by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.***

Here is verses 13-19 we see a promised blessing, to the one **who finds wisdom**, to the **one who gets understanding**. This is meant to create in us a **thirst for wisdom**. Then we are told that the **gain of wisdom** is **more valuable than silver and gold.**

**Vs 15 –** She wisdom is more precious than jewels and there is nothing that compares to her. Again, Jesus is the embodiment of this wisdom, and we can only truly pursue wisdom as we pursue Christ.

**Vs 16 –** Notice wisdom brings with her long life, riches, and honor. Not necessarily long life in this fallen world, and not necessarily riches and honor in this broken world, but in God’s design it does and we must not discount this promised blessing. But for sure the ultimate long life and ultimate riches and honor are in the life to come. All brought about from wisdom.

**Vs 17 –** The ways of Lady Wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and she walks on a path of peace.

**Vs 18 –** Wisdom is a tree of life (flashing back to the garden of Eden) to those who lay hold of her and those who hold fast to her, those who hold on to her with all their might, will be called blessed.

***19The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens; 20by his knowledge the deeps broke open, and the clouds drop down the dew.***

**Vs 19-20** - When God created, He did so by wisdom, by **חכמה (chokmah),** wisdom was there at his side! Wisdom was an ever-present companion with God when he created everything!

The idea being conveyed is that God has woven wisdom into his beautiful creation and here is the unstated reality, that wisdom, the wisdom of God can be ours, you can and should operate in the wisdom.

I would say in summing this up, that nothing is more precious that God’s **חכמה (chokmah)!**

Wisdom, God’s wisdom is available in **Christ and through His Word.**

### 4th Speech from Father to Son- Walk Securely in Wisdom

**Verses 21-35:** This chapter ends with another speech from the father. This speech clearly follows the presentation on wisdom, **for the Father gives instruction about waling in that wisdom.**

**The Blessing of Wisdom: The Doing of Wisdom (positive):**

***21My son, do not lose sight of these— keep sound wisdom and discretion, 22and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. 23Then you will walk on your way securely, and your foot will not stumble. 24If you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. 25Do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the ruin of the wicked, when it comes, 26for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.***

Do not lose sight of wisdom and discretion. Wisdom and discretion can be your life. If you have wisdom, you will walk securely, and your foot will not stumble. Even when terror comes; the Lord will be the confidence for those who possess wisdom!

**Now the father shifts gears,** his focus moves to what wisdom looks like as we interact with those in need!

**The Doing of Wisdom (negative):**

***27Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. 28Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it”—when you have it with you.***

Do not withhold good when you can do it and do not say to a person in need, oh yes, I will do that, come bac tomorrow.

Here is he lesson: The **action of Compassion** is wisdom’s **most attractive expression** and outside of the Scriptures it is the **most convincing demonstration** of the **God of Creation**.

**The Doing of Wisdom (negative):**

 ***29Do not plan evil against your neighbor, who dwells trustingly beside you. 30Do not contend with a man for no reason, when he has done you no harm. 31Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways, 32for the devious person is an abomination to the Lord, but the upright are in his confidence.***

Do not purpose and plan evil against your neighbor. Do pick a fight for no reason, especially when he has done nothing to you. Do not envy a man who is violent, the reason for devious men and an abomination to the Lord!

***The Doing of Wisdom (in summation):***

***33The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous. 34Toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor. 35The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace.***

You see the point; God watches over and blesses the righteous. He shows favor to the humble, and those who act in wisdom will inherit honor from their creator. Disgrace is what ultimately awaits all who reject knowledge. Again, never forget Jesus is the embodiment of God’s wisdom.