

“Walking in Wisdom” Proverbs 3:1-8

Introduction: The Bible constantly talks about how living life is like walking down a path. The Book of Proverbs sets these two paths before all people: the Path of Wisdom, which leads to Life and the Path of Folly, which leads to Death. When we talk about wisdom, we are referring to living life according to God’s intention. Someone has said, Wisdom is knowledge applied to the glory of God.

The Point: God calls his people to walk in wisdom that they might experience abundant life.

I. Keep God’s commands and you will live the abundant life (1-2).

He begins by saying, **“My son, do not forget my teaching,”** Solomon says the first step toward walking in wisdom is by remembering and living out God’s commands. Solomon taught his son in accordance with the Hebrew Scriptures, the Bible as they knew it. Here’s a framework for interacting with God’s Word.

1. Know the Word - Do you regularly expose yourself to the Word? Do you delight in it?
2. Apply the Word - **“let your heart keep my commandments”** The commands of God are designed not to steal our joy, but to give us joy! *1 John 5:3* says, “This is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome.”

The Book of Proverbs is a book of commands filled with wisdom that teaches us to be faithful in the little things of life, the step by step moments of life.

- Solomon says, “Son, watch your mouth.” – “Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (18:21).
- “Son, listen to your mom: ‘Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and forsake not your mother’s teaching’” (1:8).
- “Son, when no one else is looking, be a man of integrity” and watch how you treat the poor because “Whoever mocks the poor insults his Maker.” (17:5)
- Son, choose your friends wisely: “Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm” (13:20).
- Son, practice self-control: “A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls” (28:25).
- We don’t have time to look at other areas like pride and lust, worry and hope, laziness and gluttony.

3. Spread the Word - One of the greatest ways to not forget his Word is to remind one another of Scripture. “Does the Word of God stop with you or does it spread through you?” - David Platt

Verse 2 provides the motivation or promise for keeping God’s commands from the heart: **“for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.”** Jesus said in John 10:10, “The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come that you might have life and have it to the full.” Abundant life is not icing on the cake of Christianity. It’s the cake. It’s the substance of the whole.

II. Grow in Favor with God and Man by living a life of love and faithfulness (3-4).

“steadfast love” – is a love that doesn’t quit. It is made with “industrial strength, absolutely committed” **“faithfulness”** – “is essentially that which can be relied on.” God is looking for faithful men and women. The leaders of Redemption Hill are looking for faithful men and women to help accomplish this mission. The text says to bind steadfast love and faithfulness “around your neck and write them on the tablet of your heart, the idea is that these qualities would be *permanently visible* in your life.

Verse four tells us that there are some amazing ramifications for those whose lives are characterized by steadfast love and faithfulness. *Verse 4* **“So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.”** Most importantly, the text says our relationship with God (the vertical dimension of life) and our relationship with people (the horizontal dimension of life) will be thriving. [Luke 2:52]

III. Trust the Lord with an All-Encompassing Commitment (5-6). [Reword]

Solomon gives us three ways we should trust:

- 1) **Trust the Lord Entirely** – **“with all your heart”** “Throw yourself upon God with reckless abandon.”
- 2) **Trust the Lord Exclusively** – **“do not lean on your own understanding”** True faith is in Christ alone.
- 3) **Trust the Lord Exhaustively** – **“in all your ways acknowledge him”** When the text says “acknowledge him,” it is really simply and profoundly saying “know him.”

App: And let me give you a bit of advice: Two keys to this: prayer and knowledge of the Word.

When you trust entirely, exclusively, and exhaustively in the Lord, what’s the **Promise?** “He will make straight your paths.” The idea is “straight and smooth.” (Waltke)

IV. Fear the Lord and Pursue Holiness with Great Humility (7-8).

I believe humility is the key to fulfilling the three commands of verse seven.

“Do not be wise in your own eyes;” Tim Keller says, “If you don’t think you are a fool, you are a fool. But when you see your own foolishness, you are barreling down the path of wisdom.”

“Fear the Lord” - This is the most foundational truth of the book of Proverbs. It has been called the motto of the book. The Book of Proverbs has this to say about the Fear of the Lord.

- **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction” (1:7).**
- **“The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate” (8:13). Don’t tell me you fear the Lord, if you these characteristics dominate your life.**
- **“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...” (9:10).**
- **“The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death” (14:27).**
- **“Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble with it” (15:16).**
- **“The fear of the Lord leads to life, and whoever has it rests satisfied” (19:23).**

Some people think that fearing God means we should be afraid of God, but let me provide a definition for you: **The Fear of the Lord involves a disposition of humility and reverential awe before our holy God which leads to wisdom.** Question: How do we acquire a deeper sense of reverential awe? Answer.

Acquire greater thoughts of God.

“turn away from evil.” John Owen said, “Be killing sin, or sin will be killing you.” And how do we do this? Rom. 8:13, “...but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

Conclusion:

In the garden, it was through the path of folly that Sin and Death entered the world. Adam and Eve, rather than keeping God’s command, foolishly rebelled against God, and we have been under the curse ever since. Tragically, we too have chosen the path of folly and have sinned against God. Because of our sin, we are justly separated from the life God gives. But God, because of his great love sent his Son, Jesus, who is the embodiment of wisdom, so that through his wisdom, life might overcome and defeat death and the path of folly forever. All who embrace the wisdom of God, Jesus Christ, and trust in his work and follow in his ways may have abundant and eternal life. (tweaked from Keller) Have you accepted the wisdom of God? Are you walking in his wisdom?