

WORSHIP SERVICE - 7.10.2022

TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART

I. INTRODUCTION

PROVERBS 3:1-12

- 1 My son, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments,
- 2 for length of days and years of life
and peace they will add to you.
- 3 Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you;
bind them around your neck;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
- 4 So you will find favor and good success
in the sight of God and man.
- 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
- 6 In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
- 7 Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.
- 8 It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones.
- 9 Honor the Lord with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
- 10 then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

11 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline

or be weary of his reproof,

12 for the Lord reproves him whom he loves,

as a father the son in whom he delights.

II. PRESERVING THE FATHER'S TEACHING

- One of the most important things you will get from this passage is the emphasis on the heart.
- Worldly wisdom says, "*follow your heart.*"
- The problem with that is that God's Word has a lot to say about the condition of our heart.
- And from God's point of view, the heart is far from a reliable guide.

- From the Hebrew perspective, the heart was more than just the emotions and feelings. It involved the thoughts, the understanding, the will.
- Proverbs 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.
- Jeremiah says our heart is fundamentally broken.
- Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?
- The heart, rather than being a faithful compass for our life, is a terrible one.
- James reminds us that our heart lusts after and desires what we want but do not have (James 4:1-2).
- James calls the kind of "follow your heart" philosophy, not heavenly wisdom, but "*earthly, unspiritual, demonic*" and leads to "disorder and every vile practice" (James 3:15-16).

- The only hope then is the total renewal of the heart.
- Ezekiel expressed that hope prophetically as a new heart and new spirit that God will put within his people (Ezekiel 36:26-27).
- Jeremiah declared that God would make a new covenant with his people and that he would write his commands on their heart (Jeremiah 31:33).
- Only then could God's people obey from the heart and receive the blessings of obedience.

THE ADMONITION

- Solomon is not only concerned with the transmission of wisdom information to his son, but the internalization of all of his teaching in the son's heart.
- He pleads like he did in the first two lessons for the son to not forget, to not forsake, to not ignore, to not harden his heart to his teachings, but to in every way keep the commandments.
- Obedience will come from the heart that hides and treasures the father's commands and teachings.

- V3 steadfast love and faithfulness are substituted in place of teachings and commandments.
- The son is to bind them around his neck and write them on the tablet of his heart. (6:20-21; 7:2-3)
- Again, the focus is on the internalization of the father's words and commands.

- These words are covenant words. Kindness, love, fidelity are not to depart from him, he must have them deep within his heart.
- **Deut. 6:8-9** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- These words are to be committed to memory and then the will is to be conformed to them.

THE MOTIVATION

- There is a reward attached to the son's obedience to the father's teaching and commands, long life and peace.
- Peace is the Hebrew word, "Salom"
- Salom means peace, prosperity, success, welfare, and carries the sense of being complete and whole.
- For the Israelites, who were in covenant with the Lord, long life was seen as a mark of blessing.
- **Deut 4:40** Therefore you shall keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land that the Lord your God is giving you for all time."
- It was a promise attached to the fifth commandment -"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12).
- There is a connection being drawn between how well the son listens to and keeps the father's teachings and commandments and the outcome of his life.
- If he keeps them, the result is a long, complete life.
- The point is that wisdom will add both to the quantity and quality of your years.
- Wisdom will bring you favor and a good reputation before God and men.
- Obedience to God's wisdom can add years to your life, but more importantly, it adds life to your years.
- The ancient Hebrews didn't have a complete understanding of eternal life like we do who have the fullness of God's revelation.
- Because of Christ, we have a new heart, new affections, new desires, we have God's law written in our hearts.
- What Ezekiel and Jeremiah prophesied about has been fulfilled in Christ.
- The presence of trials and adversity and suffering in this life are not signs that we are out of favor with God. In Christ, we have life and peace and we have the promise of eternal life.
- And if we live in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord, if we are walking in his ways, others will see what God has done in you.

III. WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION

1. TRUST IN THE LORD

5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart,

and do not lean on your own understanding.

6 In all your ways acknowledge him,

and he will make straight your paths.

THE ADMONITION

- What does it mean to trust the Lord?
 - Trust means to have full confidence in something.
 - What is the son to place his full confidence in?
 - The son is to have full confidence in Israel's covenant-keeping God.
 - That trust is based on a sense of security in God.
 - He is to have faith in God and God's promises, because this teaching is only as good as God's ability to back up his promises.
 - Some Hebrew scholars have noted that the Hebrew word we translate as trust originally had the idea of lying facedown on the ground, in a helpless and defenseless position.
 - It is a position of complete dependence upon God to protect you, especially in the face of danger.
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- We are to trust in the Lord "with all your heart."
 - We are to trust God wholeheartedly.
 - This is an all of life commitment to trusting in the Lord.
 - God demands an undivided commitment to himself.
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- The first key to help us trust in the Lord is that it is contrasted in what we usually trust in—ourselves.
 - Do not lean on your own understanding.
 - We are to trust God exclusively.
 - Lean means to support yourself.
 - We are to lean on the Lord not on our own understanding.
 - Solomon is teaching his son that only by trusting in the Lord wholeheartedly and exclusively can he truly walk in the way and the will of the Lord.
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- What's the problem with leaning on our own understanding?
 - We have limited wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and insight.
 - Bruce Waltke writes, "*One is a fool to rely on his thimble of knowledge before its vast ocean or on his own understanding, which is often governed by irrational urges that he cannot control.*"
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- When we make decisions without even considering the Lord, we are leaning on our own understanding.
 - Our default mode is to rely upon our own wisdom, our own thoughts, our own inclinations and desires.
 - Proverbs 28:26 Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.
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- The wise person does not lean on his own understanding but trusts that God knows best and his way is best.
 - Is God's revealed Word your ultimate authority for truth or do you assume that your limited human knowledge and reasoning is the last word?
 - What you believe about that will take you down two very different paths.
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- We are to trust God extensively.
 - "In all your ways acknowledge him..."
 - There is no dimension of our life that is outside of the realm of trusting God wholeheartedly and exclusively.
 - We don't just trust God with spiritual matters only, we are to bring God's truth to bear on every aspect of our life.
 - We need his counsel not just in the big decisions of life but also in our day-to-day routine.
 - There is no matter too small for God's attention and our full dependence and confidence in him.

- “Acknowledge” is the word in Hebrew “to know.”
- In all your ways, know the Lord, be aware of the Lord.

THE MOTIVATION

- *“And he will make straight your paths.”*
- He will remove the obstacles in our life that trip you up and cause you to stumble.
- This promise lies at the heart of what we all want—to know and do the will of the Lord.
- Some want the promise of the straight path without following the admonition that leads to the promise.
- Do you want to know the will of God for your life?
- Are you trusting him wholeheartedly, exclusively, and extensively?
- Are you leaning on your own understanding or are you leaning on the Lord?
- When you are doing these things and not just following your heart, you can be assured you are moving in the direction of the straight paths.

2. HUMILITY

- Look at the **further teaching** the father gives the son.

7 Be not wise in your own eyes;

fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.

8 It will be healing to your flesh

and refreshment to your bones.

THE ADMONITION

- "Be not wise in your own eyes"
- Wisdom ceases to be wisdom when you think you are wise in your own eyes.
- In fact, whoever claims to be wise is worse than a fool (Prov. 28:12).
- If you think you are wise apart from God, you've got big problems.
- The antidote is to "fear the Lord and turn away from evil. "
- The fear of the Lord is the beginning, the foundation, of wisdom. (1:7)
- The wise person is always conscious of God and is repulsed by evil, they turn away from it.

THE MOTIVATION

- When we trust the Lord, acknowledge him, lean on him, we will have healing and refreshment.
- When we try on our own understanding, we are exhausted, weary, unsure.
- When we lean on him, his presence refreshes and renews us.
- There is a payoff to living rightly and obeying God and his commands.
- Total healing is what is in mind, literally from the outside of your navel (flesh) to your bones.
- It's not simply referring to the absence of sickness or disease but to a complete well-being of mind and body.
- Solomon is teaching us here that we are to submit every area of our life to the Lord and he will produce wisdom in us. That will lead to well-being in all areas of life.

3. WORSHIP

9 Honor the Lord with your wealth

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

THE ADMONITION

- Here is an example of how wholehearted devotion manifests itself outwardly in worship.
- *“Honor the Lord”*
- The word we translate as “honor” means “heavy or weighty”.
- To honor the Lord is to highly value God, esteem him rightly as God.
- One of the ways we show how highly we value God is by putting him first in the area concerning our wealth.
- Firstfruits are symbolic of the best. (Numbers 18:12)
- We honor the Lord by giving our best. The best of what?
- The best of our wealth, our finances, our resources, our revenue.
- In modern terms it means to give to God first as soon as you receive your income rather than waiting to see what’s left over.
- Paul tells us that we should give in proportion to how God has prospered us (1 Cor. 16:2) and to give what we have purposed in our heart (2 Cor. 9:7).
- This goes back to trusting in the Lord. Do we trust him with our finances?
- We give to the Lord’s work, not because he needs our help, but because we honor and worship him.
- We give as an act of gratitude towards God who has graciously given us all things in Christ.
- We give expressing confidence that God will meet our needs.

THE MOTIVATION

- The motivating promise is held out with two word pictures - barns and vats, representing grain and wine. Both were necessary to a family’s survival.
- The Creator rewards the true worshiper by sustaining his life.
- In modern terms, pantries will be stocked full and our refrigerator filled to overflowing.
- But is this always true?
- Yes, because God does promise good things to his people.
- Some of those good things are material blessings. But it doesn’t just include material blessings. He promises to meet our needs (Matt. 6:33; and that as we honor him in our giving we are storing up treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:20).
- Paul says that our generous sacrificial giving as worship produces a harvest of righteousness.
- **2 Cor. 9:10** He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.
- Here’s where the prosperity gospel goes off the rails. They make material blessings an end in and of themselves.
- Material blessings are always the sign of God’s blessings, favor, and approval.
- God’s people never suffer or are sick. Sickness and suffering means you are out of God’s favor.
- Prosperity preachers misunderstand the Old Testament covenant promises made to Abraham and to Israel.

- They twist the Scripture to fit their paradigm of giving that leads to prosperity.
- The trap of the prosperity gospel is that people end up loving the gifts more than they love the Giver.
- But I don't want you to lose sight of this, God does promise good things to his people, he is a good Father who gives good gifts to his children.
- He blesses those who honor him through their faithful giving.
- Obedience leads to God giving us more because he can trust us with more—that shouldn't come as a surprise to us.

IV. SUBMITTING TO THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE

- Is this passage teaching a prosperity gospel?
- Yes, it is. Not like the false prosperity gospel of our day, but it is teaching that if we trust and obey the Lord he will give us life, health, wealth, and direction.
- But there's a problem.
- Sometimes we do obey and things go really, really bad.
- We have to remember that when it comes to Proverbs, these things are generally true now, but ultimately true later.
- This is why we end on discipline.

11 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline

or be weary of his reproof,

12 for the Lord reproves him whom he loves,

as a father the son in whom he delights.

THE ADMONITION

- What is required for our heart to have wholehearted devotion to the Lord is the discipline of the Lord.
- We need the instruction that the Lord's discipline brings.
- We are to honor God not just during prosperity but also in the midst of adversity.
- Discipline means instruction. But it is the kind of instruction that can only be learned through hardship and suffering.
- The son is to embrace the Lord's loving discipline throughout his life.
- He is not to resist it. He is not to grow tired of it. He is to submit himself to it.
- Why? Because the Lord's discipline is the proof of the Lord's loving care.
- We don't like discipline, we tend to see it as all bad.
- We don't see it as a blessing.
- But God disciplines those he loves, like a father disciplines the son he loves.

THE MOTIVATION

- God's discipline is a blessing.
- He cares more about our holiness and conforming us to Christ than our momentary and fleeting moments of happiness.
- He disciplines us to mature us and to sanctify us.
- He corrects sinful behaviors that we are dealing with now or will deal with in the future.

- If you are disciplined by the Lord—praise God for that—he loves you because you are his child.

- **Read Hebrews 12:3-11**

- The writer of Hebrews encourages believers to endure, to not grow weary, it is for discipline that we have to endure because God is treating us as sons.

- The Lord's discipline is not punishment but correction and instruction.

- Hebrews 5:8 reminds us that even Jesus learned obedience through what he suffered.

- When the Lord disciplines you, that suffering proves your sonship.

- **Hebrews 12:11** For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

- This is what the Lord's discipline produces in us in the long run because He's a loving Father.

- He loves you enough to allow hardship at times to prepare you for something greater at a later time.

- So he will bless us and reward us, but he doesn't always give us what we want when we want it.

- He gives us exactly what we need when we need it.

- God is shaping us for glory.

- Are you someone who wants the blessings of the Lord without trusting the Lord, acknowledging the Lord, honoring the Lord and submitting to His discipline?

- Or is your heart trusting in God alone? Do you acknowledge him in all of your decisions? Are you honoring him with the best he has given you? Are you submitting yourself to the Lord's discipline?

- God blesses those whose hearts are inclined towards him in the manner that Solomon described for us.

- Our confidence remains, however, not in our ability to perfectly trust, acknowledge, honor, or submit.

- Our confidence remains in Christ alone, the perfectly obedient Son of God, whose sacrifice secures for us all of the blessings and benefits of the New Covenant.