

Proverbs 4

Now I want to bring us up to speed on what is being said so far.

Solomon the greatest the wealthiest Hebrew King that ever lived, also had more wisdom than all men who were before him, and who would come after him.

Jesus can only be said to be wiser.

Solomon begins the task of writing this wisdom down, and seems to be addressing his son.

He seems to be preparing his boy for manhood, and giving him the tools he needs to be successful in life.

Solomon chooses instead of a long drawn out lecture with do's and don'ts he will engage the imagination of his son's eager mind.

And we can pretty much agree that a young man about to set out on his own in life, as a young virile man could be amazingly confident in himself even though he is untested.

Solomon in his great wisdom, here uses Hebrew poetry, and proverbs to grab ahold of his son's attention.

Solomon in the first Chapter of Proverbs gives us the key that unlocks the door to this wisdom he is passing to his son.

Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

All instruction and learning must begin here, or everything gained will be like grasping the wind, an endless chase of hopeless data.

Once his son can set out with this understanding, with a healthy fear of God, then the rest of the instruction will be set within the right context.

Wisdom, as I understand this book of Proverbs is none other than God's Word.

So we will continue on with Solomon's plea to his son in Chapter 4.

Security in Wisdom

4:1 Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, And give attention to know understanding; 2 For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law. 3 When I was my father's son, Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother, 4 He also taught me, and said to me: "Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live.

Solomon here in his plea ties 3 generations together in humility.

He explains that his own father David had this same talk with him, that his mother also nurtured him in the ways of wisdom.

This approach to his son's heart is very wise in itself.

Father's when instructing your children on the do's and don'ts of life, explain to them the reasons why.

Through your own experiences. Your own lessons in life.

I can look back at many of my own father's lessons, and something in my soul connected with wisdom that he confessed his own father gave him.

My father's stories of my grandfather's discipline, and down to the rules he enforced at the dinner table have stuck with me all these years.

There is something very precious about a generational passing of wisdom.

An understanding of family heritage, as to why these instructions are so important to us.

Think of **Deut. 6:6-9** "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 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.

The heritage the Jews were to pass from one generation to the next were to be detailed throughout their daily living.

"Well son, we go to the tabernacle this particular time of the year, to make a sacrifice for our sins, we as a people are expecting one day a Savior who will save us

as a people, this picture is found in our sacrifice” a Hebrew father would say to his son.

And these godly principles were to be taught as they went about daily life...

For me, as a child, and being my fathers only son, on Saturday's we worked.

We would take trips to the dump, build sheds, cut firewood, clean up the horse manure, and do yard work.

While we had fun some Saturdays, the meat, or the sustenance of my upbringing came from those laborious days with my father.

He would tell me of stories of him and grandpa working in his garden, he would tell me of this heritage of hard working men we had, and he would tell me why me, and not my sister's was helping him.

It is our calling as men to work son, this is godly and good.

And I would find a sense of duty in what we were doing, knowing this was something that my grandfather taught my father, I hope to someday pass down to my son.

My dad would talk about morality in those moments, teach me about godliness, what it meant to be a man of God, he would throughout our work teach me of the issues of life.

And when he did this from that point of humility, I understood these lessons he was teaching me, came from his own schooling in life.

Those were foundational for me as a Christian young man growing up in an ever increasing wicked world.

Yes, I rebelled against my father's instructions, but when I finally came around to know true Wisdom, my dad's lessons came flooding back into my life, I knew how to walk through his example.

I know for my son Freedom, he will hear often, "Your grandfather had to teach me this too son, I learned as you are now."

And here in Chapter 4 Solomon says this good doctrine he is offering was passed down to him, and this doctrine is in verse 5...

5 Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. 6 Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you. 7 Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore, get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. 8 Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will bring you honor, when you embrace her. 9 She will place on your head an ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you."

He declares... "Son, get wisdom and understanding, and never let it leave you."

“You see out there in the world, there will be another deceptive path waiting for you, but when the choice to go down that road comes, remember these instructions!”

“Do not forsake her, wisdom, when the temptation is brought before you, hold fast to God’s Word that I have instructed you with.”

Wisdom is the most important thing, hold fast to God’s Truth, and the fear of Him.

He is hoping he will understand what awaits his son... There will be temptation to cheat your way to the top, but he must resist, and hold fast to God’s Word.

When he does, this godly wisdom will bring him promotion in life.

He will be tempted to lie, to cheat, to steal, but when those things come he must not forsake the things his mother and father raised him to know.

He tells his son.... “In all your pursuit in life, in all your getting, find Wisdom, honor God’s principles above all else.”

And this will lead to success.

It will be a crown of Glory upon your head.

Now men, you will be faced with this same choice in your workplace, to forsake the path of Wisdom, the path that God’s Word is illuminating.

You will be tempted to venture of the lighted path, into the darkness of ambition.

You will be tempted with self-promotion, by any means necessary, hold fast to the truths of God's Word, work with fair scales, honest weights, be truthful, have integrity.

And let the goodness of God's Wisdom promote you through life.

Radio Illustration... Integrity promoted me, after my boss understood he could trust me, he trusted me with more!

Teach your sons through your example.

Solomon continues on...

10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, And the years of your life will be many. 11 I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. 12 When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, And when you run, you will not stumble. 13 Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.

Solomon pleads one more time, maybe he sees his son's eyes drifting off into a daydream.

You have been there I am sure, you are I pleading with your child, or a young person, and you start to see their mind wonder off, they are thinking of their own ways, or about Pokémon or something on Facebook they liked, and you shout "Hear me!"

“Receive these sayings please.”

“You need to know this before you head out there on your own.”

Solomon then draws attention to his own example.

“Son remember these things I taught you and I lived out before you.”

“They will give you long life, your path will not be hindered.”

“I am telling you what to expect son!”

“Take firm hold of God’s Word, it will keep you on the right path, this Word is your very life son!”

And I look back at my childhood, I remember every morning, early, my father would grab a bowl of cereal.

I could hear this in the kitchen going on, as he poured that bowl, then he would take it into the dining room, and in the quiet of the morning he would read his Bible.

Every day he sought out God’s Wisdom for his life.

I would hear the ding of the spoon hitting that ceramic bowl, and my dad chomping away, as he ate his physical food, and devoured his spiritual food for the day.

It was a simple thing for me, when I came to the Lord to understand, if that man of God, that I watched my

whole life, needed God's Word every morning, so would I.

Much of my discipleship in the Lord came from me looking back at my father's example.

And I knew, as Solomon pleads with his son here, I needed to take hold of this.

And ever since me and Jess came to the Lord all those years ago, I dare not set out without that spiritual nutrition in the morning.

My Daughter Sofia now knows every morning me and mom will do our devotion first thing in the morning.

As I remember my father over that bowl of cereal, I hope my children too will see the value of God's Word in their own lives.

Father's, your kids are watching, can you say as Solomon does here, do as you have seen in me?

So Solomon moves on, and mentions again there will be another path his son will have opportunity to walk upon, he will now go from saying do, to do not...

14 Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil. 15 Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on. 16 For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; And their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. 17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, And drink the wine of violence.

“Son,” Solomon Declares... “you cannot expect God to walk with you, to lead you if you go between, or back and forth between two paths.”

“You must at all cost avoid the path of the wicked, those whose lives do not line up with wisdom.”

“Turn away from that path, don’t even give it a second glance, for its doom is great, and its deception is a snare.”

“The evil person does not sleep until their agenda is complete.”

“The plotting and planning that comes on that dark path will lead to your ruin if you journey with them.”

Stay on this path that the Word points to...

18 But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day. 19 The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know what makes them stumble.

“As dark as this world around grows, if you son,” Solomon says, “stay on this path of light, and right living.”

“You will be set apart; you will stand out.”

“Your witness will shine brighter, don’t make a companion with those who are wicked.”

“They don’t even know their own calamity.”

So men, we see Wisdom would say

2 Cor. 6:14-18 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

"I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." 17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." 18 'I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the Lord Almighty."

We are to be separate from those in the world.

Now we of course are supposed to be a light, a light that draws men from darkness.

But friendship with the world is a quick trip down.

How can your unbelieving co-worker ever know the blessings of a godly marriage?

They will tell you to get rid of her when hard times come, to move on, you don't deserve that, friends that are full of God's Wisdom will encourage with the truths of God's Word.

They will help you understand the value and blessing there is in a godly marriage...

There is no value in the way of the wicked or the council of the unbeliever.

Stay with those who walk this path of Light with you.

Solomon continues...

20 My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. 21 Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; 22 For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. 23 Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.

What is coming into your ears, what is coming into your eyes?

For these things will fill the well-spring of your heart.

And out of your heart these things will be evident.

Now if your only influence is the unbelieving council of your co-workers or friends, your heart will speak those things coming in.

How do you think the colleges are sweeping the Christian kids away from truth?

They are filling their ear with deceptive lies, and putting before their eyes a smokescreen of deception.

And we wonder why when we send our kids off to college, where they will have no church to attend, or pastor to seek council from, we wonder why, they are being swept away.

Solomon is pleading with his son to consider where his influence is coming from.

When you go off, surround yourself with and keep yourself in truth.

I imagine this should be the plea of the Christian parent that sends their child off.

Find a church, should be more important than keep your grades up, find a Christian club should have a higher priority than finding a tutor.

Prepare you kids for the deception they will face, it will be nearly impossible for them to overcome without proper training and preparation.

So... Solomon ends this chapter with...

24 Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you. 25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you. 26 Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established. 27 Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.

Solomon here instructs his son to do a personal inventory.

Son search your heart.

As Paul says in...

2 Cor. 13:5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? — unless indeed you are disqualified.

Examine your heart son, Solomon pleads, make sure you are sure you are ready for what is out there.

Only you can know what is in your heart.

You see we have a plague in humanity, this sickness of hypocrisy.

We take careful attention to make sure our outside is right before men.

We cleverly make our words so pious, and full of fluff.

We flatter, and speak words of well-being.

We try so hard to cover up the putrid smell of who we really are.

We are more concerned about what man thinks of us than what the All-Seeing-Eye of God sees.

Well men this morning I want to plead with you as Solomon does to his son here, let us do an inventory this morning.

Let us be real before God and man, let's stop trying to cover up who we really are, and cry out to God for help this morning.

He promised us a Helper, let's make our hearts ready to receive him this morning.

I want to take the next part of this morning, and set it apart for prayer, confession and intercession.

Let's go to God, as we are wicked sinners, and ask for the cleansing we all need, and ask Him to set our path straight, to light up the way we should go.

Let's call on God this morning expecting Him to work.
Amen?