

THE LIFE OF SOLOMON

SESSION #24: Proverbs 3:1-26

TEXT:

v. 1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart,

v. 2 for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

v. 3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

v. 4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

v. 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

v. 6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

v. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.

v. 8 This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

v. 9 Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops;

v.10 then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

v.11 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke,

v.12 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

v.13 Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding,

v.14 for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.

v.15 She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.

v.16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.

v.17 Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.

v.18 She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

v.19 By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place;

v.20 by his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

v.21 My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight;

v.22 they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck.

v.23 Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble;
v.24 when you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

v.25 Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked,
v.26 for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.

INTRODUCTION:

(Charity: A Collection of Poems by Gail T. Burton by Gail T. Burton)

A FRIEND

Tho' paths of life begin and end
 or climb an endless stair
 A friend will always understand,
 and share the load you bear.
 And tho' the complex toil of life
 exceeds the human thought,
 And logic fails to comprehend
 the problems life has brought
 A friend will stand forever firm
 and by his stand declare,
 "I may not understand at all,
 but friend, I truly care."

p. 40

(Cactus Tracks & Cowboy Philosophy by Baxter Black

THE CONSULTANT

*Bein' in between jobs ain't no picnic.
In fact, it's downright insulting.
So I printed some cards, put signs in the yard,
And bingo, became a consultant!*

*I solicited quality rest stops
In search of the right clientele.
Passed out ballpoint pens to all my friends,
Got an answer machine from Ma Bell.*

*At last an ol'time sought my advice.
He brought in his last balance sheet.
I saw with a smile his management style
Was outdated and obsolete.*

*So I set out to solve all his problems.
I spoke like a preacher possessed!
He sat there amazed, his eyes sorta glazed,
I could see he was truly impressed.*

*He said not a word as I rambled on.
For effect, I went over it twice.
When time had expired, he politely inquired,
"How much for this expert advice?"*

*I said, "Fifty bucks." I thought it was fair.
From his looks I thought I could fake it.
But he nodded his head and finally said,
"Well, son, I don't think I'll take it!"*

pp. 51-52

*I grew up a Southern Baptist. We were staunch believers in Creationism.
Then I went to veterinary school. There is an almost incestuous relationship
between scientists that demands "if you expect me to believe you when you
tell me my horse has navicular disease, then I expect you to believe me when
I tell you this rock is twenty-five million years old." Scientists believe in
evolution.*

*So I have spent a lifetime bearing the burden of trying to resolve
Genesis and evolution. This was my solution.*

COWBOY TIME

*If Genesis was right on track concerning Adam's birth
And seven days was all it took to build the planet Earth,
Then where does carbon dating fit? And all the dinosaurs?
Plus all that other ancient stuff that happened on our shores?*

*Now, I believe in scientists. They aren't just lunatics!
But I believe in Genesis, which leaves me in a fix,
The answer finally came to me while making up this rhyme.
God made the earth in seven days, but . . . that was Cowboy Time!*

*Have you ever called the shoer to set aside a day?
You scrutinize your calendar, say, "Tuesday'd be okay."
The big day comes, you take off work, alas, he's never seen.
You call him back and he inquires, "Which Tuesday did you mean?"*

*Did you ever place an order to get a saddle made?
An A-fork tree with padded seat and silver hand-inlaid,
As decades pass, all you can do is sit around and eat
So by the time it finally comes you've padded your own seat!*

*A friend came by on July 4th. He swore he couldn't stay
But then he said, "For just a bit." He left on Christmas Day!
"A couple days," "a little while," "not long," or "right away!"
Should not be taken lit'rally in cowboyville today.*

*But like I said, the precedent was set so long ago.
The angels had to learn themselves what all good cowboys know.
They worried if they didn't work to keep the schedule tight
That Earth would not be finished by the deadline Sunday night.*

*They'd never learned to think in terms of rollin' with the flow
But God does things on Cowboy Time . . . to watch the flowers grow.
He bade the angels to relax and said, "For Heaven's sakes,
I'll get it done in seven days . . . however long it takes!"*

(Holy Humor: Inspirational Wit and Cartoons by Cal and Rose Samra)

*A fine preacher named Tweedle
Said as he refused a degree,
It's tough enough being Tweedle,
Without being Tweedle, D.D.*

—James C. Hefley
Way Back in the 'Korn' Fields

p. 9

(Courage for the Chicken Hearted: Humorous & Inspiring Stories for
Confident Living by Becky Freeman, Susan Duke, Rebecca Barlow
Jordan, Gracie Malone & Fran Caffey Sandin)

Scrambled Eggs

*Sometimes we try too hard to make a point
and end up making no sense at all. These are
some of my favorite real-life mixed
metaphors, used by public officials, from the
book, Anguished English.*

The sacred cows have come home
to roost with a vengeance.

I wouldn't be caught dead in that movie
with a ten foot pole.

That snake in the grass is barking up the wrong tree.

These hemorrhoids are a real pain in the neck.

It's as easy as falling off a piece of cake.

From now on, I'm watching everything you do
with a fine-tuned comb.

p. 207

(God's Little Devotional Book for Men by Honor Books, Inc.)

**No matter what
a man's past may
have been, his
future is spotless.**

n n n

*. . . forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those
things which are before.*

Philippians 3:13

His name conjures up memories of booming home runs, tremendous speed, and enormous natural ability. Mickey Mantle was touched by greatness as a baseball giant. And yet, just a month after receiving a liver transplant, Mantle had the graciousness to say, "You talk about your role models. This is your role model. Don't be like me." Mantle squarely faced the fact that while he was a superstar on the field, his personal life was not one to hold out to others for emulation.

Nevertheless, in the ninth inning of his life, with two outs and a full count, Mantle hit a personal home run. With humility, a sense of humor, and an absence of self-pity, he pleaded eloquently with others to take heed of his mistakes. In return, his final days were ones marked by a great outpouring of love—not only in response to the great moments he had given on the baseball fields of the nation, but in response to his honest self-appraisal that was marked by personal pain and regret.

Because of his please, organ donations increased all across America virtually overnight . . . giving countless people what Mantle himself did not enjoy: extra innings.

pp. 162-3

We come now to our FINAL EPISODE in the LIFE OF KING SOLOMON.
We could title Proverbs 3:1-26 as:

"LESSONS LEARNED THE HARD WAY!" or

"WE GROW TOO SOON OLD AND TOO LATE SMART!" or

"THE THINGS I LEARNED!" or

"I DID IT MY WAY!"

Seriously, I would like to title these 26 verses:

"LIVING LIFE HIS WAY."

There are EIGHT SUMMARY STATEMENTS that will outline these 26 verses for us:

- I. OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD — (verses 1 & 2),
- II. COMPASSION AND CONSISTENCY IN YOUR CONDUCT — (verses 3 & 4),
- III. TRUST THE LORD AND LET HIM LEAD — (verses 5 & 6),
- IV. HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE THE LORD AND AVOID SIN — (verses 7 & 8),
- V. HONOR THE LORD IN YOUR GIVING — (verses 9 & 10),
- VI. SURRENDER YOURSELF TO THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE — (verses 11 & 12),
- VII. PURSUE WISDOM WITH A PASSION — (verses 13-20), and
- VIII. STAY FOCUSED ON SOUND JUDGMENT AND DISCERNMENT — (verses 21-26).

Wiersbe summarizes the passage this way:

Your heart (1-8). What you do with your heart determines what you do with your life (Prov. 4:23). Cultivate an obedient heart (v. 1) that receives Gods' Word (v. 3; 2 Cor. 3:1-3) and a trusting heart that obeys (vv. 5-6). Verse 5 does not suggest that you ignore your mind or common sense, but that you not lean only on them and reject God's way.

Your possessions (9-20). Put God first in the way you use His wealth (Matt. 6:33) and major on the things that money cannot buy (vv. 13-18). When God corrects you, accept it as an evidence of His love (Heb. 12:5-6).

Your conduct (21-26). Let every part of your body be controlled by God's wisdom (Rom. 12:1-2). Sleep is one of the tests of faith and true surrender to God (Ps. 4).

p. 414

Aitken says:

This passage is a general introduction to the instructions which follow in verses 5-12. In it the sage calls on his pupils to obey his words, and sets out the benefits which obedience brings.

"Teaching" translates that well-known Hebrew word *torah*. The Authorized Version renders it by the more familiar "law". Even so, we have to remember that "law" in the Old Testament is never simply a matter of rules and regulations. The word *torah* really means "instruction which guides and directs." So God's law or *the Torah* is the instruction he has given to guide and direct the lives of his people according to his will and purpose.

p. 35

Kidner titles this chapter:

The whole-hearted disciple

Whereas chapter 2 emphasized the moral stability which grows with wisdom, chapter 3 particularly promises serenity. This is seen as the fruit of a thoroughgoing godliness, three aspects of which mark the main divisions of the chapter.

p. 63

Kidner titles verses 1-10 as:

Glad Commitment

The kernel of this section (and of the chapter) is found in 5, 6; but the childlike trust to be seen there is rooted in sound teaching (1-4) and expressed by bold obedience (*e.g.* 9).

p. 63

Garrett says:

Devotion to God and devotion to Wisdom are inseparable. For the scholar, who may be tempted to seek knowledge without having first submitted to God, this means that the search will be futile and the wisdom gained will be distorted if one has not first oriented oneself to the Creator in faith, humility, and obedience.

p. 79

He says further:

This is the most lengthy and the most complex of the exhortation discourses. It includes a parental appeal (vv. 1-4), an exhortation to piety before Yahweh (vv. 5-12), a hymn to Wisdom (vv. 13-18), a didactic quatrain on wisdom in creation (vv. 19-20), a second parental appeal (vv. 21-26), . . .

p. 79

Joseph Parker titles this chapter:

THE PROGRAMME OF LIFE

"My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments"
(ver. 1).

There is a tenderness peculiar to the paternal voice; if its tones are apparently harsher than those of the maternal appeal, yet they tremble with as true a pathos. There are few more subduing sights than that of the father instructing the child in the ways of wisdom. He adopts no cold and formal method of communication. His ministry is full of the heart's fondest love. He speaks not as a mere hireling, but with an affection unconstrained, profound, immeasurable.

This is a father's voice. Mark the persuasiveness of the father's method; there is no attempt to drive the young soul into the way of wisdom. The method is one of affectionate remonstrance and allurements.
p. 27

Let us turn our attention now to the passage that I have selected for the TWENTY-FOURTH and FINAL EPISODE in the LIFE OF SOLOMON.

After all has been said and done, the life has been lived. What can we learn from his life?

I believe we can only make sense out of the contribution of his life by using some of his writings to remind us of how important it is to be living life God's way.

The title of the study:

LIVING LIFE HIS WAY.

Now let us come to consideration of:

I. OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD — (verses 1 & 2)

v. 1 My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart,

This verse begins with a NEGATIVE COMMAND and ends with a POSITIVE COMMAND.

The NEGATIVE COMMAND is:

"DO NOT FORGET MY TEACHING."

"BUT" forms the CONTRAST.

The POSITIVE COMMAND is:

"KEEP MY COMMANDS IN YOUR HEART."

Eugene H. Peterson paraphrases verse 1:

Good friend, don't forget all I've taught you;
take to heart my commands.

p. 14

Psalm 119:60, 61

I will hasten and not delay
to obey your commands.
Though the wicked bind me with ropes,
I will not forget your law.

Deuteronomy 11:18

Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says the words "MY SON" occur in:

... 1:8, 15; 2:1; 3:11, 21) ...
p. 911

The Bible Knowledge Commentary then summarizes verse 1 by saying:

[He] is urged—both negatively . . . and positively . . .—to heed what he was being taught.
p. 911

J. Vernon McGee says:

It is the loving devotion to the will of God. Remember what the psalmist wrote, "Thy word have I hid in mine *heart*, that I might not sin against thee" (Ps. 119:11, italics mine). Also we are told regarding a young priest named Ezra: "for Ezra had prepared his *heart* to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7:10, italics mine). There needs to be that preparation of the heart. Then, remember how the Lord Jesus talked to His own there in the Upper Room. He spoke so intimately, so personally, so wonderfully of things that had never been revealed before. He told those men, ". . . If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23). My friend, do you love Him? If you do, then He wants to talk to you. Let's not put it on the basis of duty.
p. 13

Patrick & Lowth say:

Let me then again entreat thee, whoever thou art that comest to learn of me (who loveth thee with a fatherly affection), not to be careless and negligent in the observance of these instructions; but remember them, and love them, and set thyself heartily to do whatsoever I command thee.
p. 10

Lawson says:

We must never forget this law, but make it familiar to our memories, that we may have a guide ready to direct us in every situation in which we may be placed; and when we treasure it up in our memory, we are to keep it in our heart. Richly does it deserve to form the object of our constant love, and the subject of our meditation all the day. Our obedience to it must proceed from the heart.
p. 44

(Shade of His Hand by Oswald Chambers)

The plague with me, apart from the grace of God, is that I know what is right, but I'm hanged if I'll do it!

What I want to know is, can anyone tell me of a power that will alter my "want to"?
p. 123

v. 2 for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

The word "FOR" introduces the REASON for the negative and positive commands of verse 1.

"THEY" [that is the commands] will do TWO THINGS:

1. "PROLONG YOUR LIFE MANY YEARS" and
2. "BRING YOUR PROSPERITY."

Obedience has its compensations.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

If these instructions are part of one's inner **life**, two benefits will be realized: longevity . . . a sign of God's blessing . . . and **prosperity**. The word for prosperity, *šalôm*, is often translated "peace." Though it includes peace and prosperity, it is broader in meaning. It also suggests wholeness, health, and harmony.
p. 911

Alden says:

Obedience to a father's advice will have two desirable benefits, says verse 2, long life and prosperity. Here again we find a common Hebrew word limited by its translation into English. The Hebrew word *shalom* in English is "peace," yet peace is just one dimension of *shalom*.¹ The word includes harmonious relationships within the family, payment of all debts, and the collection of all loans. It means rewards or wages, ultimately even a right relationship with God which comes through Jesus Christ, our peace. Prosperity is but one, though central meaning of *shalom*.

¹See Douglas J. Harris, *Shalom! The Biblical Concept of Peace*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970.
p. 36

Peterson paraphrases verse 2:

They'll help you live a long, long time,
a long life lived full and well.

p. 14

Psalm 71:17, 18

Since my youth, O God, you have taught me,
and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.
Even when I am old and gray,
do not forsake me, O God,
till I declare your power to the next generation,
your might to all who are to come.

Psalm 92:12-15

The righteous will flourish like a palm tree,
they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon;
planted in the house of the Lord,
they will flourish in the courts of our God.
They will still bear fruit in old age,
they will stay fresh and green,
proclaiming, "The Lord is upright;
he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."

(Cowboy Slang: Colorful Cowboy Sayings! by Edgar R. "Frosty" Potter)

- He might be plenty old but he ain't hung up his saddle yet.

p. 55

Let us turn our attention now to:

II. COMPASSION & CONSISTENCY IN YOUR CONDUCT—
(verses 3 & 4)

v. 3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.

"LET LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS"

[that is COMPASSION & CONSISTENCY]

"NEVER LEAVE YOU."

The writer then says there are TWO THINGS you need to do with these qualities:

1. "BIND THEM AROUND YOUR NECK" and
2. "WRITE THEM ON THE TABLET OF YOUR HEART."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Love translates *hesed*, loyalty to one's covenant or commitment. That quality along with dependability . . . should grace one's life like a **neck** chain . . . and should be written, figuratively, on one's **heart** (cf. 6:21; 7:3).
p. 911

Alden says:

Verse 3 has two terms which also deserve more discussion. "Love" or "loyalty" (Hebrew *hesed*) and "faithfulness" (Hebrew *emet*) overlap somewhat, but *hesed* has been the subject of at least two complete books.² It is also the word repeated in all 26 verses of Psalm 136. If we gave the word a long definition it would be "faithfulness to covenant promise," but if we choose one word for it it could be one of these: faithfulness, loyalty, love, lovingkindness, mercy, or fidelity. The other term *emet*, is like our word "amen," implying such attributes are reliability, accuracy, dependability, truth, and faithfulness, its most common translation.

²*Die Entwicklung des Begriffes Hasid im Alten Testament*, Lazar Gulkowitsch, Tartu, 1934, and *Das Wort Hesed*, Nelson Glueck, Topelmann: Berlin 1961. pp. 36-37

Garrett says:

Verse 3 actually shows how far removed Proverbs is from an ethic of external obedience and reward. The command to maintain love and faithfulness demonstrates that the internal character of the heart is in view here. The general nature of this command ought to be preserved as well—the verse does not speak specifically of fidelity to the covenant or in some other particular arena of life but looks for inner integrity that manifests itself in all interactions with God and people. pp. 79-80

Aitken says:

The *first* word (Hebrew *chesed*) expresses unswerving fidelity and constancy; the *second* expresses rock-solid integrity and trustworthiness. p. 37

Lange says:

See to it that on the tablet of thine heart nothing be found but the word of God and Jesus Christ. According to what is written on the tablet of thine heart, (2 Cor. iii. 3) will endless pain or eternal joy await thee, . . . p. 67

Peterson paraphrases verse 3 by saying:

Don't lose your grip on Love and Loyalty.
Tie them around your neck; carve their initials
on your heart.

p. 14

Bridges says:

While we rest upon them for salvation, let us copy them in our profession.
Are not his children new-created in his image? Let then our Father's image
be manifested in us, "as his dear children."

p. 22

"BIND THEM AROUND YOUR NECK, WRITE THEM ON THE TABLET
OF YOUR HEART."

What do YOU find written on the "TABLET OF YOUR HEART"?

Is this what the APOSTLE PAUL meant in:

Acts 24:16

"In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless
conscience both before God and before men.

Hendricks says:

Conscience is the red light on the dashboard telling you there is something
wrong with the engine.

(Source unknown)

(God's Little Devotional Book for Leaders by Honor Books, Inc.)

*When you get what you want in your struggle for self,
And the world makes you king for a day,
Just go to a mirror and look at yourself,
And see what that man has to say.
For it isn't your father or mother or wife,
Whose judgment upon you must pass;
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life,
Is the one staring back from the glass.
Some people may think you are a straight-shooting chum,
And call you a wonderful guy,
But the man in the glass says you're only a bum,
If you can't look him straight in the eye.
He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest,
For he's with you clear up to the end,
And you have passed your most dangerous, difficult test,
If the man in the glass is your friend.
You may fool the whole world down your pathway of years,
And get pats on the back as you pass,
But your final reward will be heartache and tears,
If you've cheated the man in the glass.¹³*

—Anonymous

¹³*Speaker's Sourcebook*, Glenn Van Ekeren (ed.), (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988), p. 187.
p. 195

v. 4 Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

The word "THEN" tells us the RESULT of "binding around our neck and writing on the tablet of our heart . . . love and faithfulness."

"THEN" TWO THINGS will happen:

1. "YOU WILL WIN FAVOR" and
2. "A GOOD NAME IN THE SIGHT OF GOD AND MAN."

Peterson paraphrases verse 4:

Earn a reputation for living well
in God's eyes and the eyes of the people.
p. 14

Garrett says:

The translation "a good name" (v. 4) is somewhat paraphrastic. The text actually reads, "Then you will win favor and good *understanding* in the sight of God and man." This means that others will recognize the competence and intelligence of the wise individual.
p. 80

III. TRUST THE LORD & LET HIM LEAD — (verses 5 & 6)

v. 5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

Here again in verse 5 we have a POSITIVE and NEGATIVE COMMAND.

The POSITIVE COMMAND:

"TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART."

The NEGATIVE COMMAND:

"LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

To **trust in the LORD** wholeheartedly means one should **not** rely (**lean**) **on** his **understanding**, for human insights are never enough.
p. 911

Peterson paraphrases verse 5:

Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart;
don't try to figure out everything on your own.
pp. 14-15

I think it would be good for us to note that the writer has used the word "HEART" THREE TIMES in verses 1-5.

1. verse 1 — "keep my commands in your heart,"
2. verse 3 — "write them on the tablet of your heart," and now in
3. verse 5 — "TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART."

Psalm 86:11

Teach me your way, O Lord,
and I will walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.

Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

Matthew 6:21

for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Garrett titles verses 5-12 as:

TRUE PIETY (3:5-12). **3:5-12** This section emphasizes piety toward the Lord rather than devotion to the abstractions of wisdom or righteousness. True piety manifests itself as intellectual humility (vv. 5-8), submission of material wealth to God's rule (vv. 9-10), and patient acceptance of divine discipline (vv. 11-12). Formally, each section is an admonition composed of commands or prohibitions followed by an explanation of the reasons for the commands (motive clause).

p. 80

Garrett says further:

The commitment of the heart to God means that all the beliefs and decisions of life are to be submitted to Yahweh. Even very practical decisions are in view here, and not just matters of academic pursuit. But the text is no more opposed to academic research per se than to any normal activity of life. Also, "understanding" implies not just intellectual capacity but one's own moral standards. One's private vision of right and wrong must be submitted to God.
p. 81

Bridges says:

This is the polar-star of a child of God—faith in his Father's providence, promises, and grace. The unmeaning expression of *trust* on the lips of the ignorant and ungodly is a fearful delusion. What ground of confidence can there be when there is everything to fear? Can the sinner's God—a just, avenging God—be an object of *trust*? What owe we to that precious atonement, which has opened up our way to a reconciled God (Rom. v. 11), and assured our confidence in him as our Friend and Counsellor!
p. 23

Alden says:

Hence in Hebrew order the verse reads:

Trust
in the LORD with all your heart
on your own understanding
Do not lean.

The meaning of the twofold command is obvious, warning against self-deception or the exaltation of one's own learning. It also might be seen as a warning against "trusting your heart," a common abuse among Christians. Trusting the Lord means becoming well acquainted with him through his Word, spending time in his presence in prayer, and seeking the counsel of others in the faith.
p. 37

Lawson says:

To trust in God, is to depend on him for bestowing on us every needful blessing, and preserving us from all evil.
p. 47

He says further:

This dependence on God is to be exercised with all our hearts, our judgments being persuaded that God is the only and the all-sufficient object of confidence, and our souls resting with full satisfaction in his power and faithfulness. This holy exercise is fully and clearly exemplified to us in many of the psalms of David.

Whilst we trust in the Lord, our hearts must cleave to him, and renounce every sublunary dependance. To divide our confidence between God and the creature, is to lean with one hand upon a rock, and with the other hand upon a broken reed. David charges his soul to wait upon God only, for his expectation was from him, and from none else.
p. 47

Patrick & Lowth say:

And assure thyself there is no rule of prudence like to this, to confide in God entirely; and to depend wholly on his providence for good success in well-doing: not imagining that, by thy own wit and policy, thou canst contrive such events as thou desirest, and bring about what thou designest.
p. 10

Aitken says:

This is one of those wonderfully rich texts of the Bible which seem to say all that needs to be said. In plain and simple language the sage lays his finger on what is of the essence of religious faith: trusting in God.
p. 37

Aitken says further:

The sage therefore takes it for granted that his pupils belong within the community of faith, and he places the whole emphasis of his teaching on the need for *whole-hearted* and *absolute* dependence upon God, uncompromised by reliance on one's own resources.

p. 38

"TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING."

The NEGATIVE COMMAND is:

"LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING."

Isaiah 55:8, 9

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

God's ways are incomprehensible . . . yet He is trustworthy. All the wisdom a person may acquire can never replace the need for full trust in God's superior ways.

p. 911

Romans 11:33, 34

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!
For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

Parker says:

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." There is a solemn responsibility attaching to the fact that we may have God as a directing Father. The matter is not one of mere speculation, however hopeful, but of positive relation. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eyes." "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not: I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight."

p. 30

Kidner says:

Trust . . . lean: these two words may be even closer together in thought than appears at first sight. G. R. Driver argues¹ that the Heb. for *trust* had originally the idea of lying helplessly face downwards—an idea preserved in Jeremiah 12:5b (see RSV) and Psalm 22:9b (Heb., 10). *Lean* is not 'incline', but 'support yourself', *rely* (RSV).

¹'Difficult Words in the Hebrew Profits', in *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy*, edited by H. H. Rowley (1950), p. 59.

p. 63

Ironside says:

Solemn the admonition, and precious the assurance here for all who would be guided in the way of peace. "He that trusteth in His own heart is a fool" (chap. 28:26), but happy is the man whose trust is in the Lord. Confidence in self is like leaning on a broken reed. God has given His Word to guide in every detail of life that thus our sanctification might be by the Truth, and it is therefore inexcusable to lean upon our own poor finite intelligence.

p. 37

Aitken says:

The self-reliant attitude is celebrated in William Ernest Henley's *Invictus*:

Out of the night that covers me,
 Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
 I thank whatever gods may be
 For my unconquerable soul.
 In the fell clutch of circumstance,
 I have not winced nor cried aloud:
 Under the bludgeonings of chance
 My head is bloody, but unbowed.
 It matters not how strait the gate,
 How charged with punishments the scroll,
 I am the master of my fate:
 I am the captain of my soul.

p. 38

Delitzsch says:

From God alone comes true prosperity, true help. He knows the right way to the right ends. He knows what benefits us. He is able to free us from that which does us harm: therefore it is our duty and our safety to place our confidence wholly in Him, and to trust not to our own judgment.

p. 87

Baxter says:

How reasonable it seems to "lean on our own understanding"! Is not man's intellect his distinguishing superiority? Was it not implanted by God, to be a lamp of guidance? Is there not then something strange-sounding in this proverbial counsel? Maybe at a glance there is; but when we reflect on it as set off against "Trust in Jehovah . . ." it opens up with sage spiritual meaning. That intellectual faculty which crowns man as being "in the image of God" was never meant to make men *independent* of God, but to make possible co-operative *fellowship* with God. Now that Adam's posterity is a fallen race, man's highest faculty can be his deepest snare, the more so as there is an active deceiver "going to and fro in the earth". And so we might go on, as this little proverb goes on opening up big reflections to us.

p. 138

Phillips says:

Trust is the key word. Our God is utterly dependable. His character makes it impossible for Him to lie. His wisdom is so great He can never make a mistake. Our God can be trusted. He has high and holy purposes and no ulterior motives. His love is so limitless He can never be unkind. Yet perfect love is always balanced by absolute holiness. As Preston Moore, a preacher friend of mine, says, "He will never let us go, never let us down, and never let us off."

p. 78

Santa paraphrasing Bridges' work says:

This is the polar star of a child of God—faith in his Father's care, promises, and grace.

p. 28

He says further:

This is why there's such need for the warning—*do not lean on your own understanding*. At one time, man's understanding was reliable and gave forth a clear, unclouded light. That was man's high and rightful power, when he was created "in the image of God." But now, degraded as it is by the fall, and darkened by the corruption of the heart, man's own reason is certain to be a false guide.

p. 29

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

This is the center and marrow of true wisdom (ch. 22:19; 28:25). The positive duty has its corresponding negation in the admonition against self-confidence.

p. 461

I told God that I had done all that I could and that now the result was in His hands; that if this country was to be saved, it was because He so willed it! The burden rolled off my shoulders. My intense anxiety was relieved and in its place came a great trustfulness!

Abraham Lincoln

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

If you want favor with both God and man, and a reputation for good judgment and common sense, then trust the Lord completely; don't even trust yourself. In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.

Proverbs 3:5-6

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

Jim Reapsome writes: "The plane was packed. Last-minutes travelers laden with bags trundled down the aisle. The man stopped and checked his boarding pass for his and his wife's assigned seats: 22E and F. Sure enough, they were occupied and the people said, yes, they were in the right seats.

"No fight ensued. The fellow was quite amiable. 'Just glad to be on the plane,' he said to no one in particular. To his wife he said, 'Don't worry. They'll find us some seats.' And they did—just a couple of rows further back.

"Not long afterward, the man discovered why seats 22E and F had been taken. No, it wasn't a computer foul-up. He and his wife had dashed down the wrong jetway. Gates B12 and 13 opened side by side in Terminal 4 of the Phoenix Skyharbor airport. One led to Chicago, the other to Dallas. They thought they were headed for Dallas, but now climbing to 31,000 feet over the Sonora Desert they discovered that Chicago was their destination.

"Were they sincere? Yes. Were they dedicated? Yes. Were they zealous? Yes. Did they have the right motives? Yes. Were they on the right plane? No. Unfortunately, in our zeal we sometimes take wrong planes. No amount of zeal and dedication will make up for a lack of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding of Scripture."

[Pulse, Feb 3, 1995. Page 8.]

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(Charity: A Collection of Poems by Gail T. Burton by Gail T. Burton)

MATURITY

When things go wrong,
 tho' I'm so right,
 my irritation's justified.
 And when some folk
 tread on my toes
 then why should I stay dignified?

But Jesus says,
 don't fret this stuff,
 you can ignore the petty things.
 Just hold your tongue,
 and stay real cool,
 and watch the grace that heaven brings.

p. 16

(Never Walk Away: Lessons on Integrity from a Father Who Lived It by
 Crawford W. Loritts, Jr.)

To be broken has to do with understanding that I have come to the end of myself; that in my human nature, I don't have the resources to please God. On the surface that sounds very negative, but it's actually a positive thing. Brokenness expresses my need for, and total reliance upon, someone greater than myself. When I'm broken, I realize that I must completely trust in God's sufficiency.

pp. 103-104

(The Seeking Heart: Volume 4: The Library of Spiritual Classics by Fenelon)

What I want for you is the calmness of heart that comes from sitting before God with a heart full of love for Him. Don't become preoccupied with outward matters. Take care of your affairs in due season with a calm, quiet attention. You will accomplish more by quietly working in the presence of God than by the restless activity that comes from your old nature.
p. 90

Learn to trust God and open yourself completely to Him. Completely yield to God as He draws you to Himself.

Do not be afraid to lose sight of yourself and see Him alone. How happy you would be if you were to completely plunge into that ocean of Love. Accept, with a humble heart, all the grace that God pours out of you. This will prepare you, as Teresa of Avila says, for new and fresh gifts from God.
p. 99

(In the Grip of Grace: You Can't Fall Beyond His Love by Max Lucado)

Everything was gone. No youth. No vigor. No strength. The get-up-and-go had got up and gone. All old Abe and Sarah had was a social-security check and a promise from heaven. But Abraham decided to trust the promise rather than focus on the problems. As a result the Medicare couple were the first to bring a crib into the nursing home.
p. 88

Proverbs 28:26

He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.

Job 13:15

Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him;

Exodus 14:13, 14

Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still."

v. 6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Notice that it is:

"all your heart" in verse 5 and

"ALL YOUR WAYS" in verse 6.

Peterson paraphrases verse 6:

Listen for GOD's voice in everything you do,
 everywhere you go;
 he's the one who will keep you on track.
 p. 15

Santa, paraphrasing Bridges, says:

Next, let our confidence be uniform—in all your ways acknowledge Him. Take one step at a time, every step under divine order and direction. Always plan for yourself in simple dependence on God. It is nothing less than undue self-exaltation to think that we can carry on even the ordinary matters of the day without His counsel. He loves to be consulted. Therefore take all your difficulties to Him to be resolved. Be in the habit of going to Him *in the first place*—before self-will, self-pleasing, self-wisdom, human friends, convenience, self-interest. Before any of these have been consulted, go to God. Consider no circumstances so clear you do not need His direction. *In all your ways*, small as well as great; in all your concerns, personal or relative, temporal or eternal, let Him be supreme.
 p. 30

Phillips says:

When we enthrone God's law in our hearts, our priorities are dictated and *our paths are directed*: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6).

p. 79

Phillips says further:

The Lord is eminently worthy of our trust. When we enthrone God's law in our hearts, our paths are directed at moments of crisis and in ordinary decisions.

p. 81

Alden says:

A modern application of this advice might be to consult a road map constantly while driving through a foreign city. The more you study the map the less likely you are to lose your way. Thus the more you study the Bible, the less chance you will find yourself going astray.

Included in the expression "right way" is the idea of the straight, level, or easy way. Doing things God's way is not difficult or burdensome because it is really the easiest, least complicated, and most direct path to happiness.

p. 38

Lawson says:

When we interest God in our affairs by prayer, we may cast away every care, and walk on cheerfully, believing that he will guide every step of our journey; for his eyes are not only upon the way of his people, but upon every step of it.

p. 49

Patrick & Lowth say:

No; in all thy undertakings, both private and public, be sensible of his overruling power; observe his laws; and implore his favour and blessing: and he shall guide thee in thy proceedings; and bring them to a happy issue as he in his wisdom sees best for thee.

p. 10

Matthew Henry says:

We must ask success of him, as those who know *the race is not to the swift*. For our encouragement to do this, it is promised, "*He shall direct thy paths*, so that thy way shall be safe and good and the issue happy at last."

p. 738

The Bible Knowledge Commentary, commenting on "straight paths" says:

This means more than guidance; it means God removes the obstacles, making a smooth path or way of life, or perhaps better, bringing one to the appointed goal.

p. 911

Santa, paraphrasing Bridges, says:

He will make your paths straight. We don't want any new revelations or visible tokens. Study the Word with prayer. Note the divine Spirit shedding light upon it. Compare it with the observation of God's provisions of the day. Don't judge by personal prejudice (a most undependable interpreter), but ponder with sober, practical, reverent faith. Let your will be kept in a quiet, subdued, cheerful readiness, to move, stay, retreat, turn to the right hand or to the left, at the Lord's command, always remembering that, whatever is least our own doing is best, and that a pliable spirit always gets the needful, guidance.

p. 31

Psalm 139:3, 10 (New Living)

You chart the path ahead of me
 and tell me where to stop and rest.
 Every moment you know where I am.

even there your hand will guide me,
 and your strength will support me.

Proverbs 4:18

The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever
 brighter till the full light of day.

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

God has a thousand ways
 Where I can see not one;
 When all my means have reached
 their end
 Then His have just begun.

—Esther Guyot

p. 79

(Too Busy Not to Pray: Slowing Down to Be with God by Bill Hybels)

Let me add a few cautions:

- ☐ If a leading requires you to make a major, life-changing decision in a very short period of time, question it.
- ☐ If a leading requires you to go deeply in debt or place someone else in a position of awkwardness, compromise or danger, question it.
- ☐ If a leading requires you to shatter family relationships or important friendships, question it.
- ☐ If a leading creates unrest in the spirit of mature Christian friends or counselors as you share it with them, question it.

p. 138

IV. HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE THE LORD & AVOID SIN — (verses 7 & 8)

v. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.

Once again in verse 7 we have a NEGATIVE & POSITIVE COMMAND.

The NEGATIVE command:

"DO NOT BE WISE IN YOUR OWN EYES."

The POSITIVE command:

"FEAR THE LORD AND SHUN EVIL."

I think it is good for us to remember that this verse DOES NOT SAY:

SHUN THE LORD AND FEAR EVIL.

Peterson paraphrases verse 7:

Don't assume that you know it all.
Run to GOD! Run from evil!

p. 15

Ironside says:

To be wise in our own eyes is the very opposite to learning not unto our own understanding. Where the Lord is truly feared, evil will be hated and departed from. "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity" (2 Tim. 2:19). So shall strength and freshness characterize the soul. To go on with God while walking in that which His word condemns is impossible. The path of blessing is the path of obedience. If He has spoken, the subject soul will not stay to question but obey implicitly.
pp. 37-38

(Baffled to Fight Better: Job and the Problem of Suffering by Oswald Chambers)

St. Augustine prayed, "O Lord, deliver me from this list of always vindicating myself."
p. 41

TO THINK TOO MUCH OF YOURSELF

It's not good for your health to think of yourself too much. You might die laughing.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(God's Little Devotional Book for Leaders by Honor Books, Inc.)

**The recipe for
perpetual ignorance
is: be satisfied with
your opinions and
content with your knowledge.**

n n n

*Do you see a man wise in his own eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.*
Proverbs 26:12 NASB

Napoleon was a genius in sparking patriotism in the common man. He often told this story: Once, while visiting a province he came upon an old soldier in full uniform but with one sleeve hanging empty. He proudly wore the coveted Legion of Honor. Napoleon asked, "Where did you lose your arm?" The soldier answered, "At Austerlitz, sire."

Napoleon asked, "And for that you received the Legion of Honor?" The man said, "Yes, sire. It is but a small token to pay for the decoration." Napoleon continued, "You must be the kind of man who regrets he did not lose both arms for his country."

The one-armed man asked, "What then would have been my reward?" Napoleon answered, "I would have awarded you a *double* Legion of Honor." And with that, the proud old fighter drew his sword and immediately cut off his other arm.

Napoleon told the story for years before someone asked him, "How?"

A similar story is told of the man who collected thousands of dollars for the grieving mother of the "unknown soldier."

It's not wrong to question what you *think* you know. Sometimes it's wrong *not* to.

pp. 210-11

Proverbs 26:12

Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

If we are not "leaning unto our own understanding" or we are not "WISE IN [our] OWN EYES" then we are humbling ourselves before the Lord. The rest of the verse tells us to:

"SHUN EVIL" [that is, AVOID SIN.]

James 4:6, 10

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. "

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

1 Peter 5:5, 6

You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,

Isaiah 57:15

For this is what the high and lofty One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.

v. 8 This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

As you humble yourself before the Lord and avoid sin, the RESULT will be TWO-FOLD:

1. "HEALTH TO YOUR BODY" and
2. "NOURISHMENT TO YOUR BONES."

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

Your body will glow with health,
 your very bones will vibrate with life!
 p. 15

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

. . . spiritual and physical health are related.
 p. 912

Psalm 32:3, 4

When I kept silent,
 my bones wasted away
 through my groaning all day long.
 For day and night
 your hand was heavy upon me;
 my strength was sapped
 as in the heat of summer.

(31 Days of Prayer: Moving God's Mighty Hand by Warren & Ruth Myers)

STRENGTH AND HEALTH THROUGH GOD AND HIS WORD. George Mueller lived ninety-two years, with amazing strength and health to the end. Arthur T. Pierson reports that Mueller attributed his health and long life to three causes:

1. His striving to always keep his conscience clear before God and man (Acts 24:16)
2. His love for the Scriptures, and the way they constantly restored his whole being, even his body (Prov. 3:2, 8; 4:22)
3. His happiness in God and His work, which relieved him of all anxiety and needless wear and tear in his labors (Ps. 55:22)

p. 69

V. HONOR THE LORD IN YOUR GIVING — (verses 9 & 10)

v. 9 Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops;

Back in verse 5 we were told:

"Trust in the Lord."

Now in verse 9:

"HONOR THE LORD."

"HONOR THE LORD:"

1. "WITH YOUR WEALTH" and
2. "WITH THE FIRSTFRUITS OF ALL YOUR CROPS."

Aitken says:

The sage now brings out what whole-hearted trust in God means in two contrasting situations: in prosperity (vv. 9-10) and in adversity (vv. 11-12). The good times and the bad are part and parcel of human experience. Most folks get their fair share; some seem to be more fortunate, or unfortunate. But both in their different ways are the real tests of trust in God.. For in the one it can seem to be quite unnecessary, while in the other it can seem to be quite impossible.

p. 41

Kidner says:

We tend to seize on verse 10, either critically or hopefully. But it must not steal the thunder of verse 9. To 'know' God in our financial 'ways' is to see that these *honour* Him; the honour will be compounded largely of homage (in giving Him the first and not a later share, 9; *cf.* 1 Cor. 16:2; Mk. 12:44), of gratitude (see Dt. 26:9-11) and of trust (*cf.* verse 5), for such giving in the face of material pressures is a simple test of faith.

p. 64

Lawson says:

Our substance is his also, and we must honour him with it by a liberality in his service, proportioned to the extent of his bounty. By the practice of this duty, we shew our faith in his providence and promises, our love to God, our gratitude for his goodness, and our preference of his service to that of mammon.

p. 52

McGee says:

Don't tell me you are totally committed to the Lord until your pocketbook is committed too. The Lord gave you everything. Some folk may say, "I have worked hard. I earned this." But who gave you the health to work? Who gave you the work to do? Who made it possible for you to make money? My friend, God did all that for you. Acknowledge Him. That is the evidence of total commitment.

Someone may complain that this sounds very mercenary. No, this is real spirituality. May I say that genuine spirituality is not the length of the prayer that you pray; it is the amount on the check that you write. That is the way one can determine spirituality.

pp. 14-15

Luke 21:1-4 (New Living)

While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people putting their gifts into the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two pennies. "I assure you," he said, "this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has."

Peterson paraphrases verse 9 by saying:

Honor GOD with everything you own;
give him the first and the best.
p. 15

In the study of the LIFE OF KING SOLOMON I have only seen him giving when it involves a DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE like the:

QUEEN of Sheba or

HIRAM the King of Tyre.

1 Chronicles 22:3, 4 & 14

He provided a large amount of iron to make nails for the doors of the gateways and for the fittings, and more bronze than could be weighed. He also provided more cedar logs than could be counted, for the Sidonians and Tyrians had brought large numbers of them to David.

"I have taken great pains to provide for the temple of the Lord a hundred thousand talents a of gold, a million talents of silver, quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone. And you may add to them.

1 Chronicles 29:2-5

With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God—gold for the gold work, silver for the silver, bronze for the bronze, iron for the iron and wood for the wood, as well as onyx for the settings, turquoise, stones of various colors, and all kinds of fine stone and marble—all of these in large quantities. Besides, in my devotion to the temple of my God I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple of my God, over and above everything I have provided for this holy temple: three thousand talents of gold (gold of Ophir) and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for the overlaying of the walls of the buildings, for the gold work and the silver work, and for all the work to be done by the craftsmen. Now, who is willing to consecrate himself today to the Lord?"

2 Corinthians 9:6, 7

Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.

Proverbs 11:24, 25

One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

According to a Gallup survey, almost half the total charitable contributions in the United States come from households with incomes of less than \$30,000.

—Reported in *The Other Side*

(From Parson's Bible Illustrator 1.0)

(No More Excuses: Be the Man God Made You to Be by Tony Evans)

The story is told of a dying man who wanted to take his money with him. He had \$30,000, so he called his pastor, his doctor, and his lawyer to his deathbed and said, "I want to take my \$30,000 with me when I go. So I'm going to give each one of you an envelope with \$10,000 in it. At my funeral, I want each of you to come and put your envelope in my coffin."

The man died, and each of the three did his job. Later they met to talk about it. The preacher said, "I'm sure that Brother Smith would have wanted to help out with the new church organ, so I took out \$2,000 and put \$8,000 in the coffin."

The doctor said, "Well, he complimented me on how well I treated him during his declining years, and I know he would have wanted to help out with my new clinic. So I took \$5,000 out and deposited \$5,000 in the coffin."

The lawyer said, "I did better than both of you. I took out the \$8,000 you left, preacher, and I took out the \$5,000 you left, doctor. I also kept my \$10,000, but I left behind a check for \$30,000."

p. 215

v.10 then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Once again we have the COMMAND followed with the COMPENSATIONS. It reminds us of what we were talking about in verse 2:

OBEDIENCE HAS ITS COMPENSATIONS.

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

Your barns will burst,
your wine vats will brim over.
p. 15

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

. . . it is true that godliness results in gain, that piety brings prosperity . . .
p. 912

Luke 12:19, 20 (KJV)

And I will say to my soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

Phillips observes:

Tithing is not only required by God; it is also *rewarded by God*. "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst with new wine" (Proverbs 3:10).
pp. 84-85

VI. SURRENDER YOURSELF TO THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE —
(verses 11 & 12)

v.11 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke,

Once again we have the words "MY SON" like we did back in verse 1. Then we have TWO NEGATIVE COMMANDS in this verse:

1. "DO NOT DESPISE THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE" and
2. "DO NOT RESENT HIS REBUKE."

Peterson paraphrases verse 11:

But don't, dear friend, resent GOD's discipline;
 don't sulk under his loving correction.
 p. 15

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

APPRECIATE THE LORD AND DO NOT MISUNDERSTAND HIS
 DISCIPLINE (3:11-12).

The God who can be trusted to smooth out obstacles and bring one to his appointed goal (vv. 5-6) and to supply one's material needs (vv. 9-10) demonstrates His love by **discipline**. . . . [In verse 11 the word "DESPISE" could be translated] ("reject or take lightly"). . . . [The word "RESENT" could be translated] ("loathe or abhor") . . .
 p. 912

Lawson says:

Afflictions may be despised in another sense, which seems to agree better with the argument used in the following verse. Men despise them, when they do not value them as necessary and useful. We need afflictions, and yet we are ready to think that they might be very well spared, and the work designed by them effected by gentler means. This notion is to be rejected by us with abhorrence, because it implies a reflection upon the wisdom and love of our heavenly Father, who does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; though now for a season, if need be, he afflicts them, because the beneficial consequences are far more than sufficient to counterbalance the pain of it.

p. 54

Kidner says:

The childlike trust of 1-10 is to coexist with the mature wisdom now held up before us.

p. 64

Aitken says:

Suffering is God's means of disciplining us. It is a necessary part of our training in God's school of discipleship, part of our spiritual education towards becoming mature and fruit-bearing disciples. The great heroes of the faith celebrated in Hebrews 11 were all called upon to suffer; and many since have found that it was the path which led them to a more vibrant faith and holier life.

p. 43

Santa, paraphrasing Bridges, says:

Prosperity and adversity are wisely and proportionately mixed in our present condition. Each is equally fruitful in opportunity for honoring the Lord; in prosperity—by the full consecration of *our material goods*; in our poverty and trouble—by a humble and cheerful yielding to His will and direction.

p. 33

Patrick & Lowth say:

And suppose it be his pleasure that any affliction should befall thee, my son (ver. 1), let not that dissatisfy thee; nor make thee either doubt of his gracious providence over thee, or out of impatience take any unlawful course to remove it from thee.

p. 11

Alden says:

In Hebrew the verbs are negative, "do not resist" and "do not resent the LORD's correction and warning." The pianist, artist, or athlete who accepts and acts in response to criticism is the one who excels; it is never easy to be corrected, but to be mature enough to take it and do something about it is a mark of wisdom.

p. 39

Delitzsch says:

The contrast here follows. As God should not be forgotten in days of prosperity, so one should not suffer himself to be estranged from Him by days of adversity.

p. 90

Joseph Parker says:

There is hardly a heart that will not understand the meaning of "chastening," but many hearts fail to connect the word "chastening" with the word "Lord," and some who acknowledge the connection misinterpret the purpose of the union. The course of human life is a course of "chastening." Among the child's earliest experiences are those of pain, restraint, rebuke, correction. Throughout the educational period the same experiences prevail.
p. 32

Bridges says:

Prosperity and adversity in their wise mixture and proportion, form our present condition. Each is equally fruitful in opportunity of *honouring the Lord*, in prosperity—by the full consecration of *our substance* (Verses 9, 10); in adversity—by a humble and cheerful submission to his dispensation.
p. 27

(1001 Humorous Illustrations for Public Speaking by Michael Hodgin)

Silent Suffering

It is easier to suffer in silence if everyone knows about it.
p. 291

(The Seeking Heart: Volume 4: The Library of Spiritual Classics by Fenelon)

Suffering is necessary for all of us. You will be purified by dying to your own desires and will. Let yourself die! You have excellent opportunities for this to happen—don't waste them!
p. 18

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On!: A Cowboy's Guide to Life by Texas Bix Bender)

You can just about
always stand more 'n
you think you can.

p. 51

Makin' it in life is kinda
like bustin' broncs:
you're gonna get
thrown a lot.
The simple secret is to keep gettin'
back on.

p. 33

(Don't Whiz on a 'Lectric Fence: Grandpa's Country Wisdom by Roy English)

Life is not about how fast you run, or how high you climb, but how well you bounce.

p. 11

(God's Little Devotional Book for Leaders by Honor Books, Inc.)

**He has achieved
success who has lived
well, laughed often,
and loved much.**

n n n

Go then, eat your bread in happiness, and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already approved your works.

Ecclesiastes 9:7 NASB

Don was hungry for success. At the age of thirty, he owned his own business, drove a sports car, had a house at the beach, a condo close to the office, and was part owner of a boat. He was tall and good-looking, every bit the eligible bachelor, and he seemed determined to date as many women as possible.

At the age of thirty-one, Don was stricken with cancer. Everything in his life abruptly changed. To his credit, he was able to make a major leap in his life from living for himself and according to his own will, to expressing a need for God and a desire to live according to God's will.

Don reevaluated his priorities and four years later said: "I've been in several hospitals and had a number of different treatments. I've been in remission twice, and twice the disease has returned. I've seen people die, and I've seen people live. And above all, I've learned what's important and what's not."

During the course of his illness, Don married one of the women he had been dating and a year later, his wife gave birth to a daughter. Don says of his life today, "I wouldn't trade what I've been through. Having things is not living. Loving and knowing God — that's living. The fact is, whether I'm here on earth or in Heaven, loving and knowing God is all that matters." pp. 94-95

(Shade of His Hand by Oswald Chambers)

" . . . Life is not as idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
And batter'd by the shocks of doom
To shape and use."

—Tennyson

p. 128

(A 5th Portion of Chicken Soup for the Soul: 101 More Stories to Open the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit by Jack Canfield & Mark Victor Hansen)

*A man of character finds a special
attractiveness in difficulty, since it is
only by coming to grips with difficulty
that he can realize his potentialities.*

Charles de Gaulle

p. 291

GOD LEADS US ALONG

In shady, green pastures, so rich and so sweet,
 God leads His dear children along;
 Where the water's cool flow bathes the
 weary one's feet,
 God leads his dear children along.

REFRAIN: Some through the waters,
 some through the flood,
 Some through the fire, but all through the blood;
 Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,
 In the night season and all the day long.

Sometimes on the mount where the sun shines so bright,
 God leads His dear children along;
 Sometimes in the valley, in darkest of night,
 God leads His dear children along.

Though sorrow befall us and Satan oppose,
 God leads His dear children along;
 Through grace we can conquer, defeat all our foes,
 God leads His dear children along.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v.12 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.

The REASON we are not "to despise the Lord's discipline and . . . not resent his rebuke" is because:

"THE LORD DISCIPLINES THOSE HE LOVES, AS A FATHER THE SON HE DELIGHTS IN."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Physical punishment and verbal correction are hard to accept but they demonstrate God's loving concern.

p. 912

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

It's the child he loves that GOD corrects;
a father's delight is behind all this.

p. 15

Any time the going seems easier, better check and see if you're not going downhill.

—Megiddo Message

(possible source InfoSearch)

Hebrews 12:5-11

and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Psalm 119:67-71

Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I obey your word.
You are good, and what you do is good;
teach me your decrees.
Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies,
I keep your precepts with all my heart.
Their hearts are callous and unfeeling,
but I delight in your law.
It was good for me to be afflicted
so that I might learn your decrees.

Job 5:17, 18

"Blessed is the man whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. For he wounds, but he also binds up; he injures, but his hands also heal.

Proverbs 5:11-14

At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."

Matthew Henry says:

A divine correction is *the chastening of the Lord*. It is from God, and therefore we must not be weary of it, for he knows our frame, both what we need and what we can bear. A fatherly correction comes not from his vindictive justice as a Judge, but his wise affection as a Father. The father corrections *the son whom he loves*, nay, and because he loves him and desires he may be wise and good.
p. 738

(Prayer, Praise & Promises: A Daily Walk Through the Psalms by Warren W. Wiersbe)

Everyone has days of trouble. When circumstances entrap you and trouble closes around you, pray to the Lord. He knows how to turn your trouble into triumph. Although He may not answer your prayers the way you expect, He will do what is best for you and for His glory.
(Day 247)

(Charity: A Collection of Poems by Gail T. Burton by Gail T. Burton)

THE JOY OF HIS EMBRACE

When the problems of my earthly life
are more than I can stand,
And I learn what is required of me
is a heavy harsh demand.

I find my Lord is ever near
with comfort for the day,
And problems that have plagued my life
so quickly fade away.

Tho' He comforts me along my path
this world will not relent,
Each day I face anew the threat
of problems life has sent.

But when the silver cord of life
has finally reached the end,
The glory of His perfect love
Will make me comprehend.

Every problem, care, and threat
will be conquered by His grace.
And I'll spend a grant eternity
in the joy of His embrace.

p. 23

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On!: A Cowboy's Guide to Life by Texas Bix
Bender)

Remember,
even a kick in the
caboose is a
step forward.

p. 55

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On!: A Cowboy's Guide to Life by Texas Bix Bender)

If you want to forget all
your troubles, take a
little walk in a brand-
new pair of high-heeled
ridin' boots.

p. 122

BE STILL, MY SOUL

Be still, my soul! the Lord is on thy side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to thy God to order and provide
In every change He faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul! thy best, thy heavenly Friend
Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul! thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as He has the past.
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul! the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.

Be still, my soul! the hour is hastening on
When we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still, my soul! when change and tears are past,
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

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(From InfoSearch 3.51)

VII. PURSUE WISDOM WITH A PASSION — (verses 13-20)

The Bible Knowledge Commentary titles this section:

The high value of wisdom (3:13-20)
p. 912

v.13 Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding,

"BLESSED IS THE MAN":

1. "WHO FINDS WISDOM" and
2. "WHO GAINS UNDERSTANDING."

Peterson paraphrases verse 13:

You're blessed when you meet Lady Wisdom,
when you make friends with Madame Insight.
p. 15

Garrett says:

The hymn is formally structured as an inclusio with "blessed" marking both its beginning and ending. It includes an introductory beatitude (v. 13) and assertions of the high value of Wisdom (vv. 14-15), and it promises other benefits (vv. 16-18). In effect, vv. 14-18 are arguments to prove the validity of v. 13.
p. 82

Delitzsch says:

Such submission to God, the All-wise, the All-directing, who loves us with fatherly affection, is wisdom, and such wisdom is above all treasures.
p. 91

(God's Little Devotional Book for Leaders by Honor Books, Inc.)

*There's only one method of meetin' life's test;
Jes' keep on a-strivin' an' hope for the best;
Don't give up the ship an' quit in dismay;
'Cause hammers are thrown when you'd like a bouquet.
This world would be tiresome we'd all get the blues,
If all the folks in it jest held the same views;
So finish your work, show the best of your skill,
Some folks won't like it, but other folks will.*
(Author Unknown)

p. 123

(Don't Squat With Yer Spurs On!: A Cowboy's Guide to Life by Texas Bix Bender)

Always drink upstream
from the herd.

p. 30

(1001 Humorous Illustrations for Public Speaking by Michael Hodgin)

Degrees of Happiness

An ancient Chinese proverb says, "If you wish to be happy for one hour, get intoxicated. If you wish to be happy for three days, get married. If you wish to be happy for eight days, kill your pig and eat it. If you wish to be happy forever, learn to fish."
p. 372

(God's Little Devotional Book by Honor Books, Inc.)

Even a woodpecker
owes his success
to the fact that
he uses his head.

p. 244

It was Mark Twain who said:

Put all your eggs in one basket and watch that basket.
(possible source InfoSearch)

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the
courage to change the things I can; And the wisdom to know the difference.

Reinhold Niebur

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

v.14 for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.

Here is the REASON for the pronouncement of blessed upon "the man who finds wisdom . . . and understanding (verse 13):

"FOR SHE IS MORE PROFITABLE THAN SILVER AND YIELDS
BETTER RETURNS THAN GOLD."

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

She's worth far more than money in the bank;
her friendship is better than a big salary.
p. 15

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

More profitable equals bringing a higher yield. These words are the language of a trader or investor.
p. 912 (paraphrased)

v.15 She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her.

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

Her value exceeds all the trappings of wealth;
 nothing you could wish for holds a candle to her.
 p. 15

Lange says:

Vers. 13-18. EGARD: Silver, gold and pearls, serve and adorn the body only, wisdom, however, serves and adorns mainly the soul. As much as the soul is nobler than the body, so much is wisdom also nobler than all treasures.
 p. 68

1 Corinthians 1:30

But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,

Colossians 2:3

in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

v.16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.

This TAKES US BACK to verse 2 of our study:

"for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity."

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

With one hand she gives long life,
with the other she confers recognition.
p. 15

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Wisdom, personified as a woman, gives with both hands, that is,
generously.
p. 912

v.17 Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

Her manner is beautiful,
her life wonderfully complete.
p. 15

The FOCUS in verse 17 is upon:

"PLEASANT WAYS, AND . . . PATHS ARE PEACE."

v.18 She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her
will be blessed.

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

She's the very Tree of Life to those who embrace her.
Hold her tight—and be blessed!
p. 16

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

. . . wisdom is a source of life.
p. 912

Proverbs 11:30

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is
wise.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown say:

Wisdom allegorized as **a tree of life**—(Gen. 2:9; 3:22,) whose fruit preserves life, gives all that makes living a blessing.
p. 461

Colossians 2:7

having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.

Psalms 1:1-3

Blessed is the man
 who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked
or stand in the way of sinners
 or sit in the seat of mockers.
But his delight is in the law of the Lord,
 and on his law he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree planted by streams of water,
 which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither.
 Whatever he does prospers.

Jeremiah 17:7, 8

"But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

v.19 By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place;

Peterson paraphrases verse 19:

With Lady Wisdom, GOD formed Earth;
with Madame Insight, he raised Heaven.
p. 16

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

When God created the world, He used **wisdom . . . understanding, and knowledge**. If *God* needed these, then certainly people need them. The relationship between God and wisdom in His Creation is discussed in more detail in 8:22-31.
p. 912

Santa, paraphrasing Bridges, says:

We have seen *wisdom*, as it is in man, with all its enriching blessings. Here we behold its majesty, as it is in the bosom of God, and gloriously displayed in His works. Hereby He showeth, that this wisdom, that He speaks about, was everlasting, because it was before all creatures; and that all things, even the whole world, were made by it.
p. 43

Phillips says:

Wisdom takes us back to the beginning and introduces us not to nothing, or even something, but to Someone—to God. "There!" says Wisdom. "Out of His wisdom all was created. He knows all the laws of physics, all the laws of chemistry and biology. He knows the mathematics of the universe, all its detailed and complex equations. He knows all the laws known to science and all the laws not known to science. He knows them not because He has investigated them, but because He has invented them." The more complex the universe is discovered to be, the greater tribute it is to His genius, wisdom, and omniscience. Folly says, "It just happened." Wisdom motivates us to bow at the feet of the Almighty.

Sir Isaac Newton reportedly had a friend who was an atheist. The friend did not believe in God, but preferred to take the position that the universe just happened. One day the friend was visiting his learned colleague and Newton showed him a model of the solar system. The sun, the planets, and the moons were all in place. The sizes of the spheres were in proportion and the planets and the satellites revolved around the sun at their relative speeds. The friend admired the model. "It's intriguing," he said. "Who made it?" "Nobody," said Newton. "It just happened!"

p. 92

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Once I was a tadpole, grubbing in
the mire,
Till I became ambitious and started
to aspire,
I rubbed my tail so very hard
against a sunken log,
It disappeared completely, and I
became a frog.

I struggled from my puddle and
jumped upon the land,
And the feeling deep within me
was glorious and grand;
It made me kind of frisky, so I
hopped around a tree
Till I landed in the branches as
happy as could be.

And there I spent some aeons,
evolving without fail,
Till I became a monkey and grew
another tail.
But still I had ambitions, as the
aeons quickly sped;
I climbed down from the tree and
walked the earth instead.

My tail got tired with trailing on
the hard earth everyday.
And twice within my "process"
that appendage passed away;
Once again I evolved, and believe
it, if you can,
I awoke one summer morning and
found myself a man!

Now, you tadpoles in the mire, just
think what you may be,
If you'll only in your puddles start
to climb the family tree;
I'm the genus homo "finished," for
all the world to see,
For when I told my story I was
given a Ph.D.

IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
 In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
 Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
 Almighty, victorious—Thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
 Nor wanting, nor wasting, Though rulest in might;
 Thy justice, like mountains, high soaring above
 Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all, life Thou givest — to both great and small,
 In all life Thou Livest — the true life of all;
 We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
 And wither and perish — but naught changeth Thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
 Thing angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
 All praise we would render — O help us to see
 'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee! Amen.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(Approaching God: How to Pray by Steve Brown)

One of our daughters had a poster of the cartoon character Ziggy in her room when she was growing up. In this poster, Ziggy is standing on top of a hill watching a magnificent sunrise. He is jumping up and down and the caption reads: "Yea God!!!"

pp. 100-101

v.20 by his knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

They knew when to signal rivers and springs to the surface,
and dew to descend from the night skies.
p. 16

(Secret Strength: For Those Who Search by Joni Eareckson Tada)

Now ponder, through this poem, the *humility* of Jesus.

The Hands that shaped the flaming spheres
and set them spinning, vast light years
away from Planet Earth,
have laid aside the Robes of State,
donned human likeness by the great
indignity of birth.
The hands, responsive to Love's Plan,
that formed the God-reflector, Man,
of dust and destiny,
outstretched—by Man's fierce hate impaled—
wrought life anew, Love's Plan unveiled
upon Golgotha's Tree.

The Hands that found it nothing strange
to pucker up a mountain range
or ladle out a sea,
that balance Nature's systems still,
and shape all History to His will,
hold, and are molding, me!³

3. Marion Donaldson, "His Hands," copyright 1972. Used by permission.
pp. 103-4

(The Book of Wisdom by Multnomah Books)

Dear God,
 Could you change the taste of asparagus?
 Everything else is OK.
Love,
Fred

nine-year-old child

Quoted in *Dear God: Children's Letters to God*

p. 478

VIII. STAY FOCUSED ON SOUND JUDGMENT & DISCERNMENT —
(verses 21-26)

v.21 My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight;

This is the THIRD TIME we have the term "MY SON."

In this verse we have the POSITIVE & NEGATIVE COMMAND once again. "MY SON":

1. POSITIVE— "PRESERVE SOUND JUDGMENT AND DISCERNMENT" and
2. NEGATIVE— "DO NOT LET THEM OUT OF YOUR SIGHT."

Peterson titles these last verses:

NEVER WALK AWAY.
p. 16

He paraphrases verse 21:

Dear friend, guard Clear Thinking and Common
Sense with your life;
don't for a minute lose sight of them.
p. 16

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Sound judgment translates the Hebrew word that is rendered "victory" in 2:7 . . .
p. 912

Proverbs 2:7

He holds victory in store for the upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,

Kidner titles this section:

Quiet integrity. It becomes very clear that wisdom means walking with God (23, 26); and the paradox of this familiar metaphor is brought out by the way in which the shrewdness commended in verse 21 . . . subject-study: Wisdom, 1 (3), (4), p. 37) rubs shoulders with the cosmic wisdom of 19, 20. The promised serenity of such a life as meets us here comes, at one level, from sheer good management on God's sound principles (22, 23 are the consequence of 21), and at a deeper level, from the Lord's personal care (26).
p. 65

Keil & Delitzsch say:

From this eminence, in which the work of creation presents wisdom, exhortations are now deduced, since the writer always expresses himself only with an ethical intention regarding the nature of wisdom: . . .
p. 96

v.22 they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck.

Peterson's paraphrase says:

They'll keep your soul alive and well,
 they'll keep you fit and attractive.
 p. 16

Garrett says:

The essence of this section is given in v. 22: wisdom will preserve your life. For this reason, the righteous can be free of the anxiety that plagues the wicked (vv. 23-25). Verse 23 is a general promise; it is not an absolute guarantee that the wise will never have occasion to stumble. Compared to the unwise, however, they will experience tranquility.
 p. 83

v.23 Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble;

This is the FRUITAGE of staying focused on "sound judgment and discernment":

1. "YOU WILL GO ON YOUR WAY IN SAFETY" and
2. "YOUR FOOT WILL NOT STUMBLE."

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

You'll travel safely,
 you'll neither tire nor trip.
 p. 16

Delitzsch says:

But more than this, wisdom makes its possessor in all situations of life
 confident in God: . . .
 p. 96

Joseph Parker says:

We now come to what may be called specifically the practical rewards
 of wisdom.
 p. 43

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Security is not the absence of danger, but the presence of God no
 matter what the danger.
 p. 177

v.24 when you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

You'll take afternoon naps without a worry,
you'll enjoy a good night's sleep.
p. 16

Once again we have TWO DIFFERENT STATEMENTS. "WHEN YOU LIE DOWN":

1. "YOU WILL NOT BE AFRAID" and
2. "YOUR SLEEP WILL BE SWEET."

Lawson says:

Sleep commonly flies from the victims of wretchedness and calamity; but quiet and peaceful are the slumbers of those who can lie down in safety, because the Lord sustaineth them. Even in the prospect of danger and distress, they can repose in calm serenity, for Jehovah giveth his beloved sleep.
p. 65

Alden says:

Verses 24-26 expand on verse 23, speaking of the full-time vigil wisdom keeps over those who have it. A good night's sleep can be a desperate wish especially for those robbed of it by sickness, anxiety, fear, or noisy neighbors. How wonderful for them is the promise of wisdom's fearless "sweet sleep."
p. 41

Matthew Henry says:

The way to have a good night is to keep a good conscience; and the sleep, as of the labouring man, so of the wise and godly man, is sweet.
p. 739

Patrick & Lowth say:

And when thou comest home to rest from thy labours, thou shalt not be troubled with fear of what may happen whilst thou art asleep; but (having nothing to discompose thee) shalt lie down securely, and, by a sound and sweet repose, be refreshed to return to thy employments.
p. 12

SLEEP YOUR STRESS AWAY

Nearly one in five Americans feels stressed out every day, and 60% feel that way at least once a week. Only 10% say that [they] never feel stressed. Among adults who sleep six hours or less a night 43% feel stress daily, while of those who sleep seven or eight hours only 14% do.

—American Demographics, Sep 1994

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

FROM A TO ZZZZZ

Miscellaneous facts about sleep:

The average individual sleeps about 220,000 hours during his or her lifetime.

Only one in four people claims to always get a good night's sleep.

Drowsy drivers cause 20% of highway accidents.

The typical 65-year-old gets only half as much deep sleep as he or she did at age 20.

"From A to ZZZZZ" by Janet Cawley. Christian Reader, Jul/Aug 1991. Pages 42-44

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

JUST IN TIME

Just when you're successful enough to sleep late, you're so old you always wake up early.

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(A Man to Match the Mountain: Overcoming the Obstacles of Life by David Roper)

"Sleep is God's contrivance for giving us the help he cannot get into us when we are awake," said George MacDonald.
p. 110

Philipp Melanchthon once said to his friend Martin Luther, "Martin, this day we will discuss the governance of the universe." Luther replied, "This day you and I will go fishing and leave the governance of the universe to God."
p. 112

Psalm 4:8

I will lie down and sleep in peace,
for you alone, O Lord,
make me dwell in safety.

v.25 Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked,

We do not need to "be afraid . . . OF SUDDEN DISASTER OR OF THE RUIN THAT OVERTAKES THE WICKED."

Peterson paraphrases verse 25:

No need to panic over alarms or surprises,
or predictions that doomsday's just around the corner,
p. 16

(To Follow Him: The Seven Marks of a Disciple by Mark Bailey)

So don't be afraid. Don't hesitate to commit yourself to Jesus because you're afraid of what people think or what they will do. Don't fear what lies ahead. God is in control. Nothing takes Him by surprise; therefore we are never out of His control or care. What He wills is what is best.
p. 41

(A Man to Match the Mountain: Overcoming the Obstacles of Life by David Roper)

There's an old saying: "To a crow in the know a scarecrow is an invitation to a feast."
p. 151

The fear we experience at such times is perfectly normal. It is not cowardice. It is a natural, instinctive reaction to a situation beyond our control.

I'm personally afraid of men who are fearless. Starbuck, the chief mate of Captain Ahab's boat *The Pequod*, said, "I will have no man in my boat who is not afraid of a whale." I agree. I don't drift our Idaho rivers with men who have no fear, and I don't fly with bush pilots who aren't afraid. There are old pilots and bold pilots, as they say, but there are no old, bold pilots. There are some things a man ought to be afraid of. If he isn't, there's something wrong with him.
p. 151

(Time-Out Leadership by Donald Luce)

"I have had a long, long life full of troubles, but there is one curious fact about them—nine-tenths of them never happened."

ANDREW CARNEGIE

p. 68

(Cowboy Slang: Colorful Cowboy Sayings! by Edgar R. "Frosty" Potter)

- Busy as a prairie dog after a gully washer.

p. 15

- Meaner'n a rattlesnake on a hot skillet.

p. 51

v.26 for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.

The REASON given here in verse 26 why you do not "have any fear of sudden disaster or of ruin" is "THE LORD WILL BE":

1. "YOUR CONFIDENCE" and
2. "WILL KEEP YOUR FOOT FROM BEING SNARED."

Hebrews 6:18, 19

in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,

Peterson paraphrases this verse:

Because GOD will be right there with you;
he'll keep you safe and sound.

p. 16

Garrett says:

The climax of the text is the promise that God will be beside the follower of wisdom (v. 26). Proverbs never implies that people can be safe through their own wisdom. "Common sense" and personal competence are soon exhausted if God's protection is missing.

p. 83

Harry Ironside says:

It is the obedient soul who can lay hold of the precious promises of Scripture. The wilful and lawless have no such title. If walking in subjection to the truth, neither sudden fear nor the desolation of the wicked need affright, for Jehovah, whose truth it is, will be the confidence of all who walk uprightly, and will keep the feet of His saints.
p. 45

(Collected Verse of Edgar A. Guest by Edgar A. Guest)

Hand in Hand

All the way to age we'll go
Hand in hand together;
All the way to brows of snow
Through every sort of weather.
Rain or shine, blue sky or gray,
Joy and sorrow sharing
Hand in hand along the way
We'll go bravely faring.

All the way to sunset land
We'll walk down together
Side by side and hand in hand
Held by Cupid's tether.
Once we danced in early May
Steps we'll long remember;
So we'll trip the miles away
Even to December.

Let the years go fleeting by!
Gray old age shall find us
Still recalling smile and sigh
Long since left behind us.
And though feeble we may grow,
Worn by wind and weather,
All the way to Age we'll go
Hand in hand together.

pp. 730-31

ANCHORED!

In his book, *1001 Thoughts From My Library*, D. L. Moody includes this quotation from the writings of Frederick Arnot: "On the margin of the ocean close to our home, an object of absorbing interest may often be observed—a ship riding at anchor in the angry sea. I scarcely know in nature a more interesting or suggestive sight. The ship is dancing on the waves; she appears to be in their power and at their mercy. Wind and water combine to make her their sport. Destruction seems near; for if the vessel's hull is dashed by these waves upon the rocks of the coast, it will be broken into a thousand pieces. But as you stand and look awhile, the ship holds her own. Although at first sight she seemed the helpless plaything of the elements, they have not overcome. She is no nearer destruction than when you first began to gaze in anticipation of her fate. What is the secret of the ship's safety? The bond of her security is a line that is unseen. The ship is at anchor! The line on which she hangs does not depend on the waters, nor anything that floats there. It goes through them and fastens on the solid ground beneath. The soul, considered a passenger on the treacherous sea of time, likewise needs an anchor 'sure and steadfast.'"

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

(More Stories for the Heart: Over 100 Stories to Warm Your Heart compiled by Alice Gray)

*Never be afraid to trust
an unknown future
to a known God.*

Corrie ten Boom

p. 271

(The Book of Wisdom by Multnomah Books)

You find no difficulty in trusting the Lord with the management of the universe, and all the outward creation, and can your case be any more complex or difficult than these, that you need to be anxious or troubled about His management of you? Away with such unworthy doubtings! Take your stand on the power and trustworthiness of your God, and see how quickly all difficulties will vanish before a steadfast determination to believe. Trust in the dark, trust in the light, trust at night and trust in the morning, and you will find that the faith which may begin by mighty effort, will end sooner or later by becoming the easy and natural habit of the soul.

Hannah Whitall Smith
The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life

p. 139

(31 Days of Prayer: Moving God's Mighty Hand by Warren & Ruth Myers)

THE TELEPHONE RINGS and it's your country's leader. He wants to come by for a visit. While you try not to gasp into the phone, he continues. He hopes to find out if there's some way he can help you. And he wants to talk personally with you about a project on a scale almost beyond imagining—an undertaking he'd like you to be a part of.

How would you feel after such a call?

"Well," you say, "I'd feel shocked, a bit intimidated—a bit doubtful about his motives."

Yes, but wouldn't you also feel honored? Wouldn't your life suddenly seem more significant? All your daily strivings a little less humdrum? As you waited nervously for your president or prime minister to visit, wouldn't you see yourself in a completely different light?

The King of all kings, the Ruler of the entire universe, has already made that call. He wants time with you. He wants you to tell Him about your needs and interests. And He's asking for your partnership on an immensely important project!

p. 13

We respond to the King's invitation when He said, "I'm up to something far more momentous than you might have supposed in your life, in the lives of your loved ones, and in the whole world—and I'm asking you to be part of it."

p. 15

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Obedience to the Word should be our highest priority.

LESSON #2: Obedience has its compensations.

LESSON #3: We ought to be aiming at compassion and consistency in our conduct.

LESSON #4: It ought to be our goal to "trust in the Lord with all of our heart" and let Him lead.

LESSON #5: Humble yourself before the Lord and avoid sin.

LESSON #6: "Fear the Lord and shun evil" ought to be one of our primary goals.

LESSON #7: There is a relationship between our spiritual health and our physical health.

LESSON #8: "Honor the Lord" in your giving.

LESSON #9: Learn to surrender yourself to the Lord's discipline.

LESSON #10: Pursue wisdom with a passion.

LESSON #11: Stay focused on sound judgment and discernment.

LESSON #12: God has His way of doing things and we must learn to live life His way.

(Time To Get Serious: Daily Devotions to Keep You Close to God by Tony Evans)

A young woman was caught going one hundred miles an hour in a fifty-five-mile-per-hour zone outside one of those small towns. The policeman brought her into court where the judge fined her one hundred dollars. "But I don't have one hundred dollars," she wailed.

"I'm sorry, but you will have to spend the weekend in jail," the judge told her. "You owe the court one hundred dollars. You may not have the money, but the law is the law."

She began to cry. "Please, your honor, I don't have one hundred dollars, but I don't want to spend the weekend in jail."

The judge said, "I can't change the law." But the young woman begged for mercy again—and to the surprise of the bailiff and the policeman, the judge did something very interesting. He pushed his chair back from the bench, took off his robe, walked around to where the woman was standing, pulled out his wallet, and gave the bailiff a one-hundred-dollar bill, went back to the bench, put his robe back on, and sat down.

Then the judge picked up his gavel and said, "Young lady, I see someone has paid your fine. Case dismissed. You're free to go."

That's what God did for you and me. We stood before the bench of His justice, and He said, "You've been found guilty of sinning against My holy character. You've either got to pay the price of perfection or spend eternity in the prison called hell."

But God the Judge also heard us cry out for mercy. He knew we had nothing to pay our debt with. So in the Person of Jesus Christ He stepped out of heaven, "zipped down" His deity, put on the robe of humanity, and paid the price Himself on the cross. Three days later, He put His robe of deity back on and ascended back to the bench of heaven.

Now He looks down and says to anyone who comes to Him and begs for mercy, "I can't change the law, but I can pay the price." You will never have to worry about heaven again if you know Jesus Christ.

—————**-Think About It-**—————

The Judge who pronounced sentence against you also paid your fine.

He'll do it for anyone who comes to Him. Do you know
someone who needs good news like that?

(Made Perfect in Weakness: The Amazing Things God Can Do With Failure by Gary J. Oliver)

Max Lucado has given us a remarkable description of God's forgiveness:

It was like discovering the prize in a box of Cracker Jacks or spotting a little pearl in a box of buttons or stumbling across a ten dollar bill in a drawer full of envelopes.

It was small enough to overlook. Only two words. I know I'd read that passage a hundred times. But I'd never seen it. Maybe I'd passed over it in the excitement of the resurrection. Or, since Mark's account of the resurrection is by far the briefest of the four, maybe I'd just not paid too much attention. . . .

But I won't miss it again. It's highlighted in yellow and underlined in red. You might want to do the same. Look in Mark, chapter 16. Read the first five verses about the woman's surprise when they find the stone moved to the side. . . . Go a bit further. Get your pencil ready and enjoy this jewel in the seventh verse. . . . "But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee."

Did you see it? Read it again. (This time I italicized the words.)

"But go, tell his disciples *and Peter* that he is going before you to Galilee."

Now tell me if that's not a hidden treasure.

If I might paraphrase the words, "Don't stay here, go tell the disciples," a pause, then a smile, "and *especially* tell Peter that he is going before you to Galilee."

What a line. It's as if all of heaven had watched Peter fall—and it's as if all of heaven wanted to help him back up again. "Be sure and tell Peter that he's not left out. Tell him that one failure doesn't make a flop."

Whew!

No wonder they call it the gospel of the second chance.

Not many second chances exist in the world today. Just ask the kid who didn't make the little league team or the fellow who got the pink slip or the mother of three who got dumped for a "pretty little thing."

Not many second chances. Nowadays it's more like, "It's now or never." "Around here we don't tolerate incompetence." "It's a dog-eat-dog world."

Jesus has a simple answer to our masochistic mania. "It's a dog-eat-dog world?" he would say. "Then don't live with the dogs." That makes sense doesn't it? Why let a bunch of other failures tell you how much of a failure you are?

Sure you can have a second chance.

Just ask Peter. One minute he felt lower than a snake's belly and the next minute he was the high hog at the trough. Even the angels wanted this distraught netcaster to know that it wasn't over. The message came loud and clear from the celestial Throne Room through the divine courier. "Be sure and tell Peter that he gets to bat again. . . ."

It's not every day that you get a second chance. Peter must have known that. The next time he saw Jesus, he got so excited that he barely got his britches on before he jumped into the cold water of the Sea of Galilee. It was also enough, so they say, to cause this backwoods Galilean to carry the gospel of the second chance all the way to Rome where they killed him. If you've ever wondered what would cause a man to be willing to be crucified upside down, maybe now you know.

It's not every day that you find someone who will give you a second chance—must less someone who will give you a second chance every day.

But in Jesus, Peter found both.²

2. Max Lucado, *No Wonder They Call Him the Savior* (Portland, Ore.: Multnomah, 1986), pp. 93-95.
pp. 72-74

(God's Little Devotional Book II by Honor Books)

**It is reported that
Moody's farewell words
to his sons as he lay
upon his deathbed
were: "If God be your
partner, make your
plans large."**

p. 298

Never settle for what is, settle only for what God desires.

p. 299

(The Message: Psalms by Eugene H. Peterson)

Trials: Psalm 34

Yahweh met me more than halfway,
he freed me from my anxious fears. . . .

When I was desperate, I called out,
and Yahweh got me out of a tight spot. . . .

Open your mouth and taste, open your eyes and see—
how good Yahweh is.
Blessed are you who run to him. . . .

Yahweh keeps an eye on his friends,
his ears pick up every moan and groan. . . .

If your heart is broken, you'll find Yahweh right there;
if you're kicked in the gut, he'll help you catch your
breath.

Disciples so often get into trouble;
still, Yahweh is there every time.

pp. 48-49

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN LIVING LIFE HIS WAY?

1. OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD
2. COMPASSION & CONSISTENCY IN YOUR CONDUCT
3. TRUST THE LORD & LET HIM LEAD
4. HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE THE LORD AND AVOID SIN
5. HONOR THE LORD IN YOUR GIVING
6. SURRENDER YOURSELF TO THE LORD'S DISCIPLINE
7. PURSUE WISDOM WITH A PASSION
8. STAY FOCUSED ON SOUND JUDGMENT AND DISCERNMENT

LIVING FOR JESUS

Living for Jesus a life that is true,
 Striving to please Him in all that I do;
 Yielding allegiance, gladhearted and free,
 This is the pathway of blessing for me.

REFRAIN: O Jesus, Lord and Savior,
 I give myself to Thee;
 For Thou, in Thy atonement,
 Didst give Thyself for me.
 I own no other Master,
 My heart shall be Thy throne.
 My life I give, henceforth to live,
 O Christ, for Thee alone.

Living for Jesus who died in my place,
 Bearing on Calvary my sin and disgrace;
 Such love constrains me to answer His call,
 Follow His leading and give Him my all.

Living for Jesus wherever I am,
 Doing each duty in His holy name;
 Willing to suffer affliction and loss,
 Deeming each trial a part of my cross.

Living for Jesus through earth's little while,
 My dearest treasure, the light of His smile;
 Seeking the lost ones He died to redeem,
 Bringing the weary to find rest in Him.

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