

I. Remember - Proverbs 3:1-4

1. Remember my instruction (**verse 1**) - two directives
 - A. Don't forget
 - B. Keep commands in your heart
2. The result of keeping commands (**verse 2**)
 - A. They will prolong your life
 - B. You will live in peace and prosperity

*a full and satisfying life
- Rea 3. Must be careful that these type verses do not lead us to expect "health and wealth"
 - Job is the needed corrective to this tangent
 - that said, God does bless us and give us peace - John 14:27
4. Love and faithfulness - cling to them (**verse 3**)
 - like a necklace around our neck for all to see
 - write them on the tablet of your heart
- Rea -two analogies - necklace, and tablet
5. Such a lifestyle will win "favor" from people (**verse 4**)
 - a good name (grace) in the sight of men and God
- Rea -Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man
- Rea -we all "win" a reputation... what is yours? - win the respect of others
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
 1. These are character traits, not just behavior - like avoid the enticements of your friends (last week's lesson)
 2. The Old Testament is supposed to be about law - but notice that he begins with love and faithfulness - sounds much like the New Testament
 3. Over the long haul - a lifestyle of love and faithfulness - not a hit or miss action

II. Trust - Proverbs 3:5-8

1. Trust the Lord (**verse 5**)
 - Rea -with all your heart - the extent of his trust
 - Rea -trust means to depend on God - lean on Him - instead of your "own understanding"
2. Submit to Him (**verse 6**)
 - acknowledge Him (KJV)
3. He will straighten out your paths/ pathways
 - instead of winding through life's "crooks"
- Rea -we say it "God will make a way"
- Rea -we might say "He will keep us straight"
4. Wise in your own eyes (**verse 7**)
 - prideful - overconfident in ourselves
- Rea -healthy self-esteem is not what he's talking about - prideful attitudes are
- humility in the way we live life
- Rea 5. There is a positive and negative here:
 - positive - fear the Lord (respect Him and His directions)
 - negative - don't be wise in your own eyes, shun evil

6. The effects of following the Lord/ the Lord's way (**verse 8**)
 - A. Health to your body
 - B. Nourishment to your bones
 - Rea -the inward man
 - C. God's "rules" are given to keep us out of the ditch - to keep us from wrecking our lives. For example, to follow greed is to quickly wind up in the ditch.
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
 1. Discuss ways in which God has kept you from making a mess out of your own life
 2. "Wise in your own eyes" - means you feel you don't need God - "I've got this"
 3. Pride and wisdom are contrasted regularly in Proverbs
 4. Why is it so difficult to "follow" someone else?

III. Honor - Proverbs 3:9-10

1. Honor God with your monies (**verse 9**)
 - and your firstfruits
 - to "honor" Him means to "acknowledge" Him - it is He who has given me these things
2. Firstfruits - are the first part of every harvest - Ex. 23:19; Dt. 26:1-11
 - it is a way to say we know this came from God
 - Rea -it didn't just happen - God made it happen
3. **Verse 10** seems to imply that God will make us prosperous if we only give Him our tenth
 - Rea -the idea might be that He "has to" bless us now that we have been faithful - God does not "have to" do anything - we never have God "over a barrel." He is never in our debt.
4. God's blessing was seen:
 - full barns
 - new wine overflowing
- Rea 5. The rich farmer in the New Testament built bigger barns - why is this wrong - in light of this verse?
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
 1. Follow the trail of blessing
 - God honors with blessings FIRST
 - we honor Him with firstfruits SECOND
 - He blesses (again)
 2. The blessing of God is not always in temporal things - I'm blessed in that all my kids are in church, for example
 3. Passages like this one lend themselves to the Jews of old feeling that if they served God, He would protect them from every problem
 - just because you have weeds in your garden doesn't mean that God doesn't love you
 4. On the one hand - I don't always see the rewards for my service of the Lord
 - On the other hand - I receive blessings from God that I never worked for - grace (for example I was "graced" to be born into this country - I never worked for that)

IV. Accept - Proverbs 3:11-12

1. The Lord disciplines (**verse 11**)
 - A. Your reaction - don't "despise"

Rea -to despise would be to get mad at God - "after all I've done and then God lets this happen"
 - B. "Resent" His rebuke

Rea 2. You might want to discuss the differences between the normal hardships of life, and the rebuke of God
3. Our writer uses the illustration of a recruit at boot camp - the sergeant does not make the soldier's life miserable to punish them but to prepare them
4. He disciplines those He loves (**verse 12**)
 - A. A sign of love not anger

Rea B. God prunes the tree to make it more fruitful - John 15
5. He ends on a positive note, - just like a father who takes delight in his son

Rea -we don't allow our grandkids to play in the street - are we wrong?

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
1. The blessing passage 3:9-10 is followed closely by the discipline passage (verses 11-12) - that is by design
2. The Lord gives and the Lord takes away - blessed be the name of the Lord - Job
3. Left to themselves, many kids would never learn to read and write

-if you gave them the option most would not go to school
4. What about this - just because the teacher at school disciplines your child does not mean that she does not like him

Argile Smith - SS Lesson for June 14, 2020