



CROSSROADS

2015 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Study 1

Wise Choices

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart



Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia Children's Ministry

Wise Choices

Objective

To teach the students that true wisdom is found in listening to, and obeying the Lord.

Key Verses

Proverbs 3:1-8 - Main Teaching Passage

Jeremiah 17:9

Proverbs 1:7

Psalms 34:14

Titus 1:2

Memory Verse - Proverbs 3:5-6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

Hook

Ask the students the following questions and write their answers on the board:

“When you are faced with a tough decision, how do you make the right choice?”

“Who do you ask for advice when making decisions? Why do you ask those people?”

“Why is it important to make good decisions?”

Discuss these answers with the class, then read Proverbs 3:1-8.

BOOK

Proverbs 3:1-7 provides one continuous thought, centered on the opening two verses. The direction from the Lord here is quite clear: believe God and His Word and obey what we see and hear in Scripture. The Lord instructs us that this is the path to peace, happiness and “length of days.” Of course the passage turns on verses 5-7, instructing us that true wisdom, simply put, is setting aside our incorrect way of thinking, and trusting in God. We are not exalt our own wisdom, but rather are to remember that God’s wisdom is perfect and therefore when our thoughts disagree with His, we are to conform our minds to Christ’s and take every thought captive for Him. We are to fear the Lord, as after all, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and again, in doing this we will receive “health to our flesh and strength to bones.”

Please read the commentary at the end of this packet for further study.

LOOK

Life is all about making decisions. In fact, every day can really be looked at as a long line of choices that we have to decide between. Some of those decisions are simple and perhaps not as important, like “What should I eat for breakfast?” or “What color socks should I wear today?” But some decisions that we make are *incredibly* important. Decisions like, “Who should I be friends with?” or “How am I going to respond when I see someone doing the wrong thing?” can be life-altering. So an important question we all have to ask ourselves is, “How do I make wise decisions?”

We live in a world that tells us the most important factor in making any decision is “How do I feel?” Our music, movies, even our favorite Disney characters tell us to “follow our heart.” They tell us if we follow our heart, we will always find true happiness. There is of course one big problem with this; the Bible calls listening to our hearts foolishness.

It gets worse. The Bible actually tells us in the book of Jeremiah (17:9) that our feelings (our heart) lies to us. It says that rather than doing whatever our heart tells us to, we actually need to compare what we are feeling, to what God tells us. After all Titus 1:2 tells us that God cannot lie, so

LOOK

if what we are feeling (what our heart tells us) is different from what God's Word tells us, we know that it must be wrong. Proverbs 3:1-8 repeats this message to us. The passage tells us to do 6 things:

Remember God's Word (law) - v.1

Obey God's Word - v.1

Be merciful and honest - v.3

Trust God with all your heart- v.5

Don't think that you are smarter than God - v.6

Run from evil - v.7

Notice how all of the rest of these things can only happen if we are careful to do the first. If we remember God's Word, we can faithfully and carefully obey it. This will cause us to be kind and truthful and help us to trust Him in all our ways. Trusting in God will help us to see ourselves for who we are (sinners saved by grace) and will in turn help us to turn from evil and do good (Psalm 34:14).

So in answer to our earlier question, "How do we make wise choices?" We remember that Proverbs 1:7 says "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and that we need to trust God, following His advice and wise counsel and not simply do whatever our heart or emotions (or friends) tell us to do.

TOOK

As a class, memorize Proverbs 3:5-6 .

Have the class make a list of all the important decisions you might have to make in the next few months. Discuss how God and His Word can help with making those decisions.

Pray: Ask the Lord for strength to trust in Him, even when we want to do our own thing. Thank Him that He promises to lead us and guide us in truth. Praise Him for His goodness and grace in our lives.

Parent Question: What is a decision that God has helped you make?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Proverbs 3 by Matthew Henry

This chapter is one of the most excellent in all this book, both for argument to persuade us to be religious and for directions therein. *I. We must be constant to our duty because that is the way to be happy (v. 1-4). II. We must live a life of dependence upon God because that is the way to be safe (v. 5). III. We must keep up the fear of God because that is the way to be healthful (v. 7, v. 8). IV. We must serve God with our estates because that is the way to be rich (v. 9, v. 10). V. We must hear afflictions well because that is the way to get good by them (v. 11, v. 12). VI. We must take pains to obtain wisdom because that is the way to gain her, and to gain by her (v. 13-20). VII. We must always govern ourselves by the rules of wisdom, of right reason and religion, because that is the way to be always easy (v. 21-26). VIII. We must do all the good we can, and no hurt, to our neighbours, because according as men are just or unjust, charitable or uncharitable, humble or haughty, accordingly they shall receive of God (v. 27-35). From all this it appears what a tendency religion has to make men both blessed and blessings.*

Verses 1-6 We are here taught to live a life of communion with God; and without controversy great is this mystery of godliness, and of great consequence to us, and, as is here shown, will be of unspeakable advantage. *I. We must have a continual regard to God's precepts, v. 1, v. 2. 1. We must, (1.) Fix God's law, and his commandments, as our rule, by which we will in every thing be ruled and to which we will yield obedience. (2.) We must acquaint ourselves with them; for we cannot be said to forget that which we never knew. (3.) We must remember them so that they may be ready to us whenever we have occasion to use them. (4.) Our wills and affections must be subject to them and must in every thing conform to them. Not only our heads, but our hearts, must keep God's commandments; in them, as in the ark of the testimony, both the tables of the law must be deposited. 2. To encourage us to submit ourselves to all the restraints and injunctions of the divine law, we are assured (v. 2) that it is the certain way to long life and prosperity. (1.) It is the way to be long-lived. God's commandments shall add to us length of days; to a good useful life on earth, they shall add an eternal life in heaven, length of days for ever and ever, Ps. 21:4. God shall be our life and the length of our days, and that will be indeed long life, with an addition. But, because length of days may possibly become a burden and a trouble, it is promised, (2.) That it shall prove the way to be easy too, so that even the days of old age shall not be evil days, but days in which thou shalt have pleasure: Peace shall they be continually adding to thee. As grace increases, peace shall increase; and of the increase of Christ's government and peace, in the heart as well as in the world, there shall be no end. Great and growing peace have those that love the law. II. We must have a continual regard to God's promises, which go along with his precepts, and are to be received, and retained, with them (v. 3): "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee, God's mercy in promising, and his truth in performing. Do not forfeit these, but live up to them, and preserve thy interest in them; do not forget these, but live upon them, and take the comfort of them. Bind them about thy neck, as the most graceful ornament." It is the greatest honour we are capable of in this world to have an interest in the mercy and truth of God. "Write to them upon the table of thy heart, as dear to thee, thy portion, and most delightful entertainment; take a pleasure in applying them and thinking them over." Or it may be meant of the mercy and truth which are our duty, piety and sincerity, charity towards men, fidelity towards God. Let these be fixed and commanding principles in thee. To encourage us to do this we are assured (v. 4) that this is the way to recommend ourselves both to our Creator and fellow-creatures: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding. 1. A good man seeks the favour of God in the first place, is ambitious of the honour of being accepted of the Lord, and he shall find that favour, and with it a good understanding; God will make the best of him, and put a favourable construction upon what he says*

and does. He shall be owned as one of Wisdom's children, and shall have praise with God, as one having that *good understanding* which is ascribed to all those *that do his commandments*. 2. He wishes to have favour with men also (as Christ had, [Lu. 2:52](#)), to be *accepted of the multitude of his brethren* ([Esth. 10:3](#)), and that he shall have; they shall understand him aright, and in his dealings with them he shall appear to be prudent, shall act intelligently and with discretion. *He shall have good success* (so some translate it), the common effect of good understanding. III. We must have a continual regard to God's providence, must own and depend upon it in all our affairs, both by faith and prayer. By faith. We must repose an entire confidence in the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, assuring ourselves of the extent of his providence to all the creatures and all their actions. We must therefore *trust in the Lord with all our hearts* ([v. 5](#)); we must believe that he is able to do what he will, wise to do what is best, and good, according to his promise, to do what is best for us, if we love him, and serve him. We must, with an entire submission and satisfaction, depend upon him to perform all things for us, and not *lean to our own understanding*, as if we could, by any forecast of our own, without God, help ourselves, and bring our affairs to a good issue. Those who know themselves cannot but find their own understanding to be a broken reed, which, if they lean to, will certainly fail them. In all our conduct we must be diffident of our own judgment, and confident of God's wisdom, power, and goodness, and therefore must follow Providence and not force it. That often proves best which was least our own doing. 2. By prayer ([v. 6](#)): *In all thy ways acknowledge God*. We must not only in our judgment believe that there is an over-ruling hand of God ordering and disposing of us and all our affairs, but we must solemnly own it, and address ourselves to him accordingly. We must ask his leave, and not design any thing but what we are sure is lawful. We must ask his advice and beg direction from him, not only when the case is difficult (when we know not what to do, no thanks to us that we have our eyes up to him), but in every case, be it ever so plain, We must ask success of him, as those who know *the race is not to the swift*. We must refer ourselves to him as one from whom our judgment proceeds, and patiently, and with a holy indifferency, wait his award. *In all our ways* that prove direct, and fair, and pleasant, in which we gain our point to our satisfaction, we must acknowledge God with thankfulness. *In all our ways* that prove cross and uncomfortable, and that are hedged up with thorns, we must acknowledge God with submission. Our eye must be ever towards God; to him we must, in every thing, make our requests known, as Jephthah *uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpeh*, [Jdg. 11:11](#) . 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." Note, Those that put themselves under a divine guidance shall always have the benefit of it. God will give them that wisdom which is profitable to direct, so that they shall not turn aside into the by-paths of sin, and then will himself so wisely order the event that it shall be to their mind, or (which is equivalent) for their good. Those that faithfully follow the pillar of cloud and fire shall find that though it may lead them about it leads them the right way and will bring them to Canaan at last.

[Verses 7-12](#) We have here before us three exhortations, each of them enforced with a good reason:—I. We must live in a humble and dutiful subjection to God and his government ([v. 7](#)): "*Fear the Lord*, as your sovereign Lord and Master; be ruled in every thing by your religion and subject to the divine will." This must be, 1. A humble subjection: *Be not wise in thy own eyes*. Note, There is not a greater enemy to the power of religion, and the fear of God in the heart, than conceitedness of our own wisdom. Those that have an opinion of their own sufficiency think it below them, and a disparagement to them, to take their measures from, much more to hamper themselves with, religion's rules. 2. A dutiful subjection: *Fear the Lord, and depart from evil*; take heed of doing any thing to offend him and to forfeit his care. To *fear the Lord*, so as to *depart from evil*, is true *wisdom* and *understanding* ([Job. 28:28](#)); those that have it are truly wise, but self-denyingly so, and not *wise in their own eyes*. For our encouragement thus to live in the fear of God it is here promised ([v. 8](#)) that it shall be as serviceable even to the outward man as our necessary food. It will be nourishing: *It shall be health to thy navel*. It will be strengthening: *It shall be marrow to thy bones*. The prudence, temperance, and sobriety, the calmness and composure of mind, and the good government of the appetites and passions, which religion teaches, tend very much not only to the health of the soul, but to a good habit of body, which is very desirable, and without which our other enjoyments in this world are insipid. Envy is *the rottenness of the bones*; the sorrow of the world dries them; but hope and joy in God are marrow to them.