

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
3RD-5TH GRADE
TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 4

Proverbs 3



Proverbs 3

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will look at the benefits of walking in God's commandments found in Proverbs 3, and show how God's commands are for our benefit.

Key Verses

Proverbs 3—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Proverbs 3:1-2

"My son, do not forget my law,
But let your heart keep my commands;
For length of days and long life
And peace they will add to you."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, Proverbs 2:6.

Locate an object in the room that has a warning label. Perhaps have the kids look for one. Have a student read some of the warnings on the label. Ask the class why the company that made that device would put a warning label on their device.

Warning labels serve to protect us from hurting ourselves by letting us know how not to use a device. The Bible is full of commands that act like warning labels. They warn us not to do things for our good so that we do not hurt ourselves by doing the wrong thing.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Our chapter today can be divided into three sections. The first section is found in verses 1-12 and focuses on the blessing of walking in God's wisdom. Like we saw last week, many of these verses are structured in an "if..., then..." format. Solomon tells us that that walking in the Lord's wisdom in various aspects will lead to long days, peace, favor in the sight of God and man, paths directed by the Lord, healing and refreshment, prosperity, and the Lord's delight.

Verses 13-24 talk about the beauty of wisdom and the blessings for those who pursue it. Solomon compares wisdom's value to gold and precious jewels, things that people in every culture of every age have considered to be of high worth. He calls wisdom life-giving, comparing it to a tree. Wisdom was also instrumental in God creating the universe. To end the section, Solomon exhorts his son not to lose sight of the tremendous blessing that comes with pursuing and keeping wisdom.

The final section (verses 25-35) gives examples of things not to do if we want to walk in the Lord's wisdom. Solomon warns against fear, withholding good, delayed kindness, betrayal, fighting with others, and violence. In the end, Solomon talks about the dangers that a person who goes against the wisdom of the Lord faces. The Lord actively opposes the lives of those who walk in wickedness. Even those who live in the same house as the wicked run the risk of falling into their judgment. This contrasts with the prosperous life of the one who follows the Lord.

The interpretation/
exegesis of the passage.
What does this passage
mean? How does this
passage apply to my
life?

LOOK

There are many unbelievers who think that Christianity is a religion of rules and restrictions, and that God is only interested in telling us the fun stuff we aren't allowed to do. They think that God is holding out on us, keeping us from the best things in life. However, Solomon wrote this chapter in part to show us that this is not the case. God's commandments are for our best. As our Creator, He knows what is good for human beings and what is not. When He tells us, for example, that stealing is wrong, it is not because He doesn't want us to have nice things, but that He knows that we would have all kinds of problems in the world if people kept taking things without asking. In this passage, Solomon shows us that walking in the Lord's wisdom is the way to receive the most out of life.

LOOK (Continued)

Unfortunately, this truth is often distorted into what is called the prosperity Gospel. The prosperity Gospel teaches us that if we obey the Bible, we will be happy, rich, and healthy all the time. This is not what this passage is teaching. Solomon is showing us that, *in general*, following God's commandments lead to blessing because He knows what is best for us. That does not mean that obedience will *always* lead to blessing. Certainly stories like Job illustrate that this is not the case. However, keeping God's commandments is a good way to avoid many things that would be harmful to us.

Obviously, the Bible is our ultimate source of God's wisdom and truth. However, this passage points out that our parents or guardians are a great source of wisdom. Verses 1, 3, and 21 show that Solomon originally addressed this chapter to his son. Because our parents have lived on this earth longer than we have, they have gained experience and wisdom that we do not yet have. When they give us certain rules, it is not because they don't want us to have fun, but because they love us. When your dad says not to run in the street, it is because he knows that the street can be dangerous. When mom says not to touch the hot stove, she is protecting you from hurting yourself. When a guardian tells us to eat our vegetables, it is not because they don't want us to enjoy other foods, but because they know it is good for us. Parents are a great source of wisdom that can lead to a prosperous life.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Proverbs 3:1-2.

Have the students go through the chapter and look for points of practical application. Have them create goals to work on this week.

Pray: Thank the Lord for providing the wisdom of His Word. Ask Him for help as we all try to walk in His wisdom.

Parent Question: How does walking in God's wisdom affect my life here on earth?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Proverbs 3 by David Guzik

WISDOM FROM TRUSTING GOD

A. My son, walk rightly with God.

1. ([Proverbs 3:1-4](#)) Walk rightly with God by valuing His word.

**My son, do not forget my law,
But let your heart keep my commands;
For length of days and long life
And peace they will add to you.
Let not mercy and truth forsake you;
Bind them around your neck,
Write them on the tablet of your heart,
And so find favor and high esteem
In the sight of God and man.**

a. **Do not forget my law:** Solomon's advice as a father to his **son** in this section begins with a warning to never **forget** God's word (**my law**). Solomon didn't mean "**my law**" in the sense of his own personal decrees, but as God's word that he had internalized and made personal.

b. **Let your heart keep my commands:** Deciding to not **forget** God's word is more than a mental exercise of memory. It is also connected to a life of obedience, in which one does **keep** the **commands** of God. If one mentally remembers God's word yet fails to obey it, we could rightly say he or she has *forgotten* God's **commands**.

i. We note also that this obedience is one of the **heart**. Our goal in obedience is not mere outward conformity to God's will, but a **heart** that loves and obeys Him.

ii. "The heart is the first thing that wanders away from God, and it is also the first thing that returns to God." (Bridges)

c. **They will add to you:** There is a real benefit from this life and heart that obeys God. In principle, life and heart obedience bring **long life** and **peace**. This is a blessed combination; **length of days** could be a curse and not a blessing without **peace**.

i. We say *in principle* because this is largely how Proverbs was written and should be regarded. The principle of [Proverbs 3:2](#) is not an absolute promise; there are some people who truly are given to obedience in both conduct and heart and die relatively young. Some godly persons have trouble living in **peace**. We regard these as true principles, not absolute promises.

d. **Let not mercy and truth forsake you:** Solomon wisely told his son to keep God's loyal love (**mercy**, the great Hebrew word *hesed*) and **truth** close. They should be so close that it would be as if they were a necklace on him at all times (**bind them around your neck**) and written **on the tablet of your heart**.

i. Matthew Poole observed that **mercy and truth** could be understood both as God's mercy and truth to us

and as the mercy and truth that is man's duty to show to others. Both are important and should never be forsaken.

ii. "Mercy and truth are frequently joined together, as they are in God, as [Psalms 25:10](#); [57:3](#), etc., or in men, as [Proverbs 16:6](#); [20:28](#); [Hosea 4:1](#), and here." (Poole)

iii. **Bind them...write them:** "Striking expressions for glorying in, meditating on and ([7:3](#)) acting by these principles." (Kidner) "By 'binding' and 'writing' the teacher is stressing that the teachings become a part of the disciple's nature." (Ross)

e. **So find favor:** The blessed, obedient life is magnetic. It enjoys the **favor** of the God it honors and attracts the **favor** of man.

i. "[F]avor (*hēn*, see [1:9](#)), the common word for 'grace,' here denotes the positive disposition of heaven and earth toward the son because of his attractiveness. Like *hesed*, it cannot be compelled; it is extended voluntarily and unilaterally to preserve a valued relationship." (Waltke)

ii. "This means that others will recognize the competence and intelligence of the wise individual." (Garrett)

iii. Trapp on having **favor** before **man**: "As did Joseph, Moses, David. He was a man after God's own heart, and whatsoever he did pleased the people. It is God that gives credit; he fashioneth men's opinions, and inclineth their hearts, as Ezra oft acknowledges with much thankfulness. [[Ezra 7:27-28](#)]"

2. ([Proverbs 3:5-6](#)) Walk rightly with God by truly trusting Him.

**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.**

a. **Trust in the Lord:** Solomon advised his son to live a life of **trust** in Yahweh. Solomon had found that God was *worthy* to be trusted. It is our nature to put our trust in something or someone, even if it is our self. Solomon told us to consciously put our **trust in the Lord**, the covenant God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

i. "The word translated 'trust' in [verse 5](#) means 'to lie helpless, facedown.' It pictures a servant waiting for the master's command in readiness to obey, or a defeated soldier yielding himself to the conquering general." (Wiersbe)

ii. "To trust in God is to be unbottomed of thyself, and of every creature, and so to lean upon God, that if he fail thee thou sinkest." (Trapp)

b. **With all your heart:** If trust in God is to be true, it must be complete. To put half our trust in God and half our trust in self or something else is really failure to trust the Lord at all. We should endeavor to give God all our conscious trust.

i. "They trust not God at all that do it not alone. He that stands with one foot on a rock, and another foot upon a quicksand, will sink and perish as certainly as he that stands with both feet on a quicksand." (Trapp)

ii. This aspect troubles some because they fear there is some part of their **heart** that is not truly trusting God. We may sympathize with this concern, knowing that as imperfect people it is impossible for us to **trust in the Lord** perfectly. In principle, we gather that [Proverbs 3:5-6](#) does not describe an objectively *perfect* trust in God, but a heart and life that does not consciously reject or defy God with unbelief.

iii. In fact, the following phrases will explain what Solomon intended with the phrase **with all your heart**.

iv. "This trust is not the mere cold assent of enlightened judgment. It is trust...with all your heart. It is a child-like, unwavering confidence in our Father's well-proved wisdom, faithfulness, and love." (Bridges)

c. **Lean not on your own understanding:** Trusting God with all our heart means to decide to put away our **own understanding** and instead to choose to trust God and His understanding, especially as declared in

His word.

i. **Lean not:** “*Do not rely, or lean as on a broken crutch, depicts what is meant by ‘trust.’*” (Waltke)

ii. “It is on GOD, not on *thyself*, that thou art commanded to *depend*. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool.... *Self-sufficiency* and *self-dependence* have been the ruin of mankind ever since the fall of Adam. The grand sin of the human race is their continual endeavour to *live independently of God*.” (Clarke)

d. **In all your ways acknowledge Him:** Trusting God with all our heart means to honor and **acknowledge** Him in all that we do. It is the choice to “invite” God into our everyday life and conduct. It is to practice the presence of God in the regular and sometimes mundane things that happen every day.

i. **In all your ways acknowledge:** “Ask counsel at his mouth, aim at his glory, be evermore in the sense of his presence, and light of his countenance.” (Trapp)

e. **He shall direct your paths:** This is the great principle of God’s response towards those who trust Him in the way described in the previous lines. When we **acknowledge Him** in our **ways**, He will **direct** our **paths** in the fulfillment of His will, into what is right before Him and pleasing to us.

i. More than a few are *afraid* to have God **direct** their **paths**. They would much rather direct themselves! This, fundamentally, is the heart that *does not* trust in the Lord with all the heart. The surrendered heart delights in God’s direction and in God’s paths.

ii. One of the most frequently asked questions among believers is, “How can I know the will of God?” In principle, Solomon gave a wonderful answer in [Proverbs 3:5-6](#). When we:

- Decide to put our trust in the Lord.
- Decide to not trust in our own understanding, but give attention and priority to God’s revealed word.
- Decide to acknowledge and honor God in all that we do.

When we do those things, we can trust that God will **direct** our **paths**. We can go forward in peace, believing that through His word, through the leading of the Holy Spirit, through the counsel of others, through godly common sense, and through life circumstances, God will **direct** our **paths**. We will walk along our way of life and come to see that we have been on the path God intended all along.

iii. G. Campbell Morgan gave his own testimony to the truth of [Proverbs 3:5-6](#): “The measure in which I have trusted Jehovah and acknowledged Him, has been the measure of walking in the paths of real life.”

3. ([Proverbs 3:7-8](#)) Walk rightly with God by a humble, reverent life.

**Do not be wise in your own eyes;
Fear the Lord and depart from evil.
It will be health to your flesh,
And strength to your bones.**

a. **Do not be wise in your own eyes:** We can regard this as an explanation of what it means to lean on one’s own understanding ([Proverbs 3:5](#)). It is to regard *our* wisdom as better and greater than God’s.

i. **Do not be wise in your own eyes:** “Be not puffed up with vain conceit of thine own wisdom, as if that were sufficient for the conduct of all thine affairs without direction or assistance from God, or without the advice of others.” (Poole)

b. **Fear the Lord and depart from evil:** This is the natural result of trusting God. As we trust Him, we come to know Him better, leading to natural reverence and awe (to **fear the Lord**). As we trust Him, we are drawn more to God and further **from evil**.

c. **It will be health to your flesh:** A life of surrender and trust in God has real benefits to the **health** of the trusting one. It gives a greater sense of peace and **strength** that one would not have *apart* from a life of trust

and surrender to God.

i. **Flesh** is literally *navel* and is usually taken as a center point referring to the entire body.

4. ([Proverbs 3:9-10](#)) Walk rightly with God in regard to your possessions.

**Honor the Lord with your possessions,
And with the firstfruits of all your increase;
So your barns will be filled with plenty,
And your vats will overflow with new wine.**

a. **Honor the Lord with your possessions:** This is another practical way to show that you do *trust in the Lord with all your heart* ([Proverbs 3:5](#)). When we truly trust Him, we can **honor** Him with generosity that realizes He is the great provider and God has inexhaustible resources.

i. Many commentators note that the word **honor** has a connection with sacrifice. "Commentaries note that this is the only place where Proverbs alludes to the ceremonial worship.... Proverbs is not so much concerning itself with ceremonial religion here as it is exhorting the reader to demonstrate gratitude toward and confidence in God (rather than in wealth)." (Garrett)

ii. "The third piece of advice is to give back to God some of one's wealth as a sacrifice in recognition that God gave it." (Ross)

b. **With the firstfruits of all your increase:** According to the principle of the sacrifice of the firstfruits, we should give to God the *first* and *best*. If we will truly **honor the Lord** with our giving, it won't be with the last and leftovers.

i. **Firstfruits:** "It takes on the technical sense of offering the best of material things." (Waltke)

ii. The principle of **firstfruits** also means that we give to God in active anticipation that He will provide more. We honor Him by thinking, "I can give You the first and the best because I know You can and will give much more."

iii. "The Old Testament Jews brought the Lord the firstlings of their flocks ([Exodus 13:1-2](#)) and the firstfruits of their fields ([Leviticus 23:9-14](#)), and in this way acknowledged His goodness and sovereignty." (Wiersbe)

c. **So your barns will be filled with plenty:** This is a wonderful principle. God is the master and distributor of unlimited resources. He knows how to prosper and take care of those who honor Him with the resources He has given to them.

i. **New wine:** "New wine, according to F. S. Fitzsimmonds, 'represents wine made from the first drippings of the juice before the winepress was trodden. As such it would be particularly potent.'" (Waltke)

B. My son, receive the hard lessons of wisdom.

1. ([Proverbs 3:11-12](#)) Receiving correction from God with the right heart.

**My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord,
Nor detest His correction;
For whom the Lord loves He corrects,
Just as a father the son in whom he delights.**

a. **Do not despise the chastening of the Lord:** In giving advice to his son, Solomon taught him how to regard **correction** or discipline from God, the **chastening of the Lord**.

i. "The word *musar* [**chastening**] signifies *correction*, *discipline*, and *instruction*. *Teaching* is essentially necessary to show the man the way in which he is to go; *discipline* is necessary to render that *teaching* *effectual*; and, often, *correction* is requisite in order to bring the mind into *submission*, without which it cannot acquire *knowledge*." (Clarke)

ii. “When the father’s admonitions are violated, the son can expect the Lord to back it up with a “spanking” to prevent the wrong from becoming habitual.” (Waltke)

iii. We may **despise** God’s chastening, “By accounting it an unnecessary, and useless, and troublesome thing.” (Poole)

iv. The writer to the Hebrews quotes this passage in his encouragement that Christians should endure their own seasons of chastening and the discouragement that often comes with it. They could be encouraged in knowing that such suffering is a sign of sonship.

b. **Nor detest His correction:** This is when God either brings or allows some discomfort or affliction in the life of the believer for the good of:

- Exposing a sin or evil not previously seen.
- Showing the nature of the problem and need to address it.
- Discouraging the previous embrace of the sin or evil.
- Guiding to the rejection of sin or evil and embrace of God’s best.

i. The particular discomfort or affliction could come in many ways. God may do it through the inward conviction of the Holy Spirit. It may come through critics and adversaries. It may come through disappointing and sour circumstances. However it may come, it will not *feel* good, but before God could be allowed to *do* much good in the life of the believer.

ii. “‘Discipline’ primarily involves teaching or training rather than punishment for wrongdoing. It is analogous to military training, in which, although the threat of punishment is present, even stern discipline is not necessarily retribution for offenses. Hardship and correction are involved, however, which are always hard to accept.” (Garrett)

iii. “The Lord’s discipline is like that in a family, not in a school, let alone in a prison. The Lord corrects his children and does not treat them as criminals. ‘I love the rod of my heavenly Father,’ exclaimed the saintly Fletcher. ‘How gentle are the stripes I feel. How heavy those I deserve.’” (Bridges)

c. **For whom the Lord loves He corrects:** Seen rightly, God’s correction of His people is a wonderful sign of His *love*. In our instinctive desire for ease and comfort we often wish God would not correct us. Yet because He **loves** and **delights** in us, according to His wisdom He will deal with our sins, weaknesses, and failings.

i. A father who truly loves his children will correct them appropriately. For a father to leave sins and failings uncorrected is not a sign of love; it is a sign of indifference and the selfish disregard that often accompanies indifference.

ii. “C. S. Lewis illustrates the truth by noting that an artist may not take much trouble over a picture drawn to amuse a child, but he takes endless effort over his great work of art that he loves.” (Waltke)

iii. “Sometimes He chastens because we have rebelled and need to repent; other times He chastens to keep us from sinning and to prepare us for His special blessing. No matter how much the experience *hurts* us, it will never *harm* us, because God always chastens in love.” (Wiersbe)

2. ([Proverbs 3:13-18](#)) The wonderful benefits of God’s correction.

**Happy is the man who finds wisdom,
And the man who gains understanding;
For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver,
And her gain than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies,
And all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
Length of days is in her right hand,**

**In her left hand riches and honor.
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her,
And happy are all who retain her.**

- a. **Happy is the man who finds wisdom:** Solomon longed for his son (and all who would read Proverbs) to seek after wisdom. In the fear of the Lord, **wisdom** and **understanding** (often the result of God's loving correction) would guide men and women into a truly **happy** life.
- i. **Happy:** "Blessed' describes heavenly bliss stemming from being right with God; it depicts the human condition of well being that comes with God's blessing or as a divine reward for righteousness." (Ross)
- ii. **Happy:** "Is wisdom a sullen matron who entertains her followers only with sighs and tears? Does this mean that to gain the joys of the next life we must bid eternal farewell to the benefits of this life? ... This is the world's creed, and it is a slander from the great liar." (Bridges)
- b. **Her proceeds are better than the profits of silver:** Wisdom (especially that which comes from God's correction) is **better** than material gain. It imparts the kind of character and training that brings contentment and quality of life that money can't provide.
- i. Solomon sought wisdom and God took care of the rest ([1 Kings 3:9](#)).
- c. **All the things you may desire cannot compare with her:** This wisdom is greater than all kinds of riches — **silver, fine gold, or rubies**. To have the wisdom that comes from God's loving correction is to have something better than material wealth.
- i. By inheritance from his father and through his own shrewd business dealings, Solomon was a fabulously wealthy man ([2 Chronicles 9:22](#)). In a way that few would ever know, Solomon knew that the blessings of relationship with God and godly character were greater than all that a man **may desire** of material things.
- d. **Length of days is in her right hand:** In principle, wisdom brings many benefits. Wise people live longer, enjoy great prosperity (**riches**) and esteem (**honor**). They live lives marked by **pleasantness**, by **peace**, and by happiness (**happy are all who retain her**).
- i. "Wisdom is here represented as a great and generous princess distributing gifts to her subjects." (Poole)
- ii. **She is a tree of life:** "Alluding most manifestly to the tree so called which God in the beginning planted in the garden of Paradise, by eating the fruit of which all the wastes of nature might have been continually repaired, so as to prevent death for ever." (Clarke)

C. My son, value wise living before God and man.

1. ([Proverbs 3:19-20](#)) The wise Creator.

**The Lord by wisdom founded the earth;
By understanding He established the heavens;
By His knowledge the depths were broken up,
And clouds drop down the dew.**

- a. **The Lord by wisdom founded the earth:** In His work of creation, God showed great **wisdom**. This is remarkably seen in both the large features and small details of creation. The universe around us has the marks of a brilliant Designer whose design shows His wisdom.
- i. God's self-revelation through His creation is an important theme of [Romans 1:18-20](#), which also describes the guilt of mankind in ignoring and rejecting God's self-revelation through what He created.
- ii. "This section shows that the wisdom that directs life is the same wisdom that created the universe (see discussion on [8:20-31](#)); to surrender to God's wisdom is to put oneself in harmony with creation, the world

around one.” (Ross)

b. **By understanding He established the heavens:** God’s creative wisdom is seen in the smallest details of the single cell, but also in the expansive majesty of the **heavens**. In His great **understanding** God created a universe that some call “just right.” According to physicists and scientists, we live in a *just right* universe.

i. **Established the heavens:** “Or *fitted* or *ordered* them; framed them in that exquisite order which now they have.” (Poole)

ii. The universe has a just-right gravitational force. *If it were larger*, the stars would be too hot and would burn up too quickly and too unevenly to support life. *If it was smaller*, the stars would remain so cool, nuclear fusion would never ignite, and there would be no heat and light.

iii. The universe has a just-right speed of light. *If it were larger*, stars would send out too much light. *If it were smaller*, stars would not send out enough light.

iv. The universe has a just-right average distance between the stars. *If it were larger*, the heavy element density would be too thin for rocky planets to form, and there would only be gaseous planets. *If it were smaller*, planetary orbits would become destabilized because of the gravitational pull from other stars.

c. **By His knowledge the depths were broken up:** This is likely a reference to what happened at the flood described in Noah’s day ([Genesis 7:11](#)). God knew that such a judgment was necessary, and He knew how to make it happen. The radical ecological changes suggested by the flood of Noah possibly set in motion our earth’s modern hydrological system (**clouds drop down the dew**).

i. **Drop down the dew:** “The west wind after sunset brings enough moisture of the sea with it that during the night it falls in rich *dew* (*tal*; cf. [Song of Solomon 5:2](#)). In Canaan’s almost rainless summer the land was dependent on this moisture for life, and so dew was more impressive to Orientals than to Westerners who, having a more abundant amount of rainfall, have less dependence on dew.” (Waltke)

2. ([Proverbs 3:21-22](#)) Giving attention to God’s wisdom.

**My son, let them not depart from your eyes—
Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
So they will be life to your soul
And grace to your neck.**

a. **Let them not depart from your eyes:** Solomon told his **son** the importance of constant attention to God’s **wisdom and discretion**. This requires not only a life-diligence, but also an appropriately surrendered heart that recognizes that God’s **wisdom and discretion** are greater than my own.

b. **They will be life to your soul:** Constant attention to God’s **wisdom and discretion** brings real benefit to life.

3. ([Proverbs 3:23-26](#)) The safety of walking in God’s wisdom.

**Then you will walk safely in your way,
And your foot will not stumble.
When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
Do not be afraid of sudden terror,
Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
For the Lord will be your confidence,
And will keep your foot from being caught.**

a. **You will walk safely in your way:** In principle, God guides those who honor His wisdom into paths of safety. There is nothing safer than living in the wisdom and will of God.

b. **The Lord will be your confidence:** The wise life can let go of fear (**you will not be afraid**) and in the re-

lease of anxiety know the blessing of **sleep**. Confident in God, we need not be afraid of **sudden terror** or **trouble from the wicked**.

i. **Your sleep will be sweet:** “Free from distracting cares and terrors, which oftentimes haunt sinners even in their sleep, because thy mind shall be composed and serene through the sense of God’s favour and providence, and the conscience of thine own integrity.” (Poole)

ii. “Wicked men’s sleep is often troublesome, through the workings of their evil consciences; as our Richard III, after the murder of his own two innocent nephews, had fearful dreams.” (Trapp)

iii. “When Peter was in prison, in chains, between two soldiers, on the eve of his expected execution, when there seemed but a step between him and death, he was able to lie down and not be afraid.” (Bridges)

4. ([Proverbs 3:27-30](#)) Some lessons from God’s wisdom.

**Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
When it is in the power of your hand to do so.**

Do not say to your neighbor,

“Go, and come back,

And tomorrow I will give it,”

When you have it with you.

Do not devise evil against your neighbor,

For he dwells by you for safety’s sake.

Do not strive with a man without cause,

If he has done you no harm.

a. **Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due:** Here Solomon gave some practical examples of the lessons wisdom teaches. He began with the simple principle that we should do **good** when it **is in the power** of our hand to do so.

i. “Do not refuse a kindness when it is in thy power to perform it. If thou have the means *by thee*, and thy neighbour’s necessities be pressing, do not put him off till the *morrow*. Death may take either him or thee before that time.” (Clarke)

ii. **Those to whom it is due:** “May be laborers who have earned their pay, the poor who rightly plead for help, or suppliants at the city gates who call for justice.” (Garrett)

iii. **To whom it is due:** “The Hebrew of [27a](#) (‘...from its owners’) brings out the injustice, not merely inconsiderateness, of delay.” (Kidner)

b. **Do not say to your neighbor:** The good we should do should be done *promptly*, while opportunity still exists. If we leave it to **tomorrow**, it may never happen — and will certainly not happen as soon as it could and should.

c. **Do not devise evil against your neighbor:** God’s wisdom teaches us to treat others well. Since our own security and safety are connected to the good of our neighbor, then **for safety’s sake** we should **not strive** with our neighbor when there is no cause (**if he has done you no harm**).

i. **Do not devise:** “*Do not plan* renders a verb meaning concretely ‘to plow’ and figuratively, always ethical, ‘to prepare [i.e., plan]’ good or evil deeds.” (Waltke)

ii. “Do not be of a litigious, quarrelsome spirit. Be not under the influence of too nice a sense of honour. If thou must appeal to judicial authority to bring him that wrongs thee to reason, avoid all enmity, and do nothing in a spirit of revenge.” (Clarke)

iii. “We must beware of becoming involved in quarrels ([17:14](#); [18:6](#); [25:8-9](#)) instead of pursuing peace ([Romans 12:18](#)). A spirit of strife is a great hindrance to holiness ([Hebrews 12:14](#); [Colossians 3:12-15](#)) and is inconsistent for any of God’s servants ([2 Timothy 2:24](#)). (Bridges)

5. ([Proverbs 3:31-35](#)) The benefit of a life that loves God's wisdom.

Do not envy the oppressor,
And choose none of his ways;
For the perverse *person is an abomination to the Lord*,
But His secret counsel *is with the upright*.
The curse of the Lord *is on the house of the wicked*,
But He blesses the home of the just.
Surely He scorns the scornful,
But gives grace to the humble.
The wise shall inherit glory,
But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

a. **Do not envy the oppressor**: Wisdom teaches us that though the way of the wicked may seem good and at times enviable, we should **choose none of his ways**. In honor to God, in love to others, and in wisdom of life we should never oppress others (as Jesus said in [Matthew 10:25-28](#) and other passages).

b. **The perverse person is an abomination to the Lord**: We should not envy or imitate the oppressor because God knows how and when to judge such wicked. God **blesses the home of the just**, but He also **scorns the scornful**. The temporary prosperity of the wicked should never make us envy or imitate them.

i. **The perverse person**: "The Lord abhors intrigue, but people who are candid and upright, who know the virtue of openness and simplicity, have his ear." (Waltke)

c. **He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble**: This wonderful principle is repeated three times in the Bible (also in [James 4:6](#) and [1 Peter 5:5](#)). It shows how pride sets God in opposition to us, but humility invites the **grace** of God. We want to be **humble** and receive God's grace.

i. There is a sense in which Solomon spoke of *wisdom* and *humility* as being closely related. Those who are wise enough to see God as He really is and ourselves as we really are will have a natural and appropriate humility.

ii. [James 4:6](#) and [1 Peter 5:5](#) quote the Septuagint translation of this verse, which — if anything — softened the force of the Hebrew phrasing here. "The verse uses a strong anthropomorphic idea: 'He mocks the proud mockers.' The LXX [Septuagint] has a softened interpretation: 'The Lord resists the proud'." (Ross)

d. **The wise shall inherit glory**: Whatever exaltation the wicked seem to have, it is only temporary. Their **legacy** shall be **shame**, but God has a destiny of **glory** for His wise, humble ones.

i. **Inherit glory**: "Not have it only, but inherit it...they shall have it as their proper, perfect, and perpetual right." (Trapp)

ii. "By contrast, fools *are those who acquire* or earn, not inherit, by their intractability, public *shame*." (Waltke)