

Proverbs Chapter 4

Proverbs 4:1-3 "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding." "For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law." "For I was my father's son, tender and only [beloved] in the sight of my mother."

This message that Solomon penned undoubtedly is not only written by him to all young men for instruction, but is also what David had taught Solomon, as well.

“Good doctrine”: There is no wisdom but that which is linked to good doctrine, which should be the focal point of all instruction.

Sometimes in the Proverbs, it seems as if we are covering the same ground all over again. Whether this is to drive home a lesson, or whether we are picking up extra fragments of truth and that is the reason for repetition is not clear. As we said in previous lessons, wisdom is the subject. We see here also, that a doctrine (belief), has been established.

Instructions in God's law came from father to son in these times. It was very important not to leave out even minor details in that law. We are told again here to remember in detail the law of God and to live by it (do not forsake it). In fact, we should make it our doctrine or way of life as well.

Verse 3 is speaking of David and Bath-sheba.

Proverbs 4:4 "He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live."

There is much written in Chronicles and Kings about Solomon. David even gives Solomon detailed information about the temple to be built in Jerusalem. You may read more about all of this in those respective books. The point I am trying to make here, about this, is that Solomon was instructed of David; and Solomon is now conveying to us how important it is to keep the commandments. The promise is life and life everlasting, at that.

Proverbs 4:5-7 "Get wisdom, get understanding: forget [it] not; neither decline from the words of my mouth." "Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee." "Wisdom [is] the principal thing; [therefore] get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

Solomon, as you can see here, thought that wisdom and understanding was the most important things to have. Worldly wisdom is not what Solomon had in mind, here either.

Solomon, being taught of David and being gifted with the gift of wisdom which God had given him, realized that wisdom and knowledge of the things of God should bring a person even closer to God; and therefore, keep him from failure. He speaks of wisdom as if it is a person. Wisdom is spirit.

Proverbs 4:8 "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor, when thou dost embrace her."

Wisdom does bring honor instead of shame. A foolish son or daughter brings shame to their parents, but children filled with godly wisdom bring honor to their parents.

The more highly one esteems wisdom, the more highly wisdom lifts that person.

Proverbs 4:9 "She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee."

This has to do with the association of wisdom with the inner spiritual life. As we stated in the previous lesson (3:22), the wisdom of God will adorn one's life for all to see its beauty. And (in chapter 1:9), we are told "For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, and chains about your neck.

Proverbs 4:10 "Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many."

For those who hear and listen to wisdom, their days may be long upon the earth.

Exodus 20:12 Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Proverbs 4:11-12 "I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths." "When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble."

We see again, that some of this has come to Solomon from David. David walked uprightly before the Lord. Even the name "David" means beloved of God. God directed David's walk.

David taught his son; and now Solomon is saying to all who read this book of Proverbs, hear and understand. Pray for wisdom of God and walk in that wisdom, and you shall not stumble and fall. You can run the race well and not stumble along the way as long as the wisdom of God directs you.

Proverbs 4:13 "Take fast hold of instruction; let [her] not go: keep her; for she [is] thy life."

The father commanded his son (in verse 5) to get wisdom, now here he commands him to hold on to it.

When we stop learning, we are dead. There is always something else to learn. We read in 2 Timothy the type of instruction that is the most profitable to man.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Proverbs 4:14 "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil [men]."

Sin is best dealt with at its beginning by the application of necessary wisdom to suit the initial temptation.

Proverbs 4:15 "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

Four verbs identify aspects necessary in urgently dealing with sin at its start.

1. Avoid the sinful situation;
2. Pass as far from it as possible;
3. Turn away from the sin;
4. Pass beyond or escape the sin.

The plan here fits exactly with the pattern of sin's enticement outlined (in James 1:13-15).

James 1:13-15 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:" "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Proverbs 4:16-17 "For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause [some] to fall." "For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence."

We see in these 2 verses a person who has chosen a sinful way of life. They are not satisfied to ruin their own lives but are trying to drag others into their sin. Misery loves company.

They have to sin before they can sleep, and they view their sin as food for their hungry, wicked souls.

Isn't it strange that many violent crimes seem to be committed by gangs? These people, in the verses above, do not hold down a regular job and eat from that. They commit crimes against others and live by that. They eventually wind up in jail or worse, and then do not have anything to look forward to for all of eternity.

Proverbs 4:18 "But the path of the just [is] as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

This is in total contrast. Those who are justified because they have made a decision to walk in the path of righteousness are walking in the Light as He is in the Light. That perfect day is the

day when all these struggles of this life are over, and we can be in the presence of the Light for that eternal day.

The path of the believer is one of increasing light, just as a sunrise begins with the first faint glow of dawn and proceeds to the splendor of noonday.

Proverbs 4:19 "The way of the wicked [is] as darkness: they know not at what they stumble."

The wicked in darkness cannot and will not repent and come to the light. We see, as we read in John, the Light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not.

Proverbs 4:20-22 "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings." "Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart." "For they [are] life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

How many times have we told our children over and over, please listen and heed the message. Don't get out in the world and forget what I have been saying. Don't stop looking at the messages in front of your eyes. Hide the things I have said down deep in your heart, and don't let the cares of the world make you forget. They are life and health to you. Every parent has said things similar to these to their children, and we have all heard them say: "You have told me over and over, now I won't forget." It isn't necessary to say it anymore".

Proverbs 4:23-24 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it [are] the issues of life." "Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee."

The heart is the very center of our being. It commonly refers to the mind as the center of thinking and reason, but also includes the emotions, the will, and thus the whole inner being. The heart is the depository of all wisdom and the source of whatever affects speech, sight, and conduct.

We can either have a pure heart or it can be desperately wicked. It will be one or the other. God will judge our heart. The heart controls the moral structure of our lives. A pure heart brings pure words.

Froward mouths and perverse (evil), words come from an evil heart. Out of the abundance of our heart our mouth speaketh. It speaks life or death.

Proverbs 4:25 "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee."

I have always said that our eyes reveal what is inside of us.

They are little windows that you may look into the soul. Shifty eyes that cannot look at you, ordinarily indicate the person has something they are covering up. Eyes that look straight at you say, "I am telling the truth". Wandering eyes of any kind can bring heartache.

Proverbs 4:26 "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." Proverbs 4:27 "Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil."

(In verse 26), the word "ponder" means think about the path you are launching out on. Make sure that the path you are heading out on leads to righteousness. Don't despair of the path you have chosen. Make your path straight. Things of the world must not attract you off of this path. Stay on the straight path that will lead you to heaven.

Proverbs Chapter 4 Questions

1. In verse 2, we read to forsake not the law for it is good _____.
2. Solomon describes himself as what to his mother?
3. Besides Solomon giving us these instructions, what can we assume they are?
4. What is the subject of the Proverbs?
5. What is a doctrine?
6. How did the law of commandments not get lost?
7. Who was Solomon 's mother?
8. In verse 4, we read keep my commandments and _____.
9. What are 2 more Old Testament books that speak much about Solomon?
10. What did Solomon say was the principal thing?
11. Wisdom and knowledge of God can do what for a person?
12. If sin brings shame, what brings honor?
13. What do crowns of glory have to do with?
14. David means what?
15. What good could be said of David?
16. If the wisdom of God directs your path, you will not _____ and _____.
17. What kind of instruction is most important to man?

18. Where does Scripture come from?
19. What path must we avoid at all cost?
20. What is the difference in the path of the world and the path of the believer?
21. The evil eat of the bread of _____.
22. What is the path of the just compared to?
23. Out of what are the issues of life?
24. In verse 24, what is to be put away?
25. How are we to keep our eyes?
26. Shifting eyes usually indicate what?
27. What does the author think reveals what is inside of us?
28. Eyes that look straight at you, usually are saying what?
29. Ponder means what?