

"Trust in the Lord"

Proverbs 3:1-18

- We find an emphasis, in our passage of the day, on these mandates and a few others...
- Remember God's commands
- Memorize His words or do whatever it takes to keep them close at hand
- Rely upon God's knowledge rather than our own
- Endure the chastening of the Lord
- And seek happiness in wisdom and understanding

- These are themes we find throughout Proverbs, particularly in Solomon's words to his children
- But they precede and follow two useful and very well-known sentences
- Words that have encourage a deeper level of discipleship in God's saints since they were written
- It is from verses 5 and 6 of Proverbs 3 that we find our theme of the day
- "Trust in the Lord"

- Verses 5 and 6 of Proverbs 3 must be some of the most-quoted verses in Christianity
- They are well-known because they sum up, in a few words, God's mandate for disciples
- Passages like this are important
- They are easy to remember
- They can be called upon when life is difficult and we need direction

- But their context is also important
- That's why today, on the theme "Trust in the Lord," we want to look over most of the chapter
- Solomon begins...

Proverbs 3:1

1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

- He expects his son to remember his commands, because they come from God
- Solomon is passing along the law of the Lord
- This becomes clear as we move forward in the text
- He's not a father with a high opinion of himself, but rather with a high opinion of God

Proverbs 3:2

2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

- Children are promised long life for obeying and honoring parents
- This is a common refrain in passages like Exodus 20:12...

"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."

- Or Ephesians 6:1-3

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

- This is not a magic formula for long life
- It is a truth about the nature of God's commands and their implications for people
- Parents are meant to be the primary teachers of God's commands to their children
- And God's commands produce good things, healthy things, life-sustaining things in people
- He wants what is best for us, and obeying Him is good for us

Proverbs 3:3-4

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

- We can see the importance of remembering God's work and God's words
- His loyal love and His truth should be worn like a necklace
- Any means that we have of reminding ourselves will be advantageous
- As one commentator put it...

"The blessed, obedient life is magnetic. It enjoys the favor of the God it honors, and attracts the favor of man."

- Then we arrive at our theme verse...

Proverbs 3:5-6

5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

- This must be the motivation behind any of the behaviors we have talked about so far
- We keep His commands and value them because we trust Him
- We regard His knowledge far beyond our own, because it is far above our own
- When tempted to live according to our own understanding, we instead acknowledge Him
- Because when our paths are directed by Him, they lead to the destination that is best for us
- To trust is to have confidence, to be bold, to be secure
- We feel safe in trusting our lives and our choices to Him, the One True God
- He is worthy of this trust
- And does not fail to lead

Proverbs 3:7-8

7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

- If we refuse to trust Him, this may be one of the reasons
- Perhaps we are wise in our own eyes?
- Perhaps we do regard our own knowledge above His?
- Perhaps we are reluctant to simply believe Him?

- Whatever we feel or think, we should disregard it and embrace the truth
- Depart from evil and seek the healing a refreshment of His guidance
- Obedience is always better

Proverbs 3:9-10

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

- Whatever financial resources we have should be entrusted to Him
- Our giving to His work is evidence of our trust in Him
- The New Testament makes this point in Matthew 6...

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

- There is blessing, not in hanging onto what He gives us, but in giving it up
- We should not regard it as our own
- For He is the author of every good and every perfect gift

Proverbs 3:11-12

11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

- There is love in correction
- Any parent understands this principle
- We discipline children because we want what is best for them
- We seek to get them on a path that leads to health and goodness and fulfillment
- This is God's path

- This love and concern is only a reflection of the God who loves us in the same way
- He chastens and corrects
- And this is something we must endure, knowing it is helpful, rather the grievous

Proverbs 3:13-18

13 Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

14 For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

18 She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

- We've spent the bulk of our time talking about trust in Him and His word
- Recognizing things which result from this trust, like following His guidance or giving Him our firstfruits
- Or enduring His chastening
- These characteristics and actions represent wisdom

- But there are going to be complex things that enter our lives
- And we'll need every ounce of wisdom and understanding that we can muster

- They will not come without seeking
- And so we should place a high value on wisdom and understanding
- Pursuing them without delay and without distraction

- For they will lead us to the best place
- The place God wants us to be
- It is a place of pleasantness and peace

- And while we may fear taking this path
- As the world and our own flesh will point in the opposite direction
- But remember He knows what is best and sees it clearly
- Our job is to trust

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2020