

LIVING WISELY

PROVERBS 1-9

The Trusting Child

Proverbs 3

Live like a child of God (1-12).

- *Hold fast to the Father's commandments (1-2).*
- *Stand firm in God's grace and faithfulness (3-4).*
- *Trust in the Lord and not in yourself (5-8).*
- *Honor the Lord with all that you have (9-10).*
- *Respond gratefully to the Father's loving discipline (11-12).*

Solomon calls his son to live like a child of God. This includes several simple and important characteristics in the life of a believer. First, because of the exceeding and eternal value of knowing God and his Word, it's critical to hold fast to the Father's commandments. Solomon's son was being given the very words of God through his earthly father, being reminded of the commandments of God for his life. Remembering and holding fast in faith to the commandments of the Lord was a simple call and an important commitment. It impacts life in a significant way! Second, God's grace is what leads to grace in life, so stand firm in God's grace and faithfulness. Solomon's son was encouraged to covenant faithfulness, reminded that this would lead to God's grace in his life and his future rule in the kingdom. Third, Solomon exhorted his son to trust in the Lord and not in himself. God is the only wise choice for who to trust in life. He's the only one who is never wrong and never changes his mind. The path of faith leads to God's way in the life of the one who trusts in the Lord. It leads to God's protection and forgiveness in life, which is healing and refreshment to the sin-sick soul, so trust the Lord and not yourself! Fourth, Solomon called his son to honor the Lord with all that he had. Offering the Lord the very first and the very best is an act of faith. It's a very tangible way that a believer expresses his true gratitude for what the Lord has provided and displays his true faith that God will provide. Finally, Solomon urged his son to respond gratefully to the Father's loving discipline. Solomon knew that just as he had disciplined his son in love, desiring his son to learn right from wrong and grow in God's wisdom in his life, so the Lord reproves his beloved children. Therefore, be grateful for the Lord's discipline! It's given in love. Don't grow weary, but continue to appreciate that our Father in heaven loves us enough to discipline us to lead us in his wisdom!

1. Take time to walk through the five characteristics listed above. Discuss these questions for each characteristic as you go through the list.
 - a. How do these verses point to this characteristic?
 - b. Why is this an important characteristic for a child of God?
 - c. Assess your heart in relation to this characteristic. What do you see?
 - d. How are you pursuing this characteristic by faith in your life?
2. Are you a child of God? If so, why is it important to live like it? If not, why not? What's holding you back from turning in repentance and faith to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Live like nothing compares to God's wisdom (13-35).

- *Find and hold fast to God's wisdom that leads to life (13-20).*
- *God's wisdom is peace, confidence, and protection to those who have it (21-26).*
- *God's wisdom gives direction for relationships with others (27-35).*

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Continuing to reinforce the value of God's wisdom, Solomon emphasized the blessing of God's wisdom. God's Word is more precious than silver or gold or fine jewels. Its value is life and a life that leads to peace, pleasantness, and the very gift of the King's riches and honor. The gift of the Word is the very gift that leads to the tree of life: The gift of eternal life! This is possible because God is the Creator! All that exists was created by him. The understanding and wisdom that went into the complexities and expanse of creation brings understanding and wisdom to those who find and hold fast to God's Word. Solomon's call to his son continued with an imploring plea: "Do not lose sight of these – keep sound wisdom and discretion" (Proverbs 2:21). Everything that follows these pleas points to the reality that God's wisdom is peace, confidence, and protection to those who have it. God's wisdom gives direction for the path of life. It gives rest from the fears of this life. It brings confidence in the steps that we take in this life. It protects from the traps that are around every turn in life. Additionally, God's wisdom gives direction for relationships with others in this life. To the way that we treat our neighbors to the way that we avoid the path of sinners, God's Word not only gives wisdom to discern but gives the warning of the result of the path that leads away from God's wisdom. "The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace" (Proverbs 3:35)! Oh that the Lord would give us his wisdom. There's nothing in this world that compares to its value!

1. Take time to talk through the three truths listed above related to God's incomparable wisdom. Discuss these questions for each truth as you go through the list.
 - a. How do you see the reality of this truth in the general outcomes of living in the world?
 - b. How is truth related to the Old Covenant blessings and curses under the law? How is this truth fulfilled in the New Covenant eternal promises under grace?
 - c. Is God's Word – his wisdom in Christ – truly better than anything else in this world? Why, or why not?
2. Are you living your life like nothing compares to God's wisdom? Why, or why not? How can you help one another walk in God's grace by faith to live like nothing compares to the wisdom of the Lord?