


"The Art of Wise Living"  
Part 2  
"Trusting God in Everything"

# TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

2018.7.29



A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

## Questions for Reflection

- Proverbs 26:17 says "Meddling in someone else's argument is as foolish as yanking a dog's ears." State the **point** which is being made—but do it using **only literal** terminology (ie, leave the dog out of it!).

What would be lost if the wisdom contained in the Book of Proverbs were **only** stated literally?

Review the definitions of antithetic, synthetic, and synonymous parallelism (see Sermon Summary). How could we be misled in interpreting Proverbs if we didn't know these features of Hebrew poetry?

- Pastor Doug mentioned that the Hebrew word for "blessing" found in Proverbs 3:13 refers to an "earned blessing"—one which requires faithful and obedient action from us.

How often do you offer that sort of "reward for obedience" to your children? **Why** do you do it?

Is "earned blessing" contrary to grace? Read Philippians 2:12-13 and then discuss this statement:

*"Grace is **not** opposed to **effort**—it is opposed to **earning**."*

- In Proverbs 3:5-6, what are the three things we must do in order for God to do the thing he promises?

Do those three things sound **reasonable** to you? **Achievable?** **Attractive?** Why or why not?

Read Jeremiah 10:23-24. Are "straight paths" **humanly** achievable? **Why** do we need God?

**For what** does Jeremiah ask God in v. 24? **How** does Jeremiah ask God to do it?

Would you be willing to ask God for that?

Why or why not?

## Application-Challenge

- Proverbs 3:5-6 instructs us to "**acknowledge**" God in all our ways—to "recognize God's authority and claims" in every area of your life today!

**Take One Step:** What is one small, concrete step of obedience you will put into practice this week?



# Sermon Summary

A good title for the book of Proverbs would be, "*Life for Dummies.*" The book of Proverbs speaks to us so practically, each proverb is brief (often less than 25 words) and they're memorable. They get to the heart of the matter. I encourage you to make the book of Proverbs a part of your daily reading; just read a chapter a day. That way you will read the entire book of Proverbs in a month. I've been doing this for years, and I am wiser for it.

To get the most out of our study of the book of Proverbs we need to understand how Hebrew poetry works. Whereas rhyme and meter characterize English poetry, parallelism is the hallmark of Hebrew poetry. There are many types of parallelism: **[1] antithetic parallelism**, where the second line states the opposite viewpoint of the first line (see Proverbs 3:33 for an example), **[2] synthetic parallelism**, where the latter line(s) advance and complete the sense of the first (see Proverbs 3:12 for an example), and **[3] synonymous parallelism**, where the second line restates the first line so as to reinforce its meaning (see Proverbs 1:8 for an example). Proverbs 3:5-8, one of the most well-known passages in all of Proverbs, utilizes all three sorts of parallelism. As we study the book of Proverbs together we'll see contrast, repetition, consequences, explanations and illustrations. All of these features of parallelism are designed to drive home truth in a simple and memorable way.

Proverbs 3:13-14 makes a pretty bold statement: wisdom and understanding are more valuable than any amount of money stashed away in the bank. Can that possibly be true? Let's begin there with the word "blessed" (v. 13; which means "to be favored"). Hebrew has two words that are translated as "blessed." One of those words is used when God chooses to bless someone who has done nothing to deserve it. The other Hebrew word is used when we have to do something in order to receive or attain a blessing. That is the case here in Proverbs 3:13. This blessing only comes to those who actively pursue wisdom and understanding.

Do you need God to bless something in your life—your parenting, your marriage, your finances, your health? Proverbs 3:13 says that "blessed are those who find wisdom and who gain understanding." And remember from last week—"understanding" describes someone who is able to discern various good paths from bad ones and wise enough to actually know God's preference! Colossians 1:9-10 describes this kind of person. We receive and understand God's revelation to us (the Scriptures), we understand what it has to do with my particular stage of life. Then we move from information, to understanding, to application. We actually obey what God's Word says. We are not just passive hearers of the Word, we became active doers! It is one thing to have wisdom. It is another to add to that understanding. Then, the Bible says that as a result of our faithful obedience, God is going to "bless us" by making us fruitful in every good work.

Wise, understanding people are in short supply. I suspect that many of you will choose not to read the book of Proverbs with us during this series because you think you already know what is in there. Maybe you do—but you've certainly not obeyed it and tested it. God is not going to show you more truth if you fail to walk in the light of the truth he has already shown you. Proverbs 3 describes four benefits that come from finding wisdom and gaining understanding:

**[1] Health** Proverbs 3:1-2, 8 say that a benefit of wisdom is that we live longer. This proverb is not saying that you will never get cancer that you won't get in a car accident. It is saying that if you become wise and understanding, as a general rule you will make decisions that will bring less risk to your body. You will not abuse your body with alcohol and drugs. You won't put yourself in dangerous situations. You will exercise more and eat better. We will confess our sin more quickly (Psalm 51:8), thus avoiding the physical consequences that accompany a guilty heart.

**[2] Prosperity** Proverbs 3:9-10 says that if we prioritize Kingdom giving right off the top, that will cause us to pay better attention to how we spend the rest of our money. Proverbs has a lot to say about finances. It teaches that prosperity comes to those who work hard and earn money honestly, who give generously, who spend wisely, and who invest carefully. Proverbs 22:7 warns of the danger of excessive debt. Excessive debt will cripple you financially. All of us need a spending plan; it's called a budget. God does not prosper us so that we can consume more; he prospers us so that we can bless others! And that is a beautiful thing. If you follow God's prescription for finances, with God's excess blessing you will be able to give generously to help others (2 Corinthians 9:7-11).

**[3] Peace** Look at Proverbs 3:2, 17, and 23-26. You will find a peace that guards your heart (your emotions) and your mind (what you are always thinking about). Remember Proverbs 3:5-6. Your paths will be "straight"—God removes the obstacles. The Bible says that we'll still encounter tribulation—but we won't experience the tribulation of our own making! Your sleep will be sweet (Proverbs 3:24).

**[4] Honor** If you will walk in the way of wisdom, you will become more like Jesus in terms of people thinking well of you (Proverbs 3:4, 16, 35, cf. 1 Samuel 2:26 and Luke 2:52). Many young people are not rejecting what is in the Bible, they are rejecting a parody of that. They see a lack of authenticity in their parents who claim to follow Christ and they say, "I want no part of that." But what happens when we walk in the way of wisdom—when our kids see us forgive as the Bible says forgive, speak the truth in love as the Bible commands, and being generous, as God is? What happens when they see their parents' healthful living, the prosperity that comes from godly use of money, and the peace and the honor they experience? It makes an indelible impact. Our children are commanded to honor their parents; we make that a lot easier for them when we are honorable.

How do we become heirs of health and prosperity and peace and honor as the bible defines them? Proverbs 3:5-6 tell us to acknowledge God in every aspect of our lives. If we will, we will be amazed at how God will bless us!

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage.  
We can use it to explore the God's knowledge and wisdom...

**Monday**— Job 38

**Tuesday**— Job 39

**Wednesday**— Job 40

**Thursday**— Job 41

**Friday**— Job 42

**Saturday**— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study Proverbs 1:19-22.

Need blank copies for doing more  
"Five Question Bible Study"?  
e-mail: [Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com)

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?