


The Art of Wise Living
Part 2
The Blessings of Wisdom

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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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

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “Talking Points, Walking Points” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time”, are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Note: For each of the following questions, refer to the **Sermon Summary** inside.

Observation—*What do I see?*

- What three commands and contrasts are found in Proverbs 3:5–7?
- What variety of benefits of wisdom are highlighted in Proverbs 3?
- What is the process for growing in wisdom and understanding?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- Pastor Doug noted that “gaining understanding” is more than simply having knowledge. What is it?
- How should we understand the promises of health and prosperity in Proverbs?
- What warning did Pastor Doug give to those who do not obey the truth they already understand?
- How exactly does wisdom lead to peace?

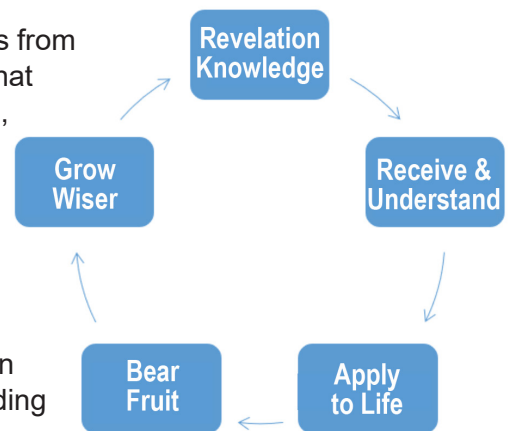
Application—*What do I do with this?*

- What evidence is there that you really believe what Proverbs 3:13–14 says about wisdom?
- In what areas are you most tempted to rely on your own understanding instead of trusting God?
- What practical steps can you take today to “acknowledge God in all your ways”?
- In what ways can your life demonstrate honor and influence others for God?

Sermon Summary Key Text: Proverbs 3

To get the most out of our Proverbs study, we need to understand how Hebrew poetry works, because the book of Proverbs falls into the literary genre of “poetry.” English poetry and Hebrew poetry are very different. Rhyme and meter characterize English poetry, whereas parallelism is the hallmark of Hebrew poetry. There are different types of parallelism: antithetic (v. 33); synthetic parallelism (v. 12); synonymous parallelism (1:8). In Proverbs 3:5-8, we see examples of the different parallelisms. The reader can find contrast, repetition, consequences, explanations and illustrations all in the book of Proverbs. Solomon says that those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding, have a gift from God that is more valuable than any amount of gold or silver could ever be (v. 13-14). The word “blessed” is a translation of the Hebrew word "eh'-sher". It means “to be favored.” The word eh'-sher is used when we have to do something in order to receive a blessing. This kind of blessing only comes to those who actively pursue wisdom and understanding. It says in Proverbs 3:13 that “blessed are those who find wisdom and who gain understanding.” The Hebrew word behind the English word, “understanding” describes someone who not only is able to discern various good paths from bad ones, but they are also wise enough in many cases to actually know God’s preference (Colossians 1:9–10).

So, what you have is a circle whereby “revelation knowledge” comes to us from the Bible. We receive and understand it, in the sense that we know what it has to do with our life at this particular stage, in this particular season, with our particular relationships and with the particular challenges that we face. 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 become active doers. It is one thing to have wisdom. It is another to add understanding. God is not going to reveal more of His will to you until you begin applying what you already know! God is not going to show us more truth if we fail to walk in the truth He has already shown us. In the rest of chapter three we find **four benefits** that come from finding wisdom and gaining understanding.



Health - A person who finds wisdom and gains understanding experiences benefits to their overall health (v. 1-2). As a general rule, if you follow what the Word of God says, and become wise and understanding, you will make decisions that will bring less risk and stress into your life. Many of us have experienced the physical consequences that accompany a guilty heart (Psalm 51:8). It’s not a good place to be. It can lead to all kinds of physical maladies—ulcers, sleep deprivation, anxiety, high blood pressure. Living life God’s way is good for your health.

Prosperity - Proverbs 3:9-10 says that if we get intentional about our money, and prioritize Kingdom giving right off the top, we’ll pay closer attention to how we spend the rest of our money. The Book of Proverbs teaches that prosperity comes to those who do four things: work hard and earn money honestly; give generously; spend wisely; and invest carefully. Excessive debt will cripple you financially (Proverbs 22:7). If you will follow God’s prescription for finances, your “barns will be full” and even overflowing. God enriches us, so that we can share with others (2 Corinthians 9:7-8;11).

Peace - What does it mean to have a peace that surpasses understanding as the New Testament puts it? A peace that guards your heart (your emotions) and your mind (what you are always thinking about)? (v. 2, 5-6, 17, 23-26). If you are on the path of wisdom, you will experience less tribulation of your own making. If you are on the path of wisdom, even in the midst of tribulation, you can have peace. Why? Because....You know that God is walking through this with you. You know that in His sovereignty He has allowed this thing to befall you. You know that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him and are living according to His purposes.

Honor - The final benefit that is greater than gold or silver is honor (Proverbs 3:4; 16:35). The fact that someone would hold you in honor is not an occasion for you to boast- it is an opportunity for you to leverage influence in their life for God’s glory. Honor gives us a wonderful ability to influence our children, friends and neighbors and to bless them because we have been blessed.

In all these things acknowledge Him! If you will, you will be amazed at how God will bless you.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

Proverbs 2

1	My son, if you will	receive treasure	my words, and my commandments within you,
2		make your ear attentive to incline your heart to	wisdom, understanding,
3	for if you	cry for lift your voice for	discernment understanding,
4	if you	seek her search for her	as silver, and as for hidden treasures,
5	then you will	discern discover	the fear of Yahweh, and the knowledge of God.
6	For Yahweh gives	wisdom,	
	from His mouth come	knowledge and understanding.	
7	He stores up	sound wisdom for the upright,	
8	He is a shield guarding	to those who walk in integrity. the paths of justice, and	Each day this week, slowly and prayerfully read Proverbs 2 aloud, asking yourself three questions:
	He preserves	the way of His godly ones.	
9	Then you will discern	righteousness, and justice, and equity, and every good course	1. What do I learn about God?
10	For wisdom	will	2. What do I learn about people?
	knowledge	will	
11	discretion	will	3. What should I apply personally?
	understanding	will	
12	to deliver you	from the way from the man from those	of evil, who speaks perverse things; who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness, who delight in doing evil, and rejoice in the perversity of evil, whose paths are crooked, and who are devious in their ways.
13			
14			
15			
16	To deliver you	from the strange woman, from the adulteress who flatters with her words;	
17		that leaves the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God;	
18	For her house her tracks	sinks down lead	to death, and to the dead;
19	None who go to her return again, Nor do they reach the paths of life.		
20	So you will walk in keep to	the way of good men, and the paths of the righteous.	
21	For the upright the blameless	will live in the land, and will remain in it;	
22	But the wicked the treacherous	will be cut off from the land, and will be uprooted from it.	