

## Proverbs 3:21-35

**“My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: 22 so shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. 23 Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. 24 When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. 25 Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh [Psalm 91:7-8]. 26 For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken. 27 Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. [i.e. the poor, the fatherless and widow, single moms] 28 Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee. 29 Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee. 30 Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm. 31 Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways. 32 For the froward is an abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous. 33 The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just. 34 Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly. 35 The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.”**

### *Introduction*

“As we read through, ah, several times we’ll hit on this, if you read a chapter a day, today’s the 11<sup>th</sup>, so if you’re at the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter, you’ll get through the Book of Proverbs every month. So we’ll be constantly coming to the chapter you read for the day, journeying through it, and kind of get a head start if you read it that morning, and I try to do it, and it talks to me, you know, it challenges me, has a lot to say about my mouth, and my attitude. And I hope sometimes to during the day I’ll find myself saying *‘Alright Lord, you’ve said it to me this morning in Proverbs, help me right now, the pressure cooker’s on, and I need wisdom, I need to take that and put it into practice.’* Sometimes I do good, sometimes I have to go back and read it the next month again. But a remarkable book, extolling wisdom, knowledge and understanding, and probably, it’s hard for us to tell and in all things, as we get to the later chapters we’ll hear of Lemuel, which seems to be Solomon again, we’ll see, some of them gathered by Hezekiah, they may all be Proverbs of Solomon, but we’ll talk about that as we get further on. The interesting thing is of course here, is a collaboration, he wrote over 3,000 proverbs, but we have these, and written by the wisest man that ever lived. I’m assuming, and you know, you scour through, and it seems, and I think many scholars feel that really at the zenith of his influence and so forth, that he wrote these

proverbs. Because at the end of his life, when he was old, he had taken to himself 700 wives, 300 concubines, he basically had ended up transgressing a large part of what he wrote. So it seems to be these things are put down on the page when he's in the midst of God's blessing, and he certainly was for many, many years.

*Serenity Under The Rush And The Roar Of Unexpected Evils Is  
A Precious Gift Of Divine Love*

So in **verse 19**, we kind of left off there, in **chapter 3**, he said **“The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens. By knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.”** (verses 19-20) in other words, wisdom, knowledge and understanding have established everything you're standing on, so you might as well listen to him when he tells you to use them. **Verse 21**, **“My son,”** and the Hebrew's more emphatic, it's **“O my son”** here, there's a heart-cry here, **‘O my daughter,’** girls, you're going to want to listen here also. **“O my, son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:”** he's asking something now of his son, and look, as we listen to this, I expect you to take it to heart as God speaking to you, “my son, my daughter,” this is his Word. It was the Holy Spirit that inspired Solomon to put these things to the page. So through the quill comes the Word of God, which is eternal, which we have here this evening. **“O my son, my daughter, let not, I don't want you to allow this, let not them, wisdom, knowledge and understanding, depart from thine eyes. Keep sound wisdom and discretion, thoughtfulness is the idea,”** **“So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.”** (verse 22) like an ornament, to be demonstrated. **“Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.”** (verse 23) this is what any father or parent would say to their son or their daughter, you know, *‘Use your head,’* I heard that growing up, *‘Use your head,’* and I did sometimes, pounded against the wall, I don't know how many times my father said that, *‘Use your head.’* [my Dad used to say *“Use your head for more than a hat-rack.”*] and then they're worried about who you're hanging around with, they're worried about why you're coming in so late. (So this is all BC days, Before Christ in my life.) But you know, I don't know how many times I heard that, *“Use your head,”* and this is what he's saying here, he's saying **‘Use your head.’** God's given you capacity, **‘O my son, O my daughter, do this, keep wisdom, keep thoughtfulness, and they're going to be life to your soul, grace to your neck. And then you'll be safe.’** You've heard your parents, and you're going to hear the Scripture say, **‘Don't hang with those guys, don't drink what they drink, don't do what they do, don't go where they go.’** This is the heart of a parent who wants, it says **‘Then you'll**

*walk safely,*’ that’s what every parent wants for their children, what God wants for us, **“and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.”** (verse 24) That’s a pretty priceless thing in the world that we live in, **“When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.”** and I take that whenever I can get it, the blessings of obedience, if I can get a sweet night of sleep, I’m in. You don’t get that all the time. Good stuff, look **“Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.”** (verse 25) [see Psalm 91:7-8, and order and read “A Thousand Shall Fall” by Susi Hasel Mundy] Now it’s actually more pointed than that. We’re watching a world that is veering out of control, we are in our administration, in the press, expecting nations around the world to adhere to treaties that are being signed. And I think out of the last, I forget, how many years, 203 treaties have been signed, and 204 have been broken, I mean, that’s the way it goes. So, **“Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.”** King James says **“when it cometh.”** the Hebrew says, it says, **“Be not afraid of the desolation of the wicked, because it will come.”** It’s way more pointed in the original language. Listen, **‘the desolation of the wicked, IT WILL COME, God is on the throne.’** Psalm 2 tells us **‘he sits in the heavens, and he laughs, he holds them in derision.’** They say **‘Let us break his restrictions from us, and let us cast his cords away, you know, ‘who does God think he is?’ He sits in the heavens and he laughs.’ ‘The desolation of the wicked will come.’** **“For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.”** (verse 26) King James “taken,” “snared, captured” is the idea, **‘you won’t be caught in it.’** It’s interesting, because Spurgeon wrote this in regards to Proverbs 3:25-26, **“Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh, for the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.”** *“When God is abroad in judgments, he would not have his people alarmed, he has not come forth but to defend the righteous. He would have them manifest courage. We, who enjoy the presence of God, ought to display presence of mind. Since the Lord himself may suddenly come, we ought not to be surprised by anything sudden. Serenity, under the rush and roar of unexpected evils, is a precious gift of Divine love.”* **Serenity under the rush and the roar of unexpected evils, is a precious gift of Divine love.”** The LORD says **“Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, because, it will come”** (verse 25) **“For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken [snared].”** (verse 26) great verse to read every morning before you head out to work, not knowing what’s coming on the world that day.

## *Don't Withhold Good From Them, Particularly To Whom It Is Due'*

Verse 27 begins to talk about the use of wisdom in regards to other people. **“Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.” (verse 27)** I mean, Jesus would say **“do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”** You know, some of the philosophers throughout human history would say *‘Don't do to anybody else what you don't want them to do to you.’* Buddha would say that, *‘Don't do to others what you don't want them to do to you.’* [i.e. you will reap what you sow] Well you sit around and don't anything your whole life. It's very different when it says **‘DO to others, what you would have them do to you.’** Because you're on the offensive, you're taking the first step. Whether they're doing to you are not, you're to do what you'd have them do. Here it says, **‘Don't withhold good from them, particularly to whom it is due,’** employers, you should never be telling the guys working for you *‘Hey, is it ok I pay you next week, you eat Spaghetti'O's this week,’* pay the guy that's working for you. **“Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.”** you shouldn't do that. **“Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.” (verses 27-29)** the idea is, it's a little hard to pick up, **‘Don't devise evil against your neighbour, realize, seeing that you are both living in the same security, he dwelleth securely by thee, you're both enjoying the same security, that's a grace of God, why should you devise evil against him if he's living in the same security you're enjoying.’**

*“Strive Not With A Man Without Cause, If He Have Done Thee No Harm”*

**“Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.” (verse 30)** and then some of you are thinking, *‘Well if I have cause, can I strive with a man?’* Ah, **“Be at peace with all men, as much as it is within you.”** *‘What if it's not within me?’* I know, it's not in some of you, I understand that, but just, **“Strive not with a man [or woman] without cause, if he have done thee no harm.”** Some people look for an argument when they can't find one, that's their favorite indoor sport. [Especially *‘Strive not with a woman without cause...’*]

*The Curses Of The Wicked Contrasted With The Blessings Of The Righteous*

**“Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.” (verse 31)** Look, you look at sinful men, you look at their prosperity, and many of them because they are prosperous, they get it over on other people, and they’re wealthy, you know, I could name names if I wanted to do that. **‘And don’t envy, envy not the oppressor, nor choose any of his ways,’ “For the froward”** “froward” is the proud, arrogant, **‘For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous.’ (verse 32)** that’s where his instruction is, with the righteous, that’s who he speaks to. **“The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.” (verse 33)** we see these contrasting proverbs, whether the wicked knows it or not, somebody’s in it with him, it’s called the curse of the LORD, it’s in the house of the wicked. **“but he”** the LORD, **“blesseth the habitation of the just.”** **“Surely he”** the LORD **“scorneth the scorers: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.” (verse 34)** everybody’s gonna get, as you know, as you sow so shall you reap. **“and he giveth grace unto the lowly”** and look, that’s not something that we just hear in the Old Testament, ah, James, the Lord’s half-brother, same Mom, different Dad, said **“But he giveth more grace, wherefore he says God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.”** Peter, of course would say **“Likewise, you younger, submit yourselves unto the elders, ye all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.”** It says here **“Surely he scorneth the scorers: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.”” (verse 34)** **“The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.” (verse 35)** Now chapter 4,

## *Proverbs 4:1-27*

**“Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. 2 For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. 3 For I was my father’s son, tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother. 4 He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. 5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. 6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. 7 Wisdom is the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. 8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. 9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. 10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. 11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. 12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be**

straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. 13 Take fast hold of instruction; let *her* not go: keep her; for she *is* thy life. 14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. 16 For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall. 17 For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. 18 But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. 19 The way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble. 20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22 For they *are* life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life. 24 Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. 25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. 26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. 27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.”

*‘O Children, Hear The Discipline Of A Father, Heed It’*

“Chapter 4 now, interesting, let me read the first few verses, **“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. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.” (verses 1-5)** so, very interesting here, Solomon, David’s son, speaking to his children, David’s grandchildren, it’s an interesting picture of that, and certainly God speaking to all of us, God doesn’t have any grandchildren, only sons and daughters. Again, **‘Hear, O sons, hear O my children,’** it’s passionate, **“Hear, ye children,”** now it’s the instruction of a father, that word there is very specific, it is “the discipline of a father.” The dad’s not just telling the kids what to do, he’s not just instructing them, giving them information. He’s instructing them with specific obedience which is supposed to be attached to it, the word is “discipline.” So, **‘O hear,’** the idea is to his children, **‘the discipline of a father.’** You know, it says he wants the best for them. I remember thinking, when I got to be 14, 15, that my dad didn’t have any idea what he was talking about, because he didn’t know what I knew. He didn’t know who George, Paul, Ringo and John were. He didn’t know what I was smoking, what I was dropping, he didn’t know what was happening in my world [I didn’t have a clue, neither did my ex, what was

happening in my son's world when he was that age.] But as you get older and older, I came to realize how wise he was. [I look back now, and regret not being smart enough to try to mine the wisdom my father had, a man of few words, but very wise. And I couldn't shut up long enough to learn from him.] He's gone on to be with the Lord. There are days now I'd give a million bucks to talk to him for an hour [me too with my dad]. Not because he'd know what to tell me, but because the way he told me what he didn't know, was amazing, you know, just, he had that ability. So here there's a father, he says **'Heed my discipline, the discipline of a father,' "attend to know understanding" 'take hold of this,' "For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law."** (verse 2) "good teaching" is the idea, **"forsake ye not my law."** that's what God the Father would be saying to us. Now listen, **"For I was my father's son,"** no doubt Solomon thinking of David, as he speaks to his own children. **"I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother."** (verse 3) Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. David had entered into sin, of course the tragedy, it was something that then, his sin stayed with his family for the rest of his life. The child born out of that initial adultery died. David then took Bathsheba to be his wife. God was gracious to him in his repentance. He would say to the LORD, **'I understand sacrifice and offering thou hast not desired,'** an adulterer and murderer should be put to death, **'there is no sacrifice for what I have done.'** **"Sacrifice and offering thou hast not desired, but a broken and contrite spirit thou wilt not despise."** He would say to the LORD, **"Create in me a clean heart, bara, create, 'in the beginning God created, bara, the heavens and the earth.'** He didn't say to the LORD, *'Rehabilitate me, counsel me, put me in a rehab program,'* he said, **'LORD, I understand where all this is, create a new heart in me, for I am nothing, my bones are dried up, my sin has eaten me up alive, I am dead inside, I am defiled, O LORD, create a new heart in me, from nothing. Sacrifice and offering thou hast not desired, or I would offer it, but a broken and contrite spirit thou wilt not despise.'** And God heard his repentance, the child died, **'David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and he went in unto her and lay with her, and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the LORD loved him, and he [the LORD] sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah, beloved of the LORD.'** Solomon writes and says **"I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother."** (verse 3) because Bathsheba heard the prophet come and say **'His name is Jedidiah, beloved of the LORD.'** And Solomon says **'I grew up in this, I listened to my father's instruction, he had failed, he had committed adultery, he had committed murder,'** David was an older man, we love the Psalms that he wrote after his failure, because they are filled with God's grace, and the man is broken and humble. And no doubt he gave very pointed instruction to his son, and said **'Don't get involved in**

**sexual sin, don't get involved in wickedness, don't go with wicked men who commit murder,'** because he had come through those very things. He says **"I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother."** and look what he says, **"He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live."** (verses 3-4) **'Solomon,'** you can hear David say, **'listen to what I'm saying to you, keep my commandments, and live.'** A commandment never is a restriction, it gives liberty, it produces life. Satan lies about it, as he did in Genesis, **'hath God said, he knows in the moment you eat thereof, you're gonna be like him, knowing good and evil, you're not gonna be free until you eat,'** that's how Satan brings the word. God says his Word brings liberty.

*If You Do This Right, You're Not Only Teaching Your Children,  
You're Teaching Your Grandchildren*

**"Get wisdom, Solomon, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth." (verse 5)** Listen, great lesson here, parents, you have little children at home, understand, if you do this right, you're not only teaching your children, you're teaching your grandchildren, **"He taught me also,"** Solomon is saying to his own children, **'The things that my father invested in me are the things I'm saying to you. Wisdom, knowledge, understanding, do this right.'** and understand when those little faces are in front of you, you don't know who they're going to marry, you don't know what they're going to be, you don't know what they're going to have to go through, somewhere they're all going to have their own Damascus Road experience, hopefully, where they fall down in front of the LORD, and say **'LORD, what wilt thou have me to do?'** At some point there will be a surrender, and the things you have invested in them will be passed to the next generation also. [Comment: Some have a Damascus Road experience in their conversion, some God confronts less painfully, what I called a "Burning Bush" experience, like how the LORD appeared to Moses, calling him to himself. Both lead to conversion. There does appear to be two methods God will use to lead a person to himself, one far less painful and confrontational.] So when you look at those little crazy people in your home, realize that while you're instructing them, you're also instructing your grandchildren, they just haven't showed up yet. **"Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth." (verse 5)** Solomon didn't forget when the LORD came to him, he said, **'Solomon, ask, whatever you want, just ask me what you want.'** Solomon said, **"Thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude, Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart,"** **"Get wisdom, get understanding:**

forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.” (Proverbs 4:5) **“Give thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad. For who is able to judge this thy so great a people. And the speech pleased the LORD that Solomon had asked this thing, and God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast thou asked for riches, or even asked for the life of your enemies, but you’ve asked for understanding to discern, to judge, Behold, I have done according to thy word, Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart, so there was none like thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee, and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked for, riches,”** and so forth. So here is Solomon then, he’s the one who can tell us to seek the LORD for wisdom and knowledge, because his dad was a shepherd, his dad has a Hippie, playing his guitar out in the field with the flocks, his dad was a warrior, he didn’t have a PhD, he didn’t go to the university in Haifa or Jerusalem or Technion. Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived, because he listened to his father, who said, **‘seek wisdom, seek understanding, Solomon, go before the LORD, he’s gracious, and ask him.’** And Solomon didn’t forget those words, and when it came his time to ask of the LORD, verse 5, David had said to him, **‘Get wisdom, get understanding,’** Solomon hadn’t forgotten that, **“forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.”**

### *Let This Be Your Girlfriend*

He said, **“Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.” (verse 6)** now as we go through these verses, these next few verses, you’re going to hear “she” “her” “get her” “she’s gonna be your friend” “she’s going to take care of you,” and wisdom is put into a feminine picture, and it says “love her.” It’s almost like “let this be your girlfriend.” **‘Believe me, Solomon, I’ve had nine wives, and then the girlfriend, and then your mother, that was all a bad deal. You want a girlfriend? Get wisdom, you know, friends with benefits, this is the friend with real benefits, right here.’** OK? everybody should listen to that, we could laugh at that [to our peril]. **“Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.” (verse 6)** literally **“she shall watch over thee” ‘wisdom, knowledge, she’ll watch over you.’** He says here, **“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.” (verse 7)** at any cost, is the idea, “get understanding.” That’s what Solomon did, he listened to the instruction of his father. **Wisdom differs from understanding in that wisdom is the application of understanding or knowledge.** If you’re standing somewhere and there’s a guy, you know, 50-foot up, trimming a huge

branch off an oak tree, and the guy that's working with him says, *'In about 15 seconds, that branch that weighs 3,000 lbs is gonna fall exactly where you're standing.'* Now you have knowledge and understanding. Wisdom says *'MOVE.'* [laughter] *'GET OUT OF THERE.'* That's the difference between wisdom and understanding. Look, it's very important, because we live in a culture, and this is why the role of parents is so important, where children are no longer being taught to think intuitively, they're no longer being taught to think logically, analytically, there's no anticipatory thought *'What's this going to turn out to be?'* They're largely being taught to retrieve information, gathering knowledge, they know how to Google, they know how to go out, they know how to collect. Sad to say though, what's on the menu is being loaded on by someone else, what they're able to retrieve someone else is deciding. [Comment: that is nothing new. We've been taught American propaganda toward all the wars we've been in, all the current events, flavoured by hidden sources, what I have come to term the secret history underneath what we've been taught in the news outlets and history books. Don't believe me, read a healthy dose of it for yourself, see [http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Blum/KillingHope\\_page.html](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Blum/KillingHope_page.html) . But now this flavouring is occurring at all levels of online sources our kids use as information sources.] And it's up to parents to apply wisdom, understanding, think logically, think analytically, think anticipatorily. If you do this, this will happen. Now some kids aren't gonna listen. *'If you run down that hill, you're gonna bang your head on that wall.'* Now I've raised four kids, I had some that would say *'OK, make's sense.'* And I had others that said *'Watch this, crash!'* and then they said *'Oooh, now I know what you're talking about.'* Then you have an experiential learner there, and you're going to have some problems with one of those. They have to experience the rod to balance out the rest of what they think they need to experience. [Comment: That appears to be essentially what God's overall Plan of Salvation is all about, the long view of it, from Adam through Revelation 20. The Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, as part of their understanding of the prophetic meaning of God's Fall Holy Days, have a unique long-term view of that, which I believe is worth taking a look at. To view this, see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/E-Mails/June%2014/FallHolyDays-short.htm> . When the last section of that study is taken into account, should that interpretation of Bible prophecy be accurate (we'll find out at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb), most of mankind has come under the blanket category of being "experiential learners" under God's use of Satan's rod of correction, before they're given their chance to wise up and make right choices. This is an incredibly beautiful part of God's Plan, if this particular interpretation is correct. It explains a lot of unexplained questions about the "unsaved dead" which have lacked up to this point, a sensible answer. What it appears is, this world we've lived in, since

Genesis 3 to present, has been a world filled with “experiential learners” because they want nothing to do with God’s wisdom.] That’s experiential learning also. **“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting”** at any cost **“get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.”** and that’s what happened in Solomon’s life. **“She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.” (verses 7-9)** and Solomon understood that well, because it was the story of his life.

## *Two Paths*

### *‘Seize Discipline’*

Here again in verse 10 he begins to delineate two paths, which will be clear, as we get to verse 14. But again, there’s a cry with the “O,” **“Hear”** and the idea is, we read it in the Hebrew, **“Hear to obey”** for the purpose of yielding. **“Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.” (verse 10)** again, this is passionate. **“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;”** or hindered, confined, **“and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.” (verses 11-12)** *‘Look, I’ve taught you the right way to go, when you go, your going is going to be easier in life, you won’t be hindered, you’re not going to be stumbling. Understand this.’* And look in **verse 13**, he says this, **“Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.”** Here she is again. Here’s the reason, this is what every parent wants, **“keep her, for she is thy life.”** Remarkable. Listen to what it says here, now it doesn’t say *‘Take hold’* does it. It says, in the King James, **“Take fast hold”**, because the Hebrew has the idea of “seize,” you know, when you take “fast hold” of something, you “seize it.” He says here, **“Seize”** and the word of instruction here is, **“discipline.”** Look, there just aren’t many disciplined lives around anymore. A little bit of discipline will take us a long way. I’m 64 years old, and the LORD is challenging **me**, I need more discipline in my speech, and in my shutting up, because once you let it out, you can’t get it back in again. I need more discipline when I rise, and when I go to sleep. It’s not a bad thing, discipline is a good thing, it keeps people alive all over the world. He says here, **‘Seize that, seize discipline.’** *‘I don’t have to go to Bible study Wednesday night, Sunday, Monday night.’* Why not? You’re not coming just to hear, **you’re coming to change.** You’re coming to let the Word of God be alive and powerful in your life. **‘Seize discipline, don’t let her go, hold onto her, keep her, literally, guard her,’** because we forget so easily, we get lazy, we’re comfortable, we’re Americans. **‘Take hold of discipline, don’t let her**

**go, guard her,' "for she is thy life."** Failing to heed God's wisdom, instruction, is disastrous. Failing to heed God's wisdom is disastrous, **'take fast hold, seize discipline, let her not go, keep her,' "for she is thy life."**

*"Enter Not Into The Path Of The Wicked"*

Now he makes this clearer. **"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men."** (verse 14) pretty plain, right? "Enter not" we say "Do Not Enter," you see signs like that. **"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men."** (verse 14) Well what is that? OK, **'wicked path, the way of evil men.'** We kind of like to sub-divide that, and we can get our sin so compartmentalized, *'Hey, I'm a good guy, ya, we're sleeping together, but I don't sleep with anybody else, I only sleep with women that I love. I pay my taxes, I give to the poor,'* we love to compartmentalize our sin, but that's the path of the wicked, the Bible says. *'You know, I can't stand to see this on TV, there's a guy killing these people, I'm so broken, I go to Children's Hospital, you know, all of the kids with cancer,'* all that's from "the fall," from Adam, that's all because of sin entering into the picture, not because of the kids that are sick, it's not their sin, but it's just the whole process. You want to take little bits and pieces of it and say, because I can be like that too, *'I got a little corner on this right now, because this is a little kind of friendly sin, that don't hurt anybody else, and nobody knows about it, but I'm not going to do those big ones that everybody else knows about,'* we compartmentalize it. He's saying here, look, **'Seize discipline, and hold onto it, keep it, because that's your life. Don't go in the path of the wicked. Don't go the way of evil men.'** And he gives us four exhortations in **verse 15** in regards to that. King James says #1, **"Avoid it,"** #2, **"pass not by it,"** #3, **"turn from it,"** #4, **"and pass away."** Pretty evident, how God feels about the way of evil men here. "Avoid it" in the Hebrew is "ignore it." Don't let it come to you, don't let it talk to you, *'Hey, it's only for one night, hey, it's a little bit of fun,'* no, no, **'ignore it,' "pass not by it,"** the idea is, **'don't get near it, don't cuddle up to it, don't get by it.'** **"turn from it,"** is literally **"depart from it,"** in the Hebrew. If you're around it, if it's going on, if you're with "friends" that are trying to get you to enter in, what happens is, backslidden Christians, prodigals, love to be part of a prodigal club. They have their favorite verses on the wall, *'Let him who has no sin cast the first stone,'* they got their own collection of favorite verses. And if they can get you to get involved in what they're involved in, they feel a lot better about being involved with what they're involved with. It says, **'Just get out of there, depart, don't go there.'** **"depart from it," "and pass away"** King James, the Hebrew is **"pass on."** **'Just keep on going, don't stop, just pass on, don't stop, don't slow down, don't**

***talk to it, don't get involved in it, just keep going.*** That's great advice...it was the easiest thing, when you're in the world, before you get saved, then your friends sneak around, nobody wants to share their dope, nobody wants to share, then you get your feelings hurt, *'Man, I can't believe they didn't tell me they scored,'* then after you get saved, and you're no longer in the habit anymore, then they're all coming around *'Hey, try this, Come on!'* and it's like *'You gotta be kidding me, when I was an unbeliever, you were a sneak, and now I'm a Christian and you want me to smoke and snort,'* that's the way it goes, because there's an enemy. It says here, ***'here's wisdom man, you need to get discipline take hold of it, don't let it go, because that's going to be your life.'*** ***'Don't get on the pathway that they're on, don't go the way that they're going, ignore it, don't get near it, depart from it if you're around it, just keep on going.'*** I think that's good advice. You don't think so? OK, it's good advice, it doesn't matter if you believe me or not, you can be wrong. It's good advice. And he says this, ***"For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall."*** (verse 16) the wicked, they're so wrapped up in their own sin, they're up all night, they get no rest. You know, you compare that over here, ***"When thou liest down" verse 24 of chapter 3 "thou shalt not be afraid, yea, thou shalt lie down and thy sleep shall be sweet."*** The wicked, they don't sleep, they're up all night, they're always conniving, always involved in something, ***'their sleep is taken away unless they cause someone else to fall,'*** and so forth. ***"For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence."*** (verse 17) [Comment: On the Passover night, when Jesus was betrayed, in contrast, he gave them the Unleavened Bread of sincerity and truth, and the wine of the new covenant, which he said represented his blood, given for many, for the remission of sins. It's amazing to see the contrast here between *the bread of wickedness and wine of violence* which the world gives mankind, and what that has caused down through history, and the Unleavened Bread of sincerity and truth and the Wine representing Jesus' blood, which he gives to believers, which brings them into eternal life. One brings death and destruction, the other brings life everlasting in the Kingdom of God.]

### *"The Path Of The Righteous Is As The Shining Light"*

Contrast, **verse 18, "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."** That's the heart of the Father towards his child, what he wants for him or her, ***"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."*** This is the sense of the verse, ***'it is the path of the just is as,'*** not just "shining" there, it's ***'as a dawning light, the beginning of the day, that shineth more and more,'*** when it says

**“unto the perfect day”** it’s **‘until it comes to full daylight.’** It’s like getting up in the morning, you see the sun coming over the horizon, this is the path of the just, and the light starts to come over, and it changes colors, and it’s beautiful, and you see the dawning of the day, and it gets brighter and it gets brighter, until it’s in full daylight, full sun. And in the Middle East the sun is remarkable [as it is coming up over the water at my mother’s summer place in southern Maine, or sunrises out at sea when I was on my submarine, standing 4-to-8 watches]. That’s the path that we’re supposed to be on. Look, as a believer, if you are yielded to the LORD, his wisdom for you, his discipline, his knowledge, it says here that your life is like the day, it gets brighter and it gets brighter. It does not necessarily get easier, but it gets brighter. It’ll continue to get bright in our old age. When you’re in hospice, there will not be a single regret for anything that we’ve done when we’ve turned in the Lord’s direction and turned away from evil. It may get harder, but it is getting brighter and brighter and brighter. It says this in the Book of Revelation, **“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no more night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” (Revelation 22:1-5)** that’s the pathway we’re on, and that’s the destination that we’re headed towards, and the path of the just is like a sunrise that begins to dawn, and then it gets brighter and brighter as the day goes on. It may get harder, it may not get easier, but it gets brighter and brighter. That’s what he’s putting in front of us here in a wonderful way.

*“The Way Of The Wicked Is Darkness. They Know Not At What They Stumble”*

Now again, **verse 19**, here’s the huge contrast, and it summarizes everything we’ve read so far in this chapter. But **“The way of the wicked is darkness: they know not at what they stumble.”** no light, no hope at the end, **“they know not at what they stumble.”** The sense is, they don’t even know what they’re getting involved in, they don’t even know what hit them. They end up, because they have no wisdom. You know, it’s interesting, Damien Keil, I don’t know where they get these articles, he was reading these articles, and he talked about this guy in England, in London, he was breaking into someone’s home to rob their

home, and he had drunk some Vodka and taken a couple Quaaludes before he went, he snuck past, the woman was in the back of the house ironing, he snuck past her, got up into her bedroom, where he started to take her jewelry and stuff, she came up to go to bed and found him passed out on the floor, and couldn't wake him up, and the police came and couldn't wake him up, and they hauled him away and he woke up in jail. That's the wisdom of the wicked [that's a nice wake-up call]. He talked about a guy a number of years ago in Pittsburg, a bit closer to home, who walked into an Eagle Market place, like one of these huge shopping markets, and he tried to buy what he was buying with a million-dollar bill, and because they wouldn't break it he started screaming and smashing the counter, and the police had to come and get him, and the guy didn't know that the largest bill in production then was a 100-dollar bill. Somehow somebody had given him a million-dollar bill, and he wanted them to break it for him, you know, *'I'm getting a Tic-Tac and a pack of gum, could you break this for me? No, I don't have anything smaller.'* That's amazing. The best one was this guy in Colorado, went to rob a convenience store, and he was holding the lady at the counter at gun-point, and she emptied the whole cash-register and all the cash, and there was this bottle of Scotch behind her that he wanted, and he said *'I want that bottle of Scotch,'* she said *'You ain't even old enough to drink,'* and he pulled out his license and showed it to her [loud laughter] so she gave him the bottle of Scotch and he left, and she told the police *'This is his name and where he lives.'* [loud laughter] Sinful people do stupid stuff. ***'the path of the just is as the dawning of the day, like a day that shines brighter and brighter till the full light is shining, but the way of the wicked is as darkness, they don't even know what they got themselves into, they stumble, they don't even know what hit them.'* (verses 18-19)**

*What's Your Eyes, Your Ears, Your Lips, Your Mouth, Your Heart, Your Feet Doing? Are They Obeying Truth?*

**Verse 20** now, he says this, **"My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings."** now it's interesting, because this gets anatomical, he's going to talk about ears, eyes, heart, flesh, voice, lips and feet, it's very interesting, just watch what he does here. **"My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings."** Secondly, **"Let them not depart from thine eyes;"** read the Word of God, he's saying, ***'don't let them depart from your eyes,'*** **"keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."** (verses 20-22) "their flesh," literally "to the whole body." Healing, to live wisely is to live better, and to live easier, it's health to your whole flesh. **"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."** (verse 23) literally it

says ***“Keep your heart more than all else,”*** or ***“With all keeping keep your heart, because out of it are the issues of life.”*** It’s not talking about the heart that beats in your chest, it’s talking about the deeper heart of man, the deeper part of you and me, keep that, your gut, what you have inside, because life flows from there, it doesn’t flow from here. The mind is a terrible thing to waste, I understand that. But the heart always makes a convert of the mind. Desire is always more powerful than thought, particularly the unsaved person. [Comment: Desire comes from the emotional side of our brain, in brain physics, that section of the brain is much larger and talks more powerfully inside our brains than the part that controls logic, logical thought. See <http://www.unityinchrist.com/Does/waronscience.htm> for a scientific explanation of this.] Lot’s wife leaves Sodom and what she knows, perishes in what she longs for. She left Sodom, being instructed by angels, knowing what was coming, she had all the [logical] information, but her heart [the emotional side of her brain] it says *“Longed”* and she lingered behind, she turned back, and she was consumed. ***The heart always makes a convert of the mind.*** So, the wisest man that ever lived, by the Holy Spirit, says ***‘Guard your heart with all guarding, above everything else, guard it,’*** because there’s something inside of us that longs, it wants recognition, it wants fulfillment, it wants pleasure, it wants this, and it convinces us, we go through this whole mental debate, and eventually it wears us down. And the smartest people end up doing the stupidest things. See for me it’s normal, because I’m a stupid person [count me in on that one Pastor Joe], it’s normal for me to do stupid things. But the smartest people do stupid things too. Because this is more powerful [the heart, seat of emotions in the brain] is more powerful than this [the head, the logic portion of the brain. Read the linked article above]. ***‘Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it, that’s where life is determined, and the issues of life flow forth from there.’*** [i.e. If you’re in love with someone, the emotional and hormonal side of your brain, far more powerful, will drive you and powerfully influence your decisions. You have to fight to control that emotional side of your brain so that it comes in line with God’s Word, and you do things properly. That’s just one example. Solomon ended up having 700 wives and 300 concubines, and they most certainly appealed to his emotional side and hormonal side, to the point where he ended up breaking most of the precepts he wrote here in Proverbs. He failed to guard his heart, the emotional side of his brain, from their influence, which proved to be ungodly (because he married pagan women more often than not).] ***“Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.” (verse 24)*** an arrogant or proud mouth. I don’t have one of those. ***‘Put away from yourself the arrogant mouth, and perverse lips, put them far away.’*** I need to do that several times a day. I pull lips away, and come pick them up. ***“Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before***

**thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.” (verses 25-26)** this has been the instruction through the whole chapter, **“Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.” (verse 27)** Look, Paul will say in *Romans 12*, **‘I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God, that you present you body a living sacrifice,’** basically because he’s got your body, he’s got you, you’re in it. The question here is not how much do you know, can you argue Calvinism or Arminianism, you know, can you chop people down with your Reformed Theology? Great, we should have a Systematic Theology. ***The question here is, what’s your eyes, your ears, your lips, your mouth, your heart and your feet doing? Are they obeying truth?*** It’s not how much knowledge you have, it’s How much of you does knowledge have? or It’s not how much truth do you have, but how much of you does truth have? That defines wisdom. That’s why Paul says, **‘Present your body, your eyes, your ears, your lips, your mouth, your feet, your hands as a living sacrifice. It’s your reasonable service. Don’t be conformed to this world, be ye transformed through the renewing of your mind, that you may prove out to completion what is the good, perfect, acceptable will of God.’** Here, it’s not what you know, and we should learn and so forth, but what’s your mouth doing, what are your ears doing, what are your eyes doing? Where are your feet going? I wouldn’t like to play through the loud-speaker what my mouth has been doing all week, I get under pressure, sometimes it isn’t good. I say things I wish I hadn’t, I’m getting better, I’m getting better. And I’m glad that the Father is committed to continue the good work that he’s begun in me, and to complete it. It isn’t done yet. And we all have propensities in different directions. We all are being conformed into the same image and likeness, but we’re all being taken from different places. [That is so deep, just think about that one for awhile.] Some of us, are we born that way, or do we decide to do it? [I’ve seen propensities within certain families where they were born with it, so it goes both ways. I knew the great, great grand-daughters of Stephen Decatur, they were both short like him, and both had fiery tempers, like their ancestor, who when the Barbary Pirates captured the Philadelphia, he took sailors and rowed into the harbor where the Philadelphia was being held, under cover of darkness and set fire to her. I witnessed the same fiery temper and courageousness in these two sisters. So some traits are passed on genetically through family lines, the DNA.] You’re born sinners, and at some point you decide to do it. Some of our kids, arsonists, they burn something down, the parents will tell us from the time they were four years old they were lighting matches and setting things on fire, they were born with this sinful nature, and they decided to burn something down at some point. [Comment: And later in life, coming to understand how things burn down by firsthand experience, some of these have become accomplished firefighters, courageously using their knowledge to save lives and property. They just

have that fascination with fire, and put it to good use.] *'He was always hacking things with axes, from the time he was little, he was always doing this, always doing that.'* Yea, ok, we won't argue, we're you born that way, or is it a decision? [both] You couldn't make the decision if you didn't have the choice. The Scripture comes [i.e. spiritual conversion], regeneration takes place, we're born-again with the Spirit of God, and there's a completely new nature, completely new nature. Billy Graham talks about being in a mission field in China, and watching this guy, you know, they have cock fights and dog fights, and he said this guy who owned this dog-fighting ring, always won. He always won, he always bet on the dogs who would win. And Billy Graham asked him, *'How is it that you know, all the time, whether the black dog is gonna win, or whether the white dog is gonna win?'* and the guy said, *'The dog I feed is that dog that wins.'* That's what Solomon's saying right here, feed the white dog, feed the white dog. We there, together? Not White Fang, feed the white dog, not the black dog. Let's stand, let's pray...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Proverbs 3:21-35 and Proverbs 4:1-27, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

The Heart will always make a convert of the mind. Why? see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/Does/waronscience.htm>

We live in a world of "experiential learners" who have unwittingly been learning the hard way via Satan's rod of correction. Proverbs talks all about them, throughout the book. That appears to be what God's overall Plan of Salvation is all about, taking the **long view** from Genesis 3 to Revelation 20. The Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, as part of their understanding of the prophetic meaning of God's Fall Holy Days, have a very unique long-term view of that, which I believe is worth taking a look at (we'll find out if this "long view" is correct at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb). To view this, see <http://www.unityinchrist.com/E-Mails/June%2014/FallHolyDays-short.htm>