

Proverbs 4, July 8, 2024 -Men's Monday Morning Bible Study

Overview:

You will get whatever you look for. You will find what you're seeking, whether good or bad. Verses 5-7 tell us to acquire wisdom. Look for it. Find it. Get it. Guard it. Secure it. Chase it. Dig for it like a miner. Pursue, seek, and strive for wisdom

Commentary:

I. One reason we should look for wisdom is that it is valuable (3:14-18). Like silver or gold, wisdom is worth the effort to attain it. The work required to get it is less than the benefit it brings. Wisdom is more valuable than the pain of acquisition.

II. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom (1:7) Verse 7 says that the beginning is the acquisition. The starting place of wisdom is recognizing it's value and responding appropriately. The starting place of wisdom and learning is admitting ignorance and the need for learning. The beginning is knowing that I have a need. Like those twelve step programs, the starting place is admitting that I am the problem and I have a deficiency. I do not know everything. I am not omniscient. I am an idiot more than I want to admit. But, I must admit my ignorance and need to teaching and must assume a posture of submission to become the man of wisdom. Humility is the key that opens the door.

III. Verse 13 says that the son is to "continue on the right path." It is not enough to start. He must abide on the way of wisdom. Lookup what Jesus says in John about "abiding."

The wise man must seize, not let go of, and guard his thoughts and proximity. He must take thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ and keep his way from the path of evil. There are literally some places that the man of wisdom will not go. I will not go to strip clubs or restaurants that obviously promo sexual sin (Hooters, Twisted Kilt, Twin Peaks, etc.) These are not places I want to be. I have a hard line on this. Additionally, I do not frequent bars. I do not want them to know my name.

Every man must consider for himself what is appropriate give his strengths and weaknesses. Avoid places and people that are unwise. Foolishness dwells in

certain places. Stay away (verses 18-19) from them and continue on the path of wisdom and righteousness. This leads to the next observation...

IV. Guard your heart (verse 23). If there is a memory verse for this chapter, this is it. Be careful what you give your affections to. Choose carefully what you love. Pay attention to what your heart is drawn to. Love what is good, and true, and beautiful. Learn to appreciate love, justice, and peace. Admire and desire honesty, integrity, and gravitas. Guard your heart. Repel what is evil. Hate what is unholy. It is death, but the mind set on above is life and peace.

V. Grow (v18-19). We should not be stagnant. We are called upward and onward. We must move forward. We must progress in our pursuit of wisdom.

VI. Verse 21; 25-27, stay focused. Do not turn to the left or the right. Go straight ahead. Like Earl Campbell running for the endzone, run downhill and run over anything that slows you down. Be determined and single minded.

Practical considerations on how to acquire wisdom:

-from the wise (elders, experienced); pick people who have something you want out of life and go after them. We use our values (faith, family, friends, forward movement, fitness, finance, freedom and fun) to determine who we associate with.

-with the wise. Choose your friends, don't let them choose you. Be selective and exclusive.

-curated books, podcasts, sermons, etc. Learn to read *well*. Use audible and speechify.

General Principle: The company we keep largely determines the outcome of our lives. Our friends shape our future.

Closing Prayer:

Father, make us wise unto salvation. For your sake in Jesus' name. Amen.