

## I. Introduction to Proverbs 3:5-6

Today we are going to be again in chapter 3 of the book of Proverbs, and we are going to look today at one of the greatest promises and probably one of the greatest principles that is found in all of the Bible. If you have been saved for just a couple of months, or a couple of years, or a lot of years, this verse should be one that you memorize pretty quickly. I think it is one of the greatest verses and probably one of the first verses that when I got saved and got back with the Lord, I really put into my life.

When we look at this verse today, there are a couple of things I want to accomplish. I never teach the Bible or preach the Bible without having two or three goals that I want to accomplish. This passage is such a dynamic passage and has so much to it that the first thing I want to do is I want to show you how you take a verse like this and dissect it. I want to show you how to take a verse apart in the Bible. I want to show you how that when you do that, your goal is to squeeze every drop out of it. When you are done with it, you want to have just about everything that you can possibly get out of it. So we want to accomplish that.

Then there is a single principle here, or a theme, of these couple of verses that I think we want to see today. We want to also try to take it and develop it in your own life. The first thing that we are going to talk about here is the second thing, the overall concept of this passage and this verse. It simply deals with the incredible concept of God's hand in directing your life. Now, that sounds like a simple thing. It sounds like it is nowhere near as exciting as if I was going to tell you who the Antichrist was this morning, or lay out some great deep book of the Bible, or some great truth, or tell you where UFOs came from, or who J.F.K. was. But I guarantee you, the number one thing in your life that you better get down at some point in your life is the understanding of God directing you on the paths of life: the leading of God in the believer's life.

You know, there are many paths that we travel in our lives. Most people do not ever quantify it or think about it, but it is true. There is a path that once you get saved, of your Christian life, and you will have to walk that path for many, many years. When a man or a woman gets married, there is a path that a husband has to go down, and for a wife, there is a path that the wife has to go down. Then after a while, you have a child, and now there is another path you have got to go down in life, and it is the path of being a father or a path of being a mother. Lots of different paths that life is going to present you that you have got to go down, and you have got to understand some things about God leading you.

There is the path as God fulfills His will in your life, that you become more like the Lord Jesus Christ in everything you do. There is the path that you begin to fulfill God's plan in your life, that you do for God what He wants you to do. I mean, there are all kinds of people today that are, I believe, truly saved, and I believe they are on the way to heaven. But they simply do not understand what God wants them to do. Why? Because they do not understand the leading of God, God's hand in their life. There is the path that ministry will take. If you develop yourself as

you should, you are going to get to the point where you begin to let God use you in ministry, and that is another path. Yet that path will divide itself up into many other paths depending on where you go.

We have seen and understood now that the book of Proverbs is about a wise man. We have come through a lot of different scenarios of that, and we know that now from the book of Proverbs. We also should know that the wise man will be a Christian that realizes that a life without God's hand in it, a life without God's direction, will always be a dead end street. You are going to find God's people who are saved, I believe they are saved as I am, and I believe they are going to go to heaven just like I know I am going to go to heaven. But their life is an absolute dead end street. Their life is total chaos and probably will stay so for the rest of their life.

You know, we like to blame our problems, and we talk about this all the time, on everybody else and every other circumstance. But I guarantee you, the basic fundamental issue of why we have problems in our lives and we have chaos in our lives is simply because we go through a path of life, or multiple paths of life, without God's hand in it, without God's direction, and that will never, never, never work for you. We also know that it is the promises and the principles of life that are found in the Bible, like the one we are going to look at today, that form the foundation and the bedrock of our walk and our relationship with God.

It was funny, everybody was excited when we were going to start the book of Proverbs, and I was too. I told you I never really taught it verse by verse, and probably been through it a hundred times or so, but it was exciting to me, and everybody was excited about Proverbs. But now, how quickly we see that when we begin to do it biblically, this book unveils who we really are in life in spite of who we think we are. It is an incredible book, and you will see by the time we are done, some of God's people will be done. You know, it looks like a great book, we can get all the wisdom of God, and everybody wants knowledge today, everybody wants wisdom, but they do not want to do what they have got to do to attain that. When you start to get into a book that from the outside you think, "Wow, God's wisdom," but then you see all the things you have got to change and what you have really got to become to be. This book, biblically, as far as I am concerned, will either make you or break you.

## II. Proverbs 3:5-6 and Prayer

As I stated, this is one of the great promises and one of the great principles in the Bible we are going to look at, and it is in Proverbs chapter 3, verse 5 and 6. Let us look at it. Here is what it says. If you do not have this marked in your Bible, if you do not have this on your memorization sheet, I would get it on before you leave today.

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

*In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Now Father, we come to You today, and we thank You and we praise You for all that You do for us. We do love You. Now Lord, I believe that the majority of the people here today, it may be all

of them, Lord, I believe that they really want to do what You want them to do. I do not believe there is anybody here today, and maybe I am wrong on that, but I do not think there is anybody here today that just has come to church because they want to live a life that is a dead end street. But so many of us wind up on that dead end street, and help us today to understand why. Help us to understand this great truth that probably is one of the greatest truths in the Bible that I remember years and years and years and years ago how that You gave me this, and it was the cornerstone for where I built my relationship with You. So help us today. Maybe there is some young Christian out there that they are where I was so many years ago. Help them build their foundation on this great principle as You did me. And we will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name and sake we ask it. Amen.

### III. Principles vs. Promises

You know, sometimes people get confused by the way I use words. I will talk about principles and I will talk about promises. I have had people ask me before, "What is the difference between a principle and a promise?" Well, a principle, not all principles are promises, but all promises are principles. There are some general principles in the Bible. You go to Ecclesiastes chapter 3, and it gives you the cycle of life. If you take that and really look it out there and count them up and match it up to what you have got in the world, it actually shows you the cycle of life that you find in the Bible. Now that is a principle, see, but that is not a promise necessarily. I mean, you do not get around a campfire and somebody gave you your favorite verse and it is Ecclesiastes chapter 1 through 10. You do not hear that very often. So you have got to realize that there is a difference between the two.

But there is also a difference between when we talk about principles. There is also a difference in how you use principles. I talked to the people in the people ministry yesterday about this. You know, you have what we call blanket principles, and you have principles that are found in the Bible that you can apply to. It is like some kind of ointment on a sore. You can put it on just about anything. You can apply this principle. It is what I call a blanket principle. You can wrap it around anybody no matter where they are at. But then the second type of principles are design principles. They are designed for specific situations and circumstances that you deal with.

I gave them the illustration yesterday. You know, if you went to the doctor, he just does not have one medicine on his shelf. Somebody goes in with high cholesterol, somebody goes in with high blood pressure, somebody goes in with this problem, this problem. He does not give them all the same medicine. You know, he has a specific medicine that deals with a specific problem. Why we ever thought that you could just take a biblical principle and apply it across the board in every circumstance? You cannot. When you understand principles and how to use them, and I think that is really the key of being good and working with people, it is not just about learning the principles. It is to understand which principles you apply where and when. That is the key. Anybody can get a list of principles, but taking a blanket principle and trying to put it to a specific problem when there is a specific principle for that specific problem, you see, it can become problematic, and it can cause a lot of problems. You are going to find that you are dealing with principles that there are two kinds.

Now, Proverbs chapter 3, verse 5 and 6, that is a blanket principle. You can apply that to anything in your life, anybody, anywhere. You can give that verse to anybody no matter where they are at, no matter what they are struggling with. That is a blanket principle. Now, if I am dealing with family problems or I am dealing with marital problems, now that would be 1 Corinthians chapter 7 for the marriage. In 1 Corinthians chapter 7, you have what did I give you when we went through that a couple of weeks ago on Thursday night? Twenty, twenty-one direct principles that you have got to learn how to apply to twenty different scenarios that are found in there. What makes you good with people and what makes people seek you out to get good biblical counseling when they are going through something is not just the fact that you know them, but you are able to read the scenarios and understand which one goes where.

## IV. The Importance of Trust

This passage starts out with the instructions to a son: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." As I said, this is a general principle. You can give this to anybody. But I want to show you how to do a word study in a passage like this. I want to show you how that when you sit down with this verse, I mean, stop and think of it. I know I have been in this a lot longer than most of you, but take it from my example today. I just read the verse, I will read it again: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Great promise. Now watch how we take it apart. Watch how we key in on certain words and certain concepts that just take this thing and develop it from what you look at and say, "How am I going to preach an hour on that?" I look at it and say, "How am I going to get done with all this in an hour?" That is the difference.

Now, "trust" is the great word to study in the Bible. For a Christian, and I am sure you probably already know this, there are two distinct aspects of trust.

1. The first aspect for a Christian in trust is the day you got saved. The day you got saved, you trusted Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior.
2. The second aspect of trust in the Bible is after you are saved, trusting Him on a daily basis through everything in your life.

So there are two aspects to it. Now, the trust in Proverbs chapter 3 is the second one. It is not dealing with salvation.

*Titus 1:2*

*In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*

That is salvation. God promised you that He would save you. You know, people get messed up on a lot of different things. People think that you have to have certain feelings when you got saved. I have had people get saved and they have said to me, "I hope I got saved right. I did not feel anything." I have had other people say, "Well, you know, when my sister got saved, she cried. I did not cry." I have seen people that when they got saved, they were joyous. They jumped around. They were happy. I have seen people when they got saved got up and say, "Well, thank you, preacher, that was really good."

Salvation is never about the feeling. Salvation is never based on the circumstance. Salvation is simply based on the promises that God gave you. He told you:

*Romans 10:9*

*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

That is a promise. He said:

*Romans 10:13*

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

That is a promise. I am not saved because I feel saved. I know you are going to find it hard to believe, but there are some days when Bob Alexander gets up that he does not feel saved. I am sure there are days in your life that you do not feel saved. Are you not glad your salvation is not based on how you feel about it? See, I can have the worst day of my life, and I can take comfort in the fact that I am saved because my feelings have nothing to do with my salvation. My salvation and your salvation are simply based on the naked promises of the Word of God, plus nothing. You say, "Well, I do not feel saved." That does not mean you are not saved. Did you do what? Did you claim the promise? If you claim the promise, you are saved. It is just that simple. But we get all kinds of weird concepts about that, you know, and it is not true. Salvation is simply never based on the promise. It is always based on the promises of God.

When you get saved, then it is the same principles and the same promises, but a different subject that keeps you after you are saved. You know, you get saved and you have now you have to fulfill your walk with God. Both your salvation and both your fellowship after you are saved are both built on the same thing: principles and promises, just about two different areas. That is all.

Trust is a key word in the Bible. When it comes down to our life with God and our walk with God, it is based on a different set of promises than salvation, but it is based on the promises and the principles.

*2 Corinthians 7:1*

*Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

Now that is a saved man. I have laid out the book of Hebrews several times for you, and I have told you that in Hebrews you have a comparison. It is a comparison chapter by chapter of the Old Testament versus the New Testament, and he shows you chapter by chapter and section by section how that the New Testament is better than the Old Testament. In chapter 8, verse 6, he says this, and this is what makes it better:

*Hebrews 8:6*

*But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*

See, when you get into your Christian life, whether it is after you are saved, it is always about the promises, and not all principles will be promises, but all promises will be principles, and that is a great thing when you understand that. The two questions that you and I have to continually ask ourselves over and over again every day of our lives are simply this: If I can trust Him by the promises He gave me to save me, why can I not trust Him with the promises to get me through everything in life every day? I must tell you, the second was a lot harder than the first one, but in both cases, the answer is the promises of God.

Do you know why some of God's people, bless their hearts, and I pray for them, I feel sorry for them, but you know why some of God's people never get the victory in their lives that they want and we certainly need? It is simply the fact that they never get to the place in their life where they can ever learn to trust God through the things of life. Trust is one of the most key words you are going to find in the Bible. Trust is the basic element that is key to every relationship, and it is a fundamental bonding power of any relationship you are going to have. Not only is it important in the Bible, but it is important in everyday life.

You know, in a husband and wife relationship, the key element above all the other aspects of that relationship is just based on one fundamental concept: trust. That is all it is. I do not care where your relationship goes. I do not care if it is good, bad, or indifferent. I am telling you this: the fundamental basic aspect of any relationship, whether it is in the Bible or it is in your personal relationship with somebody, will be the element of trust. I hear it all the time, "He lies. I cannot trust him." I hear it all the time, "She deceived me. I cannot trust her." "I cannot trust him. I cannot trust her."

You see, when you begin to train up your children, you see it. We have talked about it, many of us. Your kids get to be 14, 15, 16 years old now, and you want to give them a little space. You know, you want to let them go out with their friends, and you say, "You know, call me at 10 o'clock and let me know where you are at," or, "I want you home by 11." You know what? They get home at 12:30. Trust is gone. You will find out later that they said, "Well, I was over at Janice's." They were not over at Janice's. They were over at Bill's. Now that is a problem. It is a real problem if it is your son. Trust is gone.

You know, with your children, when you cannot trust them, what do you do? We have all been in that situation as your children grow up. They lie to you. They will deceive you, and they can be saved kids. But you know as well as I do, when you get that element of the world in their life, they are going to test the authority structure, and you are going to have to deal with it when they do it. If you do not deal with it when they are 13, 14, and 15, you will never deal with it when they are 20, 21, and 22. But trust is gone. You say to them, "I am taking away your phone. I am taking away this. I am taking away that. You do not go out for another 25 years. No, you cannot have any time." Since you were with this person and this person covered for you, you cannot ever be with that person for a long time because you have to go through a process to restore that trust.

You know, if a person will lie to you once, do not ever believe that because they got caught, they are saying, "I never lied to you again, problems are solved." It does not work that way. They will

tell you what you want to hear. There has to be a process, a biblical process, to restore that trust. I have seen it with husband and wife where the trust is gone, and boy, I will tell you what, they have problems for years, for years. It is never an easy task, but it is a biblical process to restore that trust. But I am telling you, it says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart." You know why He starts with that? Because I am telling you, trust is the fundamental element in your relationship with God. But it is also the fundamental relationship in any relationship you have.

You know this is true because you can see it in your friends and even sometimes in your family. You know what? You stop and think and really contemplate it for a while, the people in our lives that you can really trust will be very few at the end of the day. I am not saying they are not your friends. I do not say they do not like you. They mean, in some cases, they may love you, but when it comes to certain things, you just cannot trust them. There are people that are in your family that do not do right and do not live right that you would not trust to watch your kids. There are people that are your friends that you would not trust to do something in your home when you were not there. You see, trust is the fundamental issue, and when it boils down to the bottom line, you know the people in our lives that we can trust, really, at the end of the day, pretty many, not many.

## V. Loyalty and Trust in Ministry

I think in the ministry, trust is vital. I mean, I really do. I have people all my life and everything that I have done, I have had people who I could trust with my ministry to get it done. You know, that was the problem that Paul had with John Mark, and you remember the story of John Mark. John Mark wanted to go on a missionary trip with Paul. Paul said, "Okay, I will take you." When they got out there, when they got on a missionary trip and it got rough and it got tough and John Mark missed his mama, then he wanted to go back. Paul, I am sure Paul said to him, "Look, son, we are in it now. I need you. We have got responsibility here. There are things that we have got to, you have got to cowboy up, you have got to man up. We have got to be able to accomplish some things. We have got some things that God has called us to do." John Mark headed for home. The next time they wanted to go out, John Mark signed up again. Paul would not take him. He violated that trust in ministry.

Now, thank God, a little bit later on, he gets it right, and he grows up and he learns some things. I do not know if you know it or not, but that is the Mark. John Mark is the Mark who wrote the Gospel of Mark in your Bible. A little bit later on, Paul says, when he is writing one of his letters, he says, "Bring Mark with him. He is profited with me under the ministry." But I guarantee you, he had to go through a process to reestablish that trust. To me, trust in the ministry is absolutely vital. I mean, it is. Over the years, God builds in any pastor's life, if he knows what he is doing, God builds a core of people around you who love the church as much as the pastor does, and they will invest their life, their families in it, and you never have to worry about, you know, when you give them something to do, you know they are going to get it done.

One of the bywords of the word trust is a big word for me, and it is the word loyalty, and you know it is a tremendous word for me, and as I said, it is a byproduct of the concept of trust. The two go hand in hand. Now, I cannot speak for you and where you are at, but I am basically, for a

few minutes here, can speak about me. In my life, there is no more sacred trust outside my family. There is no more sacred trust than the ministry God has given me, and I understand that for me as a pastor in the ministry, that loyalty is based on my trust, and it comes in three aspects. There is a priority of loyalty and there is a priority of trust for me in the ministry to God.

The first one is my loyalty to the Word of God. Now, I know I need to be loyal to you, and I will get to that in a minute, and I am loyal to you, but can I say something to you? My loyalty to you is worthless if I am not loyal to the Word of God first. That just makes us good old boys. That just makes us buddies. See, my loyalty to you as a church will be absolutely worthless if it is not my loyalty is in first to the Word of God. Then the second thing my loyalty has to be is to the ministry of this church. Then the third thing my loyalty is to is to you. Being loyal to you without being loyal to the book that keeps me straight, with loyal to the ministry which keeps you straight, then what good is that? We are buddies. I mean, it is just that simple.

You know, I know when I look at this thing, I cannot put you above the first two. I understand that God gave me this ministry to me and my family. I understand that. This church, and He entrusted it to me. Now, let me just stop here for a minute and tell you something. I know I do not deserve it. If I got what I deserved, I would be in hell today screaming my lungs off. I do not deserve it. I understand that. I am not somebody standing up here saying, "Well, I deserve all that God gives me." When somebody, I go someplace and somebody asks me how I am doing, my answer is, "Better than I deserve," because I do not deserve any of this. I do not deserve to have the Bible in my life. I told you after Thursday night when heaven came down and glory filled all our soul on Thursday night and had a great time we had in the Word of God. I told you, I do not know why God gave it to me. I mean, it is a great time to have. I mean, there are a million other guys out there, why He chose me, why He let me inside that book. I have no idea. I am glad He did, but I will be the first one to tell you, I do not deserve it. I do not deserve to read these books. You know what I deserve? I deserve God to take a hot stick and poke both my eyes out is what I deserve. I deserve God never let me look inside these sacred pages ever, but He did. I do not know why He did.

I mean, I look around at the goofy churches out there and all the goofy stuff that goes on and all the ridiculous stuff that goes on in the name of Jesus Christ. Why did God give me one that believes the Bible? Why did He put a mouse in my life? Why not somebody else's life? Why did He handpick my life and bring it down the line to give me what He gave me? I do not deserve it. You think if you think I sit around and think about all of it and say, "Boy, look at what I got, look at me," you are out of your mind. I do not deserve a thing about it, but He did, and because I recognize that, I will also tell you, I will stay loyal to the ministry and keep the trust that God has given me with the Word of God.

You see, a lot of pastors, they will not get up and preach on the King James Bible 1611. Most of them do not believe it anymore, but there are some rascals out there that privately believe it, but they do not have the guts to stand in the pulpit and say it. See, I think it is just the opposite. Have you ever been in a situation where somebody has maligned you and somebody has talked bad about you that was not true, and they have been in a circle of your friends, thought you thought were your friends, and they just rip you up one side and down the other and talk about you and

say this and say this, and none of it is true, or even if it is half true, even if it is true, and you know you want and you hear about it later and you hear about that some of your quote unquote friends were in that little crowd and they just stood by with their hands in their pockets and did not say anything in your defense? Now, we are all human, are we not? I have been there. Are you human? We are all human. We have been there. Zach has been there, probably going to be there again four or five times. I know you have been there. All of you have, and you know it is not about, it is not about anything other than when somebody just clobbers you when it is not true because they have got some personal motive, we would all like somebody just to stand up and say, "Why do you not just shut your mouth before I shut it for you?" It never happens.

I say all that because they malign God in this book every day. They lie about Him. They say that what He said in here was not really true. They change His Word like He did not know what He was talking about when He did, and I think God sits up in heaven sometimes and looks at His putrid church age and just looks for any guy, any gal, no matter who, that will just stand up and say, "Shut your mouth or I will shut it for you." That is my job. I will declare this book till the Lord comes back. I will take anybody on anytime, anyplace, anywhere that wants to criticize God's Word. You want to change it, help yourself. You want to make fun of it, help yourself. You come into my world and try to do it, or in my severe influence try to do it, I will kick you six days from Sunday. You will never know what hits you. You know why? Because God likes that. God wants somebody to stand up for Him just like we want somebody to stand up for us, and there is only one thing you can stand up for God for today. You know why preachers just stand around with their hands on their plow, going to say nothing? They are cowards. They are cowards.

I look back at all God has given me and all God has done for me when I do not deserve it, and yet He has entrusted me with that book, and He has entrusted me with this church, and He has entrusted me with a ministry. You think I am going to keep my mouth shut when somebody goes against the One who gave me what He has got and has got His hand in my life to make it happen? Well, I will tell you, you do not know very much about life on planet earth. He is God. He is the Lord, and I will tell you what, when you get up and declare that book in this putrid age of Christianity, God just smiles. He just loves it. Somebody sticking up for the book. Do you realize how much God loves that Word? Do you realize that the issue today in all the world, and always has been, has never been winning people to Christ. It has never been ministry. It has never been preaching. It has never been soul winning. The number one issue in God's heart is truth, and when you stand for the truth, when you have the wherewithal to stand for the truth.

I know I do not deserve what I have. I know I do not deserve what God has given me, and therefore the word trust to me and the word loyal to me when it comes to the Word of God and down through the ministry and in your world and as you go on, I will tell you this aspect of trust, and in time God gives you other men and women who love the church, love the ministry as much as I do. It does not matter, you know, if like last Sunday, it does not matter if I am here or not. You are here because you are not come for me. You come because this is your church. You come because you are part of this. You are invested in it. This is our work. It means something to you.

You are loyal to me. I thank you for that, but and you love me. I love you, but get it straight. It is through the ministry that God has given us together, and it is just that simple.

When I have to love, when I have to have my loyalty through the Word of God, through the ministry, then to you, you have to have your loyalty to me through the Word of God, this church, and then to me. I am third on the list. Loyal to the Word of God and that sacred trust that God has given you as He has given it to me. Loyal to the work of God and the sacred trust of this church that He has given us and the young Christians come in to protect it and to teach the truth. Then third and final, you are loyal to the man of God. I am third on the list as I should be. Truth can be known, I should not be on the list.

In any church, I do not care where it is, in any church, there will be people who just come to take what they can get and never give anything back. Now, we do not have a big problem with that here. I am not saying it does not exist. It exists in every church, but we are a little different in some aspects. But you are going to find people who never lift a finger to clean the bathroom. You will find people to come to church to get the Bible, their notebooks are filled, their Bibles filled with what they get. They would not replace a toilet paper. They would not pick a vacuum cleaner up to clean the floor. They would not do anything. They are the last ones here and the first ones out.

You know, Truman Dollar. Eddie and I were with Truman Dollar. Penny and I were with Truman Dollar. Nancy and I were with Truman. Were you there? Nancy was there. I spent almost 11 years with Pastor Truman Dollar. He is dead now. I learned so much from him. I always appreciated him in some ways, and I always never took for granted that God did not put me in that world for me to learn some things. I had the unique ability to ask him things. I had the unique ability to learn from him. He told me something one time that I never forgot. I will tell you, it is about ministry and about people. It is the single truest statement I ever heard in my life. He told me one time, we were talking about some circumstance in the church, and you know, and he looked over to me. We were driving down to Springfield. I remember like it was yesterday. We were talking back and forth, and I said, "Preacher," I said, I was young back then, I said, "Preacher, I do not really understand that." He looked over, and he had a way of saying it. He looked over and he said, "Well, Bob," he always drew that "Well, Bob" out, you know. He said, "Well, Bob," he says, "Let me just tell you, son, and you want to learn this. People will never remember what you did for them yesterday. They are only going to want to know what you are going to do for them today." That is so true. That is so true. That is one of the absolute truest statements I ever heard in my life.

I had a family one time, and several families over the time. A family one time, we first started our church, and they did not have a lot. You know, our churches help people. We just never brag about it. We try to help make sure everybody has got what they need whenever we can and all of those things. This was a family like that. I made sure they had gas when they had to come to church, and their kids never, I cannot, probably three or four Christmases, we gave them money and gifts and that so their kids would not have a Christmas. You know, I cannot live with that. We tried to do everything we could do. We helped them with food. When their car broke down, you know, we helped them get that fixed. One day, and I have got to also tell you this, these

people never did anything in the church. They never picked up any piece of paper. They never did anything. They never said, "Well, we needed to help. We want to do that." Nothing. They took, took, took, took, took, took.

One day somebody called me on the phone, and it was on that multimedia fashion, deep dark sides of the bottom of this pit, Facebook. There on Facebook, somebody sent me that thing that this woman, the mom, is badmouthing the ladies in our church. Saying to the churches this and the people this, and "You know, I do not like these people and I do not like this." So I called the husband on the phone, and I said, "We need to have a meeting." I sat down and I asked him, I said, "Look," I said, "What is the deal here?" And his wife was there, and his wife said, "Well, you know what, there are just some ladies in the church that I just do not like." And I said, "Oh, I am glad you explained it. I get it now. Those same ladies you do not like give their tithe every week when you do not. Those same ladies every week are the ones who put it together for your kids to have a Christmas. Those same people that you do not like, I got it now. You do not like the people in the church. You do not like the church. You just like our money." They did not come back. I wonder why that was.

I had a lady one time. Lied to us. Said she had some terrible problem, which she did. She got more terrible problems than she knows about. She came to me and she said, "Look, I got my, I got this terrible tragedy that happened, and I am getting a check from back home to help me get where I need to go, and I cannot cash the check till Monday, and if the church could lend me the money, I will, as soon as I get the check, I will get you the money back." And I said, "Absolutely, you got an emergency, which she did, I will help you get there, we will do it, no big deal." We gave her the money. She got up there, never saw the check. Found out two, three, four months later, not only did she go to tell us the story and got, I do not know, she only got like two hundred some dollars, but she told the whiny story to somebody else and they gave her seven hundred dollars. When I figured it all up, she made eleven hundred bucks off of everybody. Cared nothing about the church, and then had to go on her Facebook to badmouth the fact that we did not do anything for her.

Now, you know, that is the ministry, and I never worry about those things. I never lay awake at night thinking about it. I know I told the people yesterday, I was many times in my Christian walk, I wanted to become convert to Islam. No, because Islam in the Sharia law, you can kill people like that. But you know, I never let those things bother me because I know there is a day coming when all that will be straightened out. I also have learned over the years that being in the ministry, you cannot ever prejudge anybody. In ministry, you have got to allow yourself to be in this situation, if somebody wants to hose you, they let them hose you. You always do what is right, and if they hose you, then that is up between them and God, and God will deal with them. You know what God does? He blesses us for doing what the right thing is. I mean, you cannot, you cannot read people's hearts, you cannot read people's minds. Our job is to, is to put out the truth. You get hosed every once in a while, you do.

But I am just telling you, I mean, ask yourself this question. My dentist tells me, not that your wife, do not tell him this, this is a personal question, ask yourself this, I ask myself this all the time, "You are the pastor now. I am gone. You are the pastor now. You are the pastor. How would

you like to build a church with people like you? How would you like to be the pastor and have to build a church with people like yourself? I mean, you have got to pay the bills, you have got to operate the ministries, you have got to do the work. How would you like people to be committed to your church the way you are committed to this one if you were the pastor?" That is an excellent question to ask yourself.

You know, someday I will not be here, I will be gone. I am 63 years old. I was watching the thing the other night on television, and I was listening, and it talked about this guy, and it showed his picture, and it said he was 70 years old, and I am thinking to myself, "That is really old." Then I realized I am only 70 years away from that. Two more years I get to sign up for Medicare. I cannot fathom that. I do not feel 63. I do not think like a 63-year-old. I never give a waitress a tip if she asks me if I am a senior citizen to get the discount. I am not paying any senior citizen discount. Guy asked me one time at the grocery store, "Are you a senior citizen? I will give you this." And I said, "Let us go wrestle out in the backyard and we will tell me then if I am a senior citizen." I do not know when those gym shoes come in the mail that has got the velcro straps on them, but I am sending mine back.

But I will tell you, I am not going to live forever, and if the Lord does not come, this ministry will have to go on. I mean, bless your hearts, there are some of God's people that cannot even get to church three Sundays in a row because they are too busy. You have something at four o'clock on Sunday, and you know what, you stay home on church on Sunday morning so you can get ready for it. You never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity, and I am under no illusion when I have to go and I am off the scene, if the Lord does not come, I am under no illusion that in that day many of you will be gone too. I know you love me. I know, I believe you do, but you know what, you do not love this work. You do not care about this ministry. You love me because I helped you in life. I give you the Bible. You get a lot of nice things. You fill up your Bible, but at the end of the day, you do not love this church. Now, I love this church, and I have been entrusted trust with this church, and God will bring me men and women who love this church and feel the same trust as I do. I appreciate that when I am gone, attendance pretty much stays right where it is when I am here. I am sure you have got people out there that when they find out I am not going to be here, they are not here, but I appreciate the fact that that is true.

Now, last week I was gone up there in Vermont, and Danny preached, and Danny will preach the Word of God as good as I can every day, anytime you want to hear it. Last time I was not here, Bob preached. Bob will preach the Word of God as good as anybody I could on my best day or my worst day. When my wife was in the hospital and I was in between a rock and a hard place, I made one phone call to him on a Saturday night, and I said, "I have you to preach tomorrow because I have got a situation here." He said, "No problem." I listened in that day, and I wept. I wept. God gives you men like that. When I was gone last year, Joe Christenson preached. You will find that there is a depth to men in this church that they do not just preach three little outlines and a poem. There is a depth to them because of the Word of God. We used to go down to Joplin, and they would ask me afterwards, and I would always say, "No, I have had my fun in this, son, man, right around preaching, it is not what I am looking to do anymore," and I am waiting for them shoes to come and them velcro straps on them. But they always come up to me

and they say, "Where do you find guys like that that can preach that way?" I always tell them, "You do not find them, you have got to build them." But God builds a core, and there are many other guys and gals. I said, I put some of you guys or some of you gals up against any preacher in this country when it comes to that book. I have heard them all. I have listened to them all, and I hear you, and it is like milk toast. With you, it is like trying to get a drink out of a fire hose. Think about that one for a while. Yet in most churches, or any church, that is not true. People will come just to hear the pastor. They do not, they do not give a hoot about the work, about the ministry. It is all about what they want. You never build a work of God with those kind of people.

The Bible says, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart," and you see the real issue about trust, and this is kind of ludicrous and ridiculous to even say this, but it is true. The real issue with trust is simply this: it is not the fact that we cannot trust God. It is the bottom line that God cannot trust us. That is the problem. That is the problem. Now this verse will show us that in great detail.

## VI. Dissecting Proverbs 3:5-6

All right, look at verse 3 now. Here is what he says. He says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart." The first thing I want you to notice in our little word study of this thing is that you cannot trust God with half your heart. You cannot trust Him with part of your heart. It has got to be a hundred percent of your heart. Right there, you will lose 85 percent, if not 90 percent of God's people. If you are not willing to give God everything, then you are not giving Him anything. There are no halfway measures with God. This trust is the heartfelt confidence which leads, leans, and relies on the Lord and counts Him faithful to do what He has promised in your life, in your walk. The number one issue with God's people today, it is real simple. See it all the time. They are just not totally sold out. Not to God anyhow. Oh, they want God and His Word, but they totally want it on their terms.

*Romans 1:1*

*Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,*

You see, we are just not at the point of salvation. We are separated from the world. But then when you begin to walk with God, you have got to get separated from the world, but then you have got to get separated to something. Most of God's people have been separated from the world, they just never bothered to get separated to anything. That is why they do not care about churches. Oh, they love the Bible. They love the preachers. They love the people. They just do not love the work. So they make no investment in it. I have told you before that when God went back to heaven, He replaced Himself with three things. Told you many times. He replaced Himself with the Holy Spirit of God. He replaced Himself with the Word of God, and He replaced Himself with the local church. They are all important. You have got to have a trust and a relationship and a loyalty to each one of them.

Now the next part of that verse says, "and lean not unto thine own understanding." I will say this to you, brother, if there is anything that will get us in trouble, it is going through life by your own understanding. They say, "Let your conscience be your guide." They say, "Follow your heart." "Follow your comma." "Follow your dream." "I have a dream." "Pursue your happiness." "Listen

to that still small voice inside you." Yeah, that demon you have been hanging out with for the last 25 years. So I am thinking a paper one time, it said in a religious section, it said big thing, "Go to the church of your choice." Do not ever do that. Do not ever go to the church of your choice. Go to the church of God's choice. Lean on thine own understanding. The reason why every one of us have gotten ourselves into some of the most bizarre, traumatic, tragic, catastrophic situations in life is simple. We operate in our own understanding instead of God's understanding. Many times we do it by choice. All secular education, unfortunately, 98% of most churches today teach you to rely on your own understanding. They have to because they do not have a Bible anymore. I told you Thursday night, somebody asked the question, when you lose your Bible, you lose seven things. It absolutely puts you in a no-win situation. Going to a church that does not believe and teach the King James Bible, the Word of God, as the absolute Word of God, will without a doubt destroy you, your family, your kids, and everybody connected with you.

Then the next thing he says in the passage, "In all thy ways acknowledge him." Genesis chapter 24, verse 27, another verse I learned very early in my Christian life, I think it is a great promise. It is also a blanket promise. You could all apply this. He says:

*Genesis 24:27*

*And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left his mercy and his truth to my master: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.*

"I being in the way, the Lord led." And the next verse says, "In all thy ways acknowledge him." Now, when you get to this phase of your Christian life, most people never do. But when you get to this phase of your Christian life, I have got to be honest with you, the Christian life, at least in one respect, gets a little easier. It really does. Now, when you get to this phase of your Christian life, the walk with God gets a little easier if you are the real deal. I have told you many times that life is about choices. It is about where you go and about where you do not go. It is about who you hang out with and who you do not hang out with. It is about who you marry and who you do not marry. This part of the verse is a total and complete promise. A total and complete concept and recognition of God's hand in leading in all phases of your life. God being involved in all our ways. Not some of them. Not the ones you want to let Him in. All of them. All of them.

God being involved in our ways in the joys, in the success, in the failures, in the victories, in the sorrow, in the fun, in the activities, in the opposition you face, in the blessings, in our time of bereavement, and all the things that we attain in life. You see the great New Testament principles found in Philippians chapter 4, verses 4 through 7, where he says:

*Philippians 4:4-7*

*Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*

*Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*

*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

*And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

It means that the Lord shall be acknowledged or should be acknowledged in all areas of our lives. You acknowledge Him in the dining room, in the bedroom, in the kitchen, in the living room, on the TV set, when you are on your computer, in the field, on the highways, on the byways, on your vacation, with your family, with your friends, and everything that you do. My dear friend, it is real simple. When you get to this point in your life, your Christian life becomes real easy if you are the real deal. Now, if you are the raw deal, well, it does not. But if you get to this point in your Christian life, at least one aspect of your Christian life simplifies itself real good. Because if you are involved in something or going somewhere where you cannot openly acknowledge God and take Him in with you, then quit going there. It is just that simple. It is not complicated. Wow, well, that fixed 98 percent of our problems today.

He says, "You acknowledge Him in all your ways." That is the way you are in all that you do. Not just when you are here on a Sunday morning to put on a show when nobody sees through Monday through Friday and Saturday. Brother, that thing right there will cure you or kill you. We should keep our ways always before Him. So open that you can call on Him at any time, in any place, in front of anybody. Now you see how that fixes us? We are the biggest bunch of spiritual hypocrites you ever saw in your life. I mean, you go to a public restaurant and sit down there to feed your faith. Do you ask God's blessing publicly? Or you are one of those kind of secret agent Christians that just kind of, you know, bow your head like you have got something in your eye. You go to your friend's house for a cookout, going to watch the ballgame, and they break out the beer and start passing it around. You get your beer in a hand and then you ask God to bless it. Acknowledge Him in all your ways or just the ways you want to acknowledge Him. This thing will kill you, man. I mean, you never saw a deer hanging upside down with his guts hanging out more than you will see yourself when you look at this passage. This thing will kill you, man. "In all your ways acknowledge Him."

Then the last part of this great passage: "And He shall direct thy paths." The hand of God in your life and my life. You know, all of us, we all go through tough times in our lives. Nobody is going to escape it. Some of you have had to bury your mom and you bury your dad and lose your family. I lost my dad when I was 20 years old. I understand. My mom is up in her 90s, and I know that she has got more time behind her than she has got ahead of her. Someday I will have to preach that funeral, and I will have to say goodbye to her. I know that. The tough times will come in your life. Tough times will be in my life. It is the truest statement I ever heard. Life is on planet earth. It is a veil of tears, man. You are always looking through the tears.

I totally understand the process of getting biblical principles in your life to get you through. I preach on it all the time. How many times have you heard me say that your heart is like a bank account where you put money on the account for biblical principles? Now, when you have a tough time, you draw off the account. I believe that. I do. I believe that as much as I am standing here. You have heard me preach a thousand times Psalm 119:

*Psalms 119:11*

*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

I believe those things. But I have got to tell you something, and I cannot speak for you now. I am speaking for me. I think I could get through anything in life no matter how hard it was. No matter how hard it would be without any of the Bible principles. I thank God for it. I am not taking away from them. But I want to tell you something. I am trying to make a point on this principle. I think I could get through anything in life no matter how hard it was without any Bible principles. I did not have a one. But if I just know I am right with God and where God wants me to be and His hand is in my life and He is directing every facet of my pathway. Whatever I am in, that would be good enough for me. If I know He has got His hand in it.

I believe Romans 8:28:

*Romans 8:28*

*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

I believe that. I believe that. I can rest in that no matter how hard it is. How bad. I thank God for the principles. But if I did not have them and all I had was what I was going through and like what Job had. He did not have a Bible. He did not have any of the stuff that we got. You know what got him through, and he went through in seven days what you and I will never go through in a lifetime. You know what got him through? He knew that God was in his life and God was directing him. It got to the place where it got so bad. We bail out when it gets nowhere near that bad. It got so bad for him, and then three friends show up, Dr. Fine, Dr. Howard, Dr. Fine, and they start to ridicule him and give him all kinds of problems. When he is at the height of it, when he feels like he cannot go any farther, and it must have been a terrible time. None of us will ever understand what he went through. But when he got to that point in his life, instead of quitting, instead of bailing out, instead of blaming God, instead of finding all kinds of fault, you know what he said? He said:

*Job 13:15*

*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.*

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." Trust is a great thing. It is a great thing. If we know that God has got His hands in our lives and He is directing us, there should be nothing in life we cannot get through without the Bible. Thank God we have got it.

David one time sinned in numbering the people back in 2 Samuel chapter 24. When God came down and held him accountable for it, God gave him a couple of choices of how God would chastise him. Let him pick. I love that. It is like that big game show, door number one, door number two, and door number three, you get to pick one of it behind it. Well, He said to David, "I will do, David, I am going to come down in Calabria, but I am going to let you choose three doors up here, David. Door number one, door number one is I am going to send famine in the land for seven years. Door number two, your enemies are going to come down and kick the fire out of you. Door number three, I have got, I am going to send pestilence to you, and I will deal

with you guys, and I will send pestilence for three days." David said in 2 Samuel chapter 24, verse 14, he did not even pray about it. He says:

*2 Samuel 24:14*

*And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.*

"I am in a great strait." Have you ever been in a great strait? You know what a great strait is? That is a situation where you have got no movement, you are stuck. A great strait is a straight way, and you are stuck in the middle. You cannot turn around, you cannot go back, you cannot turn sideways. You are in a great strait. "Let us now fall into the hand of God, for His mercies are great. Let me not fall into the hand of man." David, you know what he said? He said, "I do not care how bad it is. I do not care what God does. I know God is going to deal what is right with me. He is going to do right with me, and I am going to let Him whip me because I do not want the other nations to whip me. I do not want this to happen. I am going to trust in God, and He has never hurt me, and He will only give me what I need, and He will not give me one more inch than I deserve. I trust the Lord." Pestilence came down for three days.

Listen, I would rather be on a train track with my car stalled, my door locks jammed, and a 90 mile an hour train just a hundred yards heading my way in God's will, in God's plan, with God's hand in my life, than home in my bed tucked in with a cover around my neck without the hand of God in my life. The majority of God's people today have no clue what I am even talking about. They live in a world of relying on their own understanding, and they deceive themselves that God's hand is in their life when He is not a hundred million light years around. We say we want to follow God, but it always has to be on our terms. There is always a condition, there is always a string attached. That is why in spite of what we claim, in spite of what we say, we never get any victory over anything in our life, in our life, our marriages, and our kids are just absolute chaos. It is just that simple.

David said in Psalms 37:24:

*Psalms 37:24*

*Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.*

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord." That ought to be the state that every Christian wants to get to. You know why? Because when the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, you will never be any place God does not want you to be.

*Psalms 73:24*

*Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

Oh, yes, sir, boy, in this life right now, He guides you with His counsel. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path," but afterward He is going to receive us up to glory. Now that is what a Christian life should be. It is simple as that. Getting God's direction in the path of our life.

## VII. The Exposing Power of Proverbs

The book of Proverbs from the outside is a great book of wisdom. To get into it and study it and learn all the wisdom of God, but now you see. Now you see this book lays you and me out wide open. It goes into the greatest detail. It takes off, it forces us to take off our mask and look at who we really are because who we really are, and I have told you this before, Hebrews chapter 4, verse 12 and 13 says the Word of God is a living book. It says the Word of God discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. He says:

*Hebrews 4:13*

*Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

He sees it all. The Bible is the only book, and I have told you this many, many times, it is the only book on the planet that when you start to read it, it starts to read you. We opened the book of Proverbs and we said, "All, we are going to have fun, we are going to get into this." The moment when you crack those pages, Holy Spirit goes to work in your life. Today churches are filled with thousands, thousands, thousands of people in churches today, and mostly for one reason: when someone showed them the truth, when someone showed them the book, when somebody showed them the truth about who they really were, they got as far away from that Bible as they could, and yet pretend they love God. So they go to a church that has no Bible. They go to a church that preaches no Bible. They go to a church that you have no real accountability for yourself. A church where you can go every Sunday and never do one thing, never do one thing for God all your life and pretend you are okay. A church where you can pretend you are spiritual and care about God, yet inside you despise the very book that exposed you and who you really are. In that time, that evil man and that strange woman will work their way into every aspect of your life, and God will take the very game that you tried to play on Him and He will turn it around and play it on you: your life, your marriage, your family.

I say it again, it is a great verse, and this is a great verse and a great principle, and this is a, this is one, a blanket principle you can apply across the board. Job 9:4:

*Job 9:4*

*He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*

Nobody. Nobody. We go from one great tragedy to another. Some great tragedy befalls us. We come back to church. We come back to God, and oh, we are this and we are that. Then after about a year, two years, six months, whenever the case may be, when it gets cold and indifferent, you start to go back to that old attitude, and you know what it takes? It takes another tragedy in your life. That is why your life is one tragedy after another. It is why you go through one dark time after another. You just do not get it. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." The leading of God, the directing hand of God in our lives.

## VIII. Lining Up Biblical Principles

You know, years ago, I was up in the New England area, and I was preaching up there, and it was one of those sheep work towns. I want to say it was Gloucester, but I cannot remember exactly where it was, it was so many years ago. I was staying with a family, and they had a little boat, and took me out, it was a neat little deal. We are coming back into the harbor, big old lighthouse there, beautiful place, and it was getting toward night. As we were coming in, these three huge lights, I mean, they were like, looked from my thing, looked like they were 200 yards apart, three huge lights were across the back of the bay. I asked the guy, I said, "Wow," I said, "That is, that is, uh, that is pretty neat. Now, who could not find that?" He said, "Oh," he said, "Do not go by that. Do not go by that." He says, "This is one of the most dangerous harbor entrances in all the world. We have lost more ships on, on these rocks because it is such a narrow channel." He says, "The bottom of this ocean or here going into this channel is just strewn with ships that, that sank because they hit the rocks." He says, "You know, about 60, 70 years ago, some guy designed a, a format that we could all enter in safely. He took and he put three lights like you see them out there, and he says, he has put them in such an array and such a design that when you see the three lights or you see the two lights, you are headed for the rocks. But if you get at the right angle to come into that, all three of those lights line up to be one light, and as long as you only see one light, you are on the safe path to get into that harbor."

I thought to myself, many more years later now, you know that is exactly what the principles in the Word of God do. When you have got an issue in your life and you have got a problem in your life, you know what you have to do? You have to line up all the biblical principles till they come into one focus. You have to take all of those blanket principles and all those specific principles, and when you start putting them into your life, they will all line up into one. That is the safe course into the harbor of God. It is just that simple. It is just that simple in our lives. When you have an issue, a decision to make, a problem to solve, you look to God for His leading, not to your own understanding or someone else's. You have to first take into account all the principles that come into play, the direct ones, and then when in your life by the Word of God, they all line up as one, it is clear to proceed. It is like studying the Bible. You never need a pair of scissors when you study the Bible because there is never left anything hanging out that you have got to cut off. It all goes together. It all fits perfectly. The principles of the Word of God, when you apply them right in your life, they will line up, and all of those principles will come into one central path to follow: all the principles, all the principles, not just the ones we like. If you do not, then just like so many of those ships up in that New England harbor, you will wind up on the rocks in your life.

## IX. Conclusion

Yes, Proverbs is a great book for sure, but I know of no other book in the Bible that exposes who we really are factoring the book of Proverbs does. I encourage you, my encouragement to you through the book of Proverbs are simply this: Do not go another day in your life, do not go another week before starting to put the directive hand of God in your ways. You may have to break off some relationships. You may have to change some things. You may have to quit going

to another church. You may have to put some things out of your life. But you have got to get at some point in your life where you trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding, and in all your ways acknowledge Him, and then He will direct your path. Let us pray.