

Proverbs 3

Sunday 11/17/2013

I. Introduction to Proverbs 3:5-6 and Its Core Principles

Well, if you have your Bibles, let's turn back again to Proverbs chapter 3. You remember last week I showed you probably one of the greatest promises in all of the Bible. A number of you came up to me afterwards and told me that this was one of the first verses that you ever learned when you started to get into the Bible. And it's a great one.

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.

We kind of took the verse apart, and I showed you how to squeeze out of a promise like this, kind of a word study, or to get the most out of it. I basically, if you remember, gave you five key words that outline that great verse.

1. The first one is the word trust. We talked about how that is the fundamental key element in every relationship, whether it be with your relationship with God or whether it be in your human relationship.
2. The second one was your heart, and how God won't settle for half your heart or three quarters of it. It's 100% of your heart.
3. The third word was understanding, and that's getting God's understanding over your own understanding and then the ability to use God's understanding.
4. The fourth word was ways, and the way you go and the way that we are.
5. And then the fifth one was getting God's direction in your life, and obviously this is the bottom line for all of us and a successful Christian life.

You remember I showed you the difference between a promise and a principle and the two kinds of principles that you have to be able to learn how to use. We talked about blanket principles. Proverbs 3:5-6 is one of those. You can apply that to anybody, give that to anywhere in any circumstance, in any situation, and that one will work. But then I talked about that there are direct principles, principles that you apply to specific problems that people have or issues that they go through. And really the key is not just understanding which is which, but the ability to be able to apply them in the right circumstances, in the right situation.

II. The Wisdom of God vs. The Wisdom of Man

So we're going to move on today in the next set of paragraph marks, and we're going to look at Proverbs 3:7-11. I want to keep in mind that we've not even gotten into the Proverbs yet. I know the book of Proverbs is called Proverbs, but you know now from our outline that the Proverbs of Solomon don't start until chapter 8. All we're coming through right now in the first seven chapters is what you and I are to do to get, as a son, the instruction of our Father, our Heavenly Father.

Let's begin reading in verse 7 here:

Proverbs 3:7-10

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Father, we thank you today for the Lord Jesus. We ask you as we come to you today, Father, to give us the Word of God through your Spirit. We ask you to forgive us where we have failed you, Father, that if anything in our hearts and our lives that we have not confessed to you and brought to you, put under the blood, that we would do it at this moment in time, Father, that we might be clean to receive the principles and the doctrine that you have for us. We thank you, Father, for all that you do, and truly, Father, as the song was played today for the offering, I'd rather have Jesus than all the things in the world. And Lord, we do love you and thank you for your hand of comfort, your hand of truth. And we pray, Father, your blessings upon our time today. In Jesus' name, for his sake we ask it. Amen.

One of the keys to communicating truth from the Word of God is for the wise man to have the ability to lay out the same principle three or four different ways. One of the abilities of communicating something that you want to get across is to have at your disposal your ability to be able to state the same truth several different ways. And it's a key to good teaching. People pick it up that way when you can come at it from different angles but get the same theme across.

This is what the book of Proverbs is doing in Chapter 1 through Chapter 7. The book of Proverbs in the first seven chapters keeps coming at a common theme by different angles with different principles. And that's what we are about to look at in this passage. Again, a variation on the classic theme of Proverbs 1-7, of basically getting God's understanding and the leading of God in our lives.

Now he starts this passage by saying, "Be not wise in your own eyes." This wisdom that he's saying we should not be part of is the wisdom of the world. It's wisdom without God and without God's principles. This wisdom has no guidelines. It has no truth. It has no accountability because it's not based on the Word of God. It's based on what man thinks and how man sees it. And the world operates in this wisdom of their own eyes 24/7 in all that it does. And it doesn't take much of a person to be able to see it in everything that we do.

You look across our country today, and the murder rate is unprecedented. We now call certain cities like Washington, D.C., like Chicago, murder capitals of America. There are more murders per capita. It's unbelievable. Kansas City has its share of homicides, but there are places in Kansas City that you probably ought to be careful going to late at night. But you go to St. Louis, and there are places where the police don't go. It's some bad situations out there. And the problem is that there's no fear of killing somebody anymore. And the reason why there's no fear is because there are no consequences.

Our society has gotten so far away from the reality of truth that you see it all the time. When a man kills somebody, the killer has more rights than the victim does. And that's a society that's lost its way. That's a society that has digressed from the truth and the principles. God's thought process on it is that "he that shedeth man's blood, by his blood shall his be shed"—capital punishment. But now we're so far from that today because man's wisdom, "wise in your own eyes," sees it differently now.

Back in the 1920s, they had a form of capital punishment, which was called the electric chair. And the electric chair, I always thought, was one of the best ways to execute somebody. They try to make, you know, you can kill somebody in the most brutal fashion, and when they finally do decide to take your life after what, 20 years of appeals, they make it the most comfortable thing, like it's going to McDonald's to get a Big Mac. It's the most comfortable thing. They have nice padded things, and they push you to sleep first. You never know what hits you. The electric chair was a great form of capital punishment. That was feared by inmates. They called it "Old Sparky." They used to call it, "You're going to ride the lightning." And they strapped you into a chair and then put water on your head and water on your hands and your feet and put electrodes on it and gave you enough electricity that, and they were open to the public. And all the other prisoners knew that somebody was going to be executed. They knew the moment it happened. They didn't see it. They didn't hear it. But the lights began to flicker because all of that electricity power to that prison was going into that person. Foam came out of his ears. Foam came out of his mouth. It was the most horrific thing, but you know what it did? It sent a message that somebody saw that and they said, "I'm not going to kill somebody because I don't want it to happen to me." There were consequences to it back then. No consequences now.

Even if you're on death row, you get three meals a day. You get taken care of. You get all the things. You get cable TV. But if you knew that if you were going to kill someone, they were going to kill you, I guarantee you, you'd think about it. But you see, that's gone now. It's changed. There's no man sees it now that life is the most precious thing. And he sees that. But when a murderer kills somebody, they also say, "Okay, forget the Bible. The murderer's life is also precious." And when that happens, we have cities as the murder capital of the world. Because nobody fears killing anybody anymore. They do it now. Teenagers do it just for initiation into gangs. They do it now because their video game broke down, and so they're going to go out and kill somebody to replace the fun time that they have.

You see it in our government. The end result of being wise in your own eyes is a total meltdown. And once you throw out the Bible, then it's gone. There's no physical responsibility as far as finances. There's what, 17, 18 trillion dollars in debt. There's no understanding or no accountability, no positive work in government. They can't get anything done. No spending principles, no budgets. You see it in our own Kansas City in the school district. The state has to come in and take over the schools. And I know that there are a lot of people who blame the schools, and they blame the superintendent or they blame the teachers. And I want to tell you where the real blame lies. The real blame lies with the parents. Not the schools or the teachers. It's the parents who never discipline those kids. It's the parents who have four or five kids by four or five different men. They have no father in the home. It's the parents who never trained them

up in the right way so they go to school. Now the schools have, when it was in their own eyes, threw under the pressure. You know what happens. They've taken God out of the schools now. You can't read the Bible anymore. When I went to school, they read the Bible every morning. They prayed over the loudspeaker system. Now that may not seem much to you, but it's a God consciousness that comes up when you see it every day. We still had Easter services. You know what they had in Easter service? They brought in a preacher that preached on the resurrection of Christ. We had Christmas services. You know what it was? It was Christ in the manger. Somebody got up and read the Christmas story. They talked about the Savior coming to the world. Can't do that anymore.

But you see, when you're wise in your own eyes, you take the Bible out of school. You take the Bible out of government. When you take the Bible out of school, it's only a matter of time the guns are coming in. This holiday week goes by that there's not a shooting in a school. They don't just kill adults anymore. Now they kill kids. A kid will bring a gun to school and shoot somebody that bullies him. If he doesn't like somebody, he'll kill a teacher because he didn't get a good grade. Man, if I'd have done that when I was in school, there wouldn't have been any teachers left. But it wasn't a teacher's fault, it was my fault. When this country, when this world, you see all kinds of examples of men going by being wise in their own eyes. I mean, you see it in everything. And I know they all come back and they see it as, "Let's take all the guns away. Let's solve the problem." They'll simply say, "Well, I got an idea. Let's just outside the school, let's put a sign up: No guns allowed." That'll work. That'll really work. If I'm going to go kill somebody and I'm demented and I've got anger and I'm out of control and I got a .357 Magnum, I'm going to go wipe out all my teachers and all my bullies. When I get to that door and see "gun free zone," I'm going to throw that thing in the trash. That's wise in your own eyes. That's not even, that's stupidity. That's man's wisdom. It's simply what it is. God's wisdom says you take God out of the government, you take God out of the schools, and you have anarchy.

If there's any book of the Bible that fits today and this insane world that we live in and explains why, it has to be the book of Judges. The book of Judges is the weirdest book in the Bible. There are more weird things that go on in the book of Judges that you scratch your head and look at and you're saying, "What in the world is going on?" And when I read the book of Judges, I understand it's exactly what we have today because I look at the world we live in and I scratch my head and say, "What's really going on?" And the answer is found in the last chapter, in the last verse of the book of Judges. It simply says, "There was no king in Israel, and every man did what was right in his own what? Eyes." See? Wise in your own eyes.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, you have, I don't know, probably 34, 35 different philosophies of life that men who are wiser in their own eyes have come up with. Proverbs 19:21 calls them the devices in a man's heart to get you around the counsel of the Lord. Proverbs 16:25 says, "There is a way that seemeth right unto men, but therein they're rather the ways of death." These become the foundation of worldly wisdom, that a man becomes wise in his own eyes.

Now the eyes, when you find them in the Bible, you need to understand how it's used. It doesn't always use that just looking at something. One time in John 3, when Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, he said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot what? See the

kingdom of God." Now, he wasn't talking to Nicodemus that you could actually see it with your eyes. Romans tells us that the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace in the Holy Ghost. You can't see it. But when he said to Nicodemus, "If you don't get born again, you'll not see the kingdom of God," he's saying, "You won't understand it." I look at something and you explain it to me. What do I say? "Oh, I see." I see it. Somebody explains something to me. "Well, I never looked at it that way before." It means to comprehend something, not just see it visually. The world's understanding is based on our two old friends that we talked about and preached about a couple of weeks ago back in Proverbs 2, the evil man and the strange woman. And here's how it works. And it develops itself. You see it all the time.

III. Six Results of Being Wise in Your Own Eyes

Wisdom in your own eyes will always produce six things. When a man gets wise in his own eyes, mark it down. See if this isn't true. When somebody gets out of the Word of God and becomes wise in their own eyes, it will always result in six things.

6. The first thing it'll result in is pride. They're going to get prideful about who they are. You're not going to be able to tell them they're wrong. They're going to blame their problems they have in their own life on the church, on you, somebody else. Pride will not let them see that it's them.
7. Along with that, the second thing that comes into their life is stubbornness. Pride and stubbornness, even though they're two different things, they go together. Once a person becomes prideful with where they are, they're not going to move. They're stubborn. And they're not going to change.
8. The next thing that happens, the third thing, is arrogance. They become arrogant about their situation. They become to the point where they're absolutely arrogant as far as dealing with it and trying to help them with it. And they have no problem. I've had people over the years in whatever ministry I was part of that you could have 300 people in your church. One person gets their nose bent out of joint and they are so prideful and so arrogant and so stubborn that they're right and all 299 other people are wrong. Now that's arrogance. I don't even know what to tell you.
9. The next thing is self-centered. Everything has to revolve around them. Their world implodes on themselves. They never see the needs of others. They only see their needs. And their needs are fostered by the first three things that we talked about.
10. The fifth thing is they're self-serving. It has to be all about them. Everything they do is them. They don't do anything for other people. It's always about them. If they have a ministry, it isn't a ministry that they're going to minister. It's their little ministry.
11. And then the last thing is self-righteousness. Being wise in your own eyes will come from basically last week when we looked at Proverbs 3:5-6, leaning to your own understanding. See how it works? It comes from getting off the path of uprightness, Proverbs 2:13, and getting on that express four-lane highway. It gives you all the options and all the latitude in life, instead of staying on that narrow path that is conducive to the biblical principles.

IV. The Church and Worldly Wisdom

Unfortunately, not only does the world operate that way, but Christians, churches, and pastors operate the same way. You remember when we studied the book of Corinthians, 1 and 2 Corinthians. This was the problem. It's not just found in our time today and the churches today, though it is. You remember that the church of Corinth had the exact same issue.

In 1 Corinthians 2:5-11, he says that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Now there it is. He's saying to the church, he's saying that your faith, faith now, not works, your faith. This is saved people, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:5-11

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

The Bible says the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. You can't even know them because they're spiritually discerned. He's making a case to this church that, "Hey, you're a church. You've got pastors. You've got teachers. You've got a Bible. But you're operating not in God's wisdom, you're operating in man's wisdom." He tells us, "You've got a spirit in man, and you've got a spirit of God." And when a spirit of man looks at life and develops his own critique of it, he sees it through his eyes, through his understanding, then he comes up with all the goofy stuff that we see. When a man stays on task with the Word of God and lets the principles of the Word of God dictate to him what it is and what it isn't, that's the way it goes. It's just that simple.

When we operate in the flesh, when we operate in the spirit of man, spirit of the world, it's our own flesh, it's our own eyes, our own understanding. And it gets us messed up in everything. And this church wound up being the worst screwed up church in the New Testament. And when a church, when a pastor, when Christians operate by man's wisdom in their own eyes, this is what you get: a bunch of spiritual babies, a bunch of prideful, stubborn, arrogant, self-centered, self-serving, self-righteous. The church at Corinth is all of that. And Paul deals with them all the way through it.

Last Saturday in the people ministry, our people ministry is a critique of taking people who wanted to really get into counseling and working with people. So fundamentally, we're going through all the biblical principles starting in Genesis and just walking our way through all the stories in the Bible that lay out all the great principles. And I told them last week, somebody, and people are always sending me emails, they see stuff that I don't ever see because I don't spend that much time on it. But they're always sending me stuff. And last week or the week before last, somebody sent me off of their webpage of a church, a large church in Lee's Summit. I'm not going to tell you the name of it. If you want to find out, ask somebody in the people ministry, you have my permission to tell them. So I'll just put the blessing on it. But they started a counseling ministry, and they had a big webpage devoted to it. And they brought it to me or sent it to me because this is what I preach about. And it was incredible. And in the thing there, it says, explaining their counseling ministry. And this is the church now who preaches the Bible, don't believe the Bible, but they mean they preach salvation. They don't believe King James Bible, the Word of God anymore than the Pope does. But they're a church, have a pastor, have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people. Started a counseling ministry. And here's what they said on their website: "What we do, we here at Blankety Blank, who are a bunch of Blankety Blank Christian, mold together the foundation and teaching of scripture with the very latest research, with the very latest theory, with the very latest practice. Each counselor seeks to combine faith in Christ with the fields of counseling and psychotherapy."

Now that's a church. Now that's what I talk to you about all the time. That's exactly, it doesn't get any better than that as an example. That is a great example of a church, a pastor, a congregation taking worldly wisdom, trying to mix it with God's wisdom and put the two out. And that's nothing more than being wise in your own eyes. And I guarantee you, aren't you glad that if you've got marital problems or you've got this problem or you've got that problem, when you come in, we don't give you a theory? We don't give you something to practice. We don't say, "Well, hold on, I know you've got some real tragic things. Let me investigate what the latest research is on your problem." You see, when you've got the Bible as truth, you don't need that crap. You don't need that. You've got what the Word of God says. It's true.

I had a counselor tell me one time, when these psycho, we don't do psychotherapy. I told him we do psychoceramics. We deal with crackpots, it's a different situation. But then when these guys tell me one time, he says, "Oh, you misunderstand. I believe the Bible is truth." He says, "I just don't believe the Bible contains all truth." Now I'm going to tell you something. The minute you go down that road, the moment the Bible is no longer your source of all truth, the evil man and the estranged woman are going to play havoc with that. And I guarantee you, 100 people in this church, 100% of them think that that blasphemous statement like that is just great. "Wow, look at what we have." And I'm going to guarantee you this, my friend, when you would go there and get the latest theory, the greatest research, the greatest practice and psychotherapy, when it contradicts the Word of God, and it will 99.999% of the time, they'll throw the book out and take man's wisdom every time. I've been in this business too long. I know what human nature does. You don't dump the book out of your church unless you hate the book. Now you may disagree with that and say, "Oh no, I love the Word of God." You're a liar in practice. You know what? How do you love this book and then leave this book? How do you say this book is all truth and

then stand in the pulpit and preach out of it and yet in your own heart, you don't really believe it's the absolute Word of God? There's the problem.

Now I told you many, many times that I hate living in the 21st, 20th century where you've got all this junk you've got to deal with. But since I am here, I'll pick up the task and I will preach anytime, anyplace that the Word of God is that book I hold in my hand. It doesn't contain the Word of God. It is the Word of God. There's no theory to it. There's no practice to it. And there's no research that has to be done. That's where it's at. Now you don't find a lot of people like that today. That's okay. I don't like a lot of people today. But I've been in this business for a while and I know how human nature works. I know that when you already reject the book and don't think it's the truth and you think the other stuff is truth equal, that's where you're going to go when you're human nature in your flesh. You don't say I love God and love God's Word and it's everything and then bring in that junk. You do that because you really don't believe this. You've got to have this so the suckers, oh yeah, that's the last part. Of course, there's a fee involved here. Whatever happened to freely give, freely receive, or freely receive, freely give, or just give it away free. We gave you kids some stuff out of the bookstore. Did you get it yet? Afterward we will not bill you for it. Teachers are here to give out truth. How do you solve somebody's problem in life? By using foundational truth, a relationship, fundamentals of Christ. How do you charge somebody for something you got free? Unless you're just crooked. I answered my question, didn't I? If I charge you what it took to fix your life, if I charge you what it took to fix your marriage, if I charge you what it would take to fix whatever your problem is, you couldn't pay for it in 10 lifetimes. It's free, free, free. Free at last, free at last.

V. Three Actions and Four Returns

Now in our first section of this passage, there are three things you have to do. And then in verse 8, 9, and 10, and I've already told you this, God returns four things. And that's what you love about God. He always gives you back more than he asks you to give him.

- 1.) Be not wise in your own eyes. We've already looked at it.
- 2.) Fear the Lord. Now let me explain this. This is not the reverence fear that we have of respect for God. No, this is the fear that God will clobber you if you don't do what's right and you continue to lean to your own understanding and be wise in your own eyes. You want the context, look at verse 11, the context is dealing with God's chastisement, God's judgment in our lives. Now I know people don't like hard preaching today. I know that. We'll never build a church of 5,000, 2,000. We'll never build a church probably of 1,000. We'll never treat a church of 500. And that's cool with me because I'm not in the numbers game. But I do know this. I know that there's not too many people that will put up with abuse like some of you do. And it's the right kind of abuse. People don't understand what preaching is. And this is why God just kind of takes his hand off the church today and lets it go because we're so close to the rapture it doesn't make any difference. But the bottom line is this. You know why God gave you preachers? God gave you preachers that will take your hide off and take the pain off. And I know some of God's people don't like it. I'm preaching to the choir here because I know most of you probably do. But you've got some people all the time, I preach a hot

message and somebody will come back and they will say, "Well, I brought so and so, he came to church but he didn't like it." And I said, "Well, okay, what's not to like about me? I mean, I'm the nicest guy on the planet." And he said, "Well, you yell too much." Well, I said, "You ever go to the Chiefs game? We've got the highest sound level of anything on the planet. We're number one in the country. You think that that guy doesn't go to the Chiefs game because it's too loud?" Why is it you can go watch a bunch of idiots chase a dead pig up and down the field and you think it's all right to scream, but you're coming to the house of God with a living Word of God and you think, "Shouldn't yell." Amen, amen. Something wrong with you, pal, something wrong with you. You ain't going to like heaven. You ain't going to like heaven. They'll have a section over there, a quiet section for you. You ain't going to like heaven. There's going to be a whole lot of shouting going on around here. You ain't going to like it. You better go to the Catholic heaven or the Episcopalian heaven or one of those places. But you ain't going to like heaven. Heaven is going to be one race, one riot from beginning to end. It's going to be one screaming fit match from the time you get there. I was going to say it's the time it's over. It ain't ever over. I'm telling you. People drive me nuts. And I'm telling you, man, I'm telling you. I mean, you know why God gives you preachers? He gives you preachers so when you come in here and you're dirty and you're not doing right that somebody will get up here and open that book and take the hide off of you, you'll deal with your sin and get right with God. You know why he does that? You fool. You know why he does that? He does that so he doesn't have to come down and clobber you himself. Amen. Thank you. Amen. Thank you. Man. People don't like it today. They don't like the fact that you tell them the truth. They want to stand up here and you want me to tell you how wonderful you are. And you're certainly wonderful and I love you all. But you know as well as I do we always block as the sides of the bottomless pit inside. And from time to time we all need our clock cleaned. And brother I'm the best clock cleaner you ever saw. You put me in that church of 2000 I'll have it down to 50 in a week. But I'll get the 50 done and we'll get something done with it. This idea you've got to have all the pomp and circumstance. It looks like some pompous ass when you come out in the pulpit, you know, and have the smoke and the lights and all the stuff up there that just shows everybody, "Look what we got. God's here." He ain't a hundred million light years around. He's in that book. You ain't got the book, you ain't got him.

- 3.) Depart from evil. Now the third thing is when you fear the Lord's judgment, you'll depart from evil. Let's analyze this for a moment, just departing from evil. Proverbs 1:7 says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. You see, if you're a young Christian, that's the first thing you've got to get when you start to get knowledge about God is he's going to judge you for your sin. That's the first fundamental thing you've got to learn. 1 John 1:9 says if we're faithful and just to confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But you need to know the first thing you need to know is you're going to get dirty, and when you get dirty, you have a process to get clean. And when you don't, it's coming to church. It's looking in your own heart, getting in that Bible. I've told you a million times, the Bible is the only book on the planet when you start to read it, it starts to read you. And you look inside, you say, "I'm wicked, I was wrong, I shouldn't have done that, oh God forgive me." You come on Sunday morning and you go out here with your tail

between your legs and you go out there and on the way home you say, "God, he was right, I'm wrong, I'm sorry." That's what God intended for you to do. Proverbs 8:13 says the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. Do you? Proverbs 10:27 says the fear of the Lord prolongeth days. Proverbs 19:23 says the fear of the Lord tendeth to life. This was the problem in church at Corinth in chapter 11, verse 30, when they were all screwed up with the Lord's Supper. He says, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." They were dead. 1 Peter 3:2 says we need to have chaste conversation coupled with fear. You've got to be fearful of what you say to people. Some of you shoot your mouth off about other people and talk about this and talk about that, you ought to be scared to death about that. Man, you open your mouth and you wrongly accuse somebody or rightly accuse somebody. Are you, you say something or slander somebody or gossip to somebody, you ought to be trembling in your shoes. Not today. There is no more fear of God in your life than the person who killed somebody last night. You both sleep well. Jude 23 says, "Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." Now there it is a couple of weeks ago in Leviticus in people's ministry. Remember I told you about the three stages of leprosy. Leprosy is a spot. Where is a spot in the garments. That's a great cross reference to that. People say, "Well, you know, until you get up there, you get screaming, you get yelling, you just, you're trying to scare people, you know, you're just trying to get me scared. You know, you get up there and preach about hell. God's a God of love. God, you know, you get there and talk about God coming down and clobbering me and God doing this and God doing that. You're just trying to scare me and to do what you want me to do." I don't care what you do. I'm telling you what the book says. Brother, if you're on the stage this morning, you're better out of hell scared and hell scorched. It's the truth of the Word of God. Hebrews 11:7 says, "Noah, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his household." He knew God's judgment was coming, and there may come a time in your life where this thing goes because it says, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of man." There may be a day coming where the only people in this rotten, filthy world we can get saved are your own family, and some of you can't get that done. Oh, we're in a mess. In 2 Corinthians 7:1 says we are to perfect holiness in our lives. How? In the fear of the Lord. There's none of that today. Why? Fear is the both healthiest emotion you ever had. Somebody said, "Well, you just try to scare me." Hey, it's fear that keeps you from doing something stupid that gets you killed. It's fear that keeps you from taking the wrong medicine. It's fear that keeps you from lighting a match when your power goes out and you smell gas. Fear is that most healthy emotion you ever had. And the Bible says, "By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil." He says, "Fear the Lord."

Now when you do those three things in your life—don't become wise in your own eyes, you fear the Lord, and you depart from evil—then God returns four things to you. We want to look at this real quickly here. Proverbs 3:8-10.

Proverbs 3:8

It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Proverbs 3:9

Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

Proverbs 3:10

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Now let's look at the return here for a moment. God always gives more back than he asks of us, and there are four things here. This is a great study.

- 1.) The first thing he says, "It shall be health to thy navel." Now in the Bible, the navel, that's called your belly button for those of you who are not articulate, or your belly or your bowels, they'll always stand for our emotions in the Bible, or the strength of our emotions. Maybe it's better to say it that way. This is a great analogy because you know that when you get a phone, you can be the happiest person in the world. You could be looking forward to going to dinner, you've been going to a party, looking forward to going out and doing this, and you're just all jived up and happy, and all you have to get is one phone call and your stomach feels sick in the knot and you can't eat for two days. That's emotion, see. That's emotion. That's an emotional thing. That's not a physical thing. That's an emotional thing that does that. One of the greatest verses on your emotion and my emotions that we use it all the time, I talk about all the time, Proverbs 25:28. "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." Your emotions are key to everything in your life. You don't have your emotions under control by the principle word of God. You have no defenses. In the Old Testament, a city was defenseless if it didn't have a wall around it. And in a New Testament analogy of that, you're like a city. This church is like a city, and the wall around us is what we believe about the Bible, and it protects you. And you as an individual, you have some emotions in this. We all have them, and you have to protect those emotions because those emotions will rule you. And the worst thing you ever saw in your life is a man or a woman who is run by their emotions. Emotions will run you up everywhere but where you need to go. Emotions will give you a wrong attitude. They'll give you a bad attitude. You get your emotions involved instead of what the clear Word of God says. I don't know how many people over the years that got, in any ministry I've been in, they got mad and left the church, got mad at the church, got mad at the preacher, got mad at the people, whatever it was, and it all comes down at the end of the day, emotional thing in their life that they're not willing to take the Word of God over what they want to feel. In the Song of Solomon chapter 5, you have a great composite of a picture of Christ. Did you ever see it? Eight things there that make up his character. And in Song of Solomon chapter 5, it says Christ is white, pure, he's sinless. It says he has a head of gold, that's his deity. It says he has the eyes of a dove, that's the Holy Spirit of God. He sees what God sees. His cheeks are like spices, that's a picture of his good health physically and spiritually. His hands are like gold rings, he's doing God's work. His legs are like pillars of marble, he's unmovable, he stands for something. Marble is the hardest rock there is. And his legs like marble mean there's some things that we don't move off on. There's some things in your life you stand for. God's people can't stand for anything today, so they fall for everything. And then it says his mouth most sweet. That's because the Word of God comes out and it's like honey. But verse 14 says his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. That means he's emotionally strong, he's emotionally

protected. The Christian should have all eight of these things in his life as character builders, but the bottom line is he should especially be emotionally strong. And you're emotionally strong by bringing your emotions under the guidelines of the Word of God. Letting the principles dictate how you feel, not your emotions dictate how you feel. And when a person, when a person, what's coming to church, when a person starts finding excuses not to be at church, and it may be the greatest excuse in the world, but in time it will get you. Because at the bottom line, the evil man and the strange woman are going to work their way into that. You're going to develop those six things and you're gone. You're gone. You're gone. Now, along with that belly, it's also an indicator in the Bible, the belly of gluttony in the Bible, nor the slothful man. Somebody in Titus 1:12 called a slow belly. In Job 40:16, the devil, the Bible said the devil's force is in the navel of his belly. You remember the story back in Judges 3 about Ehud and Eglon. He was a fat man, and he goes in and says, "I got a message," and he stuck him with a dagger. And the Bible said the dirt came out, and his being a fat man is a picture of being fat with all the things of the world.

- 2.) That it says in verse 8, "marrow to thy bones." Now, marrow in your bones. It's been a while since I graduated from medical school, but let me just try to help you here. Marrow in your bones keeps your bones moist and keeps you from having your bones become brittle and broken easily. Marrow is an incredible thing. It produces red blood cells, and it's part of producing red blood cells, is actually part of building your immune system. And you can see the spiritual analogy of that. Your skeleton, your bones are the framework that your whole body rests on. Without your bone structure, you'd just be a blob of flesh unable to do anything in the animal world or the world. We call it non-vertebrae, like a jellyfish. No spine. I'm not thinking I know a lot of God's people like that, but we won't get onto that course to preach it. But you see, here's what you've got. Marrow makes healthy bones, and healthy bones makes a strong body. So when you put this spiritual application, this is what you have. And he uses two examples. You know, back in Ezekiel 36 and 37, Israel is a dead nation. And in chapter 37 is a great chapter on the dry bones. Remember? And the dry bones is a picture of Israel who's been dead now for what? Twenty-five hundred years. But those bones begin to live, and he calls them bones together. And those dry bones come together, but they're dry. There's no life in them. You know, the first thing he puts to those bones? The marrow, the sinew, the stuff that holds those bones together that he breathes life into it. See, there has to be something before you can ever have the life of God working through you. There has to be something in your inner character and body that holds you together. There has to be something. You know what's wrong with most of God's people? Nothing holding them together. They get one little problem in their life and the whole world fumbles down. They cancel out for the next 10 years of their life. They don't have any ability to be able to handle the situations that come in life. Now these two examples that he uses here, the navel and the marrow, are what we call a metaphor. And it's something that he uses that gives you a picture and explains something else. And both of these are key internal parts physically to our own body. And biblically, they picture the inner strength and the inner character that makes us functional for God. You've got to have something that holds you together on the inside. There's going to be tough times come in your life. You can't fold up like a broken accordion. There's going to be time that you have to deal with things in life. You have to keep your

emotions in check. There has to be a time when you, there's something that holds you together that when you want to run or you want to do this, those principles flood in and you do what you're supposed to do. That's how it works. Now this will be a great aspect of building character in our lives. You see, having your emotional state based on God's word and the structure of your body in the best shape you can have it spiritually will be a great value to you because it'll get you to the point and the only way you really get there is by leaning not into your own understanding and being not wise in your own eyes.

- 3.) Then he says in verse 9, "honor the Lord with your substance." Now your substance will be all that you are. It'll be your mind. It'll be your body. It'll be your spirit. Notice I didn't say your soul because your soul is already sealed under the day of redemption and it's already out of your control. But your substance will be your mind, what you think, your body, where you take it, and your spirit, how you, what you allow, who you allow in your life. And you'll either give your substance to God or you'll give it to the world. Now there are two great examples of this in the Bible. The first one is over here in Luke 15:13. It's a story of the prodigal son. And the story of the prodigal son is a great picture because it's a picture of so many God's people that go back to the world or get out of the world or anybody that gets in the world. And when you read down through there you'll find that, you know, when he finally leaves, the Bible says in Luke 15:13, that he wasted, he wasted, he wasted his substance on riotous living. He took what he had, gave it to the world. And that's one of the things that, your substance is what you're all about. It's who you really are. Now the other one is over there in Hebrews 11:1, and here's where it says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." That's how that works. So we have one that has to do with the world. You're giving your substance to the riotous living of the world. The other one is you build faith in your life and that's your substance. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I have the Word of God. It's my faith, and that faith gives me the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. That's how it's worked. This is the basic issue with most of God's people. I mean, if you would take people who in any church who never do anything for God, they always have problems, they're always looking around pointing their fingers here and there. The bottom line, end of the day, comes down to one thing, no substance to them. There's nothing on the inside. There's no substance. Nothing holds them together. 99% of the time they're running on their emotions, and they run on their emotions because they're not running on biblical principles, and it's just the way that it works. There's no substance. They're like a Kleenex in a tornado. There's no substance to it. They're a jellyfish. They're no spine. I look at a lot of God's people and I think to myself, you know what? That person's life is like playing a game of pool with a rope. No substance to it. Have you ever tried to play pool with a rope? You've got to have a hard stick. A pool cue. Whatever that thing is they hit the ball with. No substance to them. This is fundamentally the lowest common denominator why God's people totally can't take a stand for God or anything. No substance to them. They're all show and no go. I've been in churches all my life where they walk around, prayed around. I mean, if it was a zoo, they'd be the peacocks. And they walk around like they're doing something, like they're something important. They're always talking about it. But whenever it happens, whenever it's a problem in a church, a problem with their family, there's no substance to them. What I look for in a person is when it hits the

fan and we're up against the wall. Where's the substance that holds it all together? You don't find it very often today. They love to pretend and show how spiritual they are on Sunday, but boy when they've got to make the hard unpopular calls or deal with issues, they're out to lunch. Nowhere to be found.

- 4.) Now look at the last part of verse 9. "And with the firstfruits of all thine increase." Now this one honors God not with who you are, but with what you have, what God gives you. In particular here, the firstfruits of all your increase, that's the tithe from Exodus 13, Leviticus 23. You know the Bible says in Malachi 3:8, "Will a man rob God?" "He have robbed me," God says. "But they say, 'O God, what do you mean? Where have we robbed thee?'" And God says back, "In tithes and offerings." See that thing? Now this is the picture of the complete child of God honoring God with who you are, your substance, but also honoring God with what he has given you, the firstfruits. And listen, the concept of the tithe is as important to a Christian as the concept of soul winning or Bible study. You know, I never say anything about money. I give my little spiel before, you know, we take up the offering, and I tell the visitors, "Don't worry about giving a dime." And I just talk about the fact that if you're a member of a church, any church, that your responsibility to support it, pay the offering. I never say anything about it. I say, there are some guys, some pastors, you go to their churches and you'll get 40 minutes of giving money and 15 minutes of the Bible. I'd really give you 30 seconds of taking up the offering and then stay in the Bible. Because you know what? I don't care. Some pastors get up there and they want to tell you and get you to think that if you don't give your money that the lights in heaven are going to go off because they can't pay the bill. I'm not kidding you. They'll put you on every guilt trip on this planet to try to squeeze every dime out of you. I'll never do that. I don't care. I really don't care. I'll never tell you when we're in dire need. I'll never tell you. I expect you to do what you need to do as members of this church. And the only thing you'll hear from me is, "You're not having church next week because we can't pay the bills. Find someplace else to go." That's all you'll hear from me. Because I don't care. I don't care. You're giving to God. God's people think they're doing God a favor. Your giving to God is for your benefit, not his. It helps keep the balance of things in order. God doesn't need our money. And the early New Testament church, you know what? They took up an offering every day of the week. A guy would go out and start a church and say, "Well, we're going to be different. We're not taking any offerings up in our church." You're disobeying the Bible in just one of 70 other places the way you disobeyed it. In the New Testament church of Acts, first day of the week, took up an offering. How do you get around that? Now, it's just that simple. And I know the reason why guys like that say if he did take an offering, you'd only get about 60 cents. You see, trust is the basic fundamental aspect of the Christian's life. You can't trust God with your life and not trust him with what he's given you. You just can't. I never preach about it. You can't even remember the last time I preached on tithing. I don't. There are some guys that think that's all they do because they've got to pay for that thing. We're not going to, I mean, they've got to have some Taj Mahal. I love my basement in the antique mall. I love it. Sometimes the pipe breaks and the commode leaks down in here. But you know what? Just gives us another drink and fountain. We're good to go. It all depends on how you look at it. In all things give thanks. I don't have a problem with it. It is what it is. You know what? One thing here isn't the spiral

on top or it isn't the plush carpet or it isn't the big screen TVs with their eyes are out being repaired right now. It isn't all those things. The most important thing we've got is the Word of God, brother. That's all we need. I don't need the rest of it. Maybe you do. You know why you need it? Because you couldn't preach a lick. That's why you need it. That's the way it goes. I am not stupid. I'm not the smartest guy in the world, but I am the fastest one in the slow class, I guarantee you. Now he says honoring God with who you are, your substance, and honoring God with your first fruit. One time in Matthew 17:24, great weird story. Jesus needed some money. The apostles came to him and says, "We've got to pay some tribute here. We don't have any money. We've got our ministry going here. We're doing a great thing, but hey, we don't have any money." You know what he told him to do? He says, "Go fish." Go fishing. And when you catch the first fish, look inside that fish's mouth, there's going to be a piece of money in there. You know what? They went out and fishing. Caught a fish, brought it in, there, lo and behold, was money in the mouth, paid the tribute. Now, that may seem like a stupid thing to you, but to me, it's a New Testament principle. You know how you pay for a church? You win people to Christ, fishing, soul winning. You get them in and train them, and the money's in their mouth to pay for the process that God wants to do here. It's just that simple. Just that simple. Watch people take care of God's work. I'm never going to get on TV, the radio, and get up there and just beg, or I'm never going to beg anybody in this church. I don't care. It's your church. It doesn't mean that much to you. It's okay with me. And I say it every Sunday. You know, I say it. I never get into it, but he's telling you. He's telling you. You honor that. You honor that with who you are, your substance. Now when you come to the place in your life that you can do that, when you come to the place in your life that you will take all the things that God gives you and you recognize all the things that God has for you and what he's made you, it's just that simple. It's just that simple. And I've never met a Christian who honored God with his substance, honestly, didn't just fake it, who didn't honor God with what he had. They go hand in hand. I don't know what to tell you. Your problem, not mine.

- 5.) Then he says, "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty." Now as it stands there in an Old Testament application, it's a physical thing, kingdom of heaven. And actually in the Old Testament, if a guy did what was right with God, was righteous, followed everything that God said, he could claim riches and ask God to make him rich, and God would do it. That's why Job was rich. That's why Abraham was rich. Remember one time the disciples, Jesus said it's harder for a rich man to go through an eye of a needle than to enter into the kingdom of God? And they all looked at him and said, "Well, who can be saved, then?" You know why they said that? Because in the Old Testament, riches was proof of your godliness. It confused him. So in a physical sense, that's what he's talking about, but not for us. We don't have this "claim it, name it, and God will give it to you," do you? I've heard guys on the radio, guys on TV, get up there and they talk about the fact if you send me \$200 or send me this or that, and Maribel over here, she sent in \$200 and she didn't have a car, her car is broke, but she loved the Lord. She said, and then she could get up next morning, it was a brand new Cadillac in her driveway. Now if you believe that, you're nuts. I've seen the faith healers come up there, you know, where a guy, you never see it. A guy comes up there and a guy casts 448 demons at him and said he's healed, you know, and he takes his crutches away and a guy walks out.

He says, "He's walking, he's rocking, he's rocking." How can he go behind a curtain and fall flat on his face? Now as it stands, it's an Old Testament application, it's a literal thing, but inspirationally for us, we know it's a picture of not of our physical prosperity, but really our spiritual prosperity in our own Christian life. We're in the kingdom of God. And now this is the concept that modern day materialistic Christians can never get to. They never honor God with their substance, they certainly never honor Him with their firstfruits. And we think our barn's full is a garage with three or four cars, a boat, and a camper, and all the things that goes along with it. Or a house decorated to the max so we can impress our friends and all of our people. 99% of God's people today will trust in the loaded barn, but they'll never trust in the one who loads the barn. That's the problem. That's the problem. Let me tell you something folks, I tell you young Christians, I see you get ahead, I see you start getting some things in your life, and I know what happens because you're young. I always say, I say look, you come up and tell me, "Well God gave me a disc, God gave me that, God's doing this," I always tell you, I always tell you, "Look, don't forget the one who got you there." It's easy to get excited when you start God doing anything, but you never get to the place of your life. I follow that rule in my own life. I never not take care of those who take care of this work. I never forget what people do for this work. A lot of people do things for me, and I appreciate that, but it's the work for me. I never forget what people do for God's work. I know you do it because you love the Lord, I know it, but I don't ever forget it because there's a lot of people out there that don't give a hoot in anything about it. The bottom line is you never want to forget what God has done for you because let me tell you something kids, let me tell you a dying truth, he can take it away fast when he gives it to you. He certainly can. He certainly can. I'm just telling him. He takes care of you, you always take care of him.

- 6.) Now look at verse 10, "thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Now that's a grape press or a wine press used to make grape juice. Now notice says new wine, it's not your fermented hooch you've got hidden in your refrigerator at home. It's the pure blood of the grape, Deuteronomy 22:18. It's the type of the blood of Christ in Matthew 26:29 used at the Last Supper, it's grape juice. Now he's metaphorically speaking here when he says this. He says when you do all that you're supposed to do in giving honor in God with your substance, in honoring God with your firstfruits, then God will bless you and fill you up with his plenty, fill your barns, the Word of God. The barn remembers where you store things and you hide the Word of God, he fills it up, he fills it to the brim and then you come to the place when all you do for him will go back to what he did for you, the shedding of his blood. There shouldn't be anything that we do in the ministry. There shouldn't be any prayer group you take. There shouldn't be any disciples person you disciple. There shouldn't be anything you get into whether it's a cleaning crew or whatever it is, no matter how mundane it is, bringing in hot dogs or hamburgers, that in your mind you're not doing it going back to what he did for you on Calvary's Cross. The blood, the blood, the bloody blood he shed for you. His sacrifice for you equals out to your sacrifice for him. It's just that simple. It's just that simple. And he says you'll come to the place in your life where all you do will go back to what he did for you. The motivation of all should be based on the shedding of his blood, his sacrifice and my sacrifice. He was a dead sacrifice, I'm to be a living sacrifice. And the blessings of the ministry of God in your life will burst out and all over everybody and everything that you

talk to or anything that you do. When a wine press bursts, the wine, the grape juice, the pure blood of the grape, a type of the blood of Christ goes everywhere. And when you have and when you have and you are what God wants you to be and recognize that what you have because of what he did for you, the blood of Christ will go wherever you go. And they'll seek Christ's sacrifice and everything in your life.

VI. The Example of Jonah

"Be not wise in your own eyes and lean not unto thine own understanding." You know there are many examples of that in the Bible. But I think the greatest example of that in the Bible is the example of Jonah. And I think that Jonah is the single probably the greatest example of that. You know Jonah is an Old Testament prophet and as an Old Testament prophet he's sent to the nation of Israel because they're not doing what's right. In a lot of ways he parallels what a New Testament preacher is. Except he goes to a nation, I come to a congregation. His people are a lot worse shaped than my people are. But you have people in bad need wherever you go. And God gave him a commission just like he's given me a commission like he's given you a commission. He wanted something him to do something. And he tells Jonah, "I want you to go to Nineveh and I want you to preach to the Ninevites." Now Nineveh was the capital of Assyria. And Assyria is about ready to come down and clobber the nation of Israel. They're Israel's natural enemy. And when God tells him, "I've got a commission, I want you to go to Nineveh," he balks at that. And what you have there if you read it sometime, and we could go through it on a Thursday night, it would be a great study. It's one of the greatest pictures of you and me rationalizing our position to do what we want to do over what God wants him to do.

God said go to Nineveh. He goes down there to the boat dock and you know what he finds? He finds a ship going to Tarshish. Now I guarantee it, Bible doesn't say this but I know human nature. In his mind you know what he's saying? You know what he's saying to him? He's down there at that boat. I know what he's doing. He's down there at that boat and he says, "Well God wants me to go to Nineveh but I think God was wrong. I think God really wants me to go to Tarshish." You know a lot of people in Tarshish and you know Nineveh was a bad place to go anyhow. And he had talked himself into it. He got down there. You know what he said? He prayed when he prayed. "Lord I'll do whatever you want me to do. When I get down here the first boat you show me is the one I know you want me to do." That's what he did. You say how do you know he did that because that's what I did many times in my life. That's what you do. God already told him. God already told him. That's what Gideon did. God told Gideon, "You go out there and smoke him." Gideon said, "Well I don't know, can you give me the fleece, give it to me again, give it to me a third time." Why do you need it three times when God already told you what to do? And he and his human nature just like you and me go down there and I can see him praying, "Oh Lord, you know me, I want to do whatever you want me to do. Lord, you know, just to make this thing clear, I'm going to throw up my prayer and when I get down here, Lord, if you want me to go, whatever you want me to go, Lord, the first boat I come up with, God, that's where it'll be." And you know what it was where he wanted to go, not where God wanted to go. I love the Word of God, but at the end of that thing, you know what it says. And since he found a

boat going to Tarshish, but he paid the fare thereof. You go your way, you always pick up the tab. You always pick up the tab. It's incredible.

Nineveh was a capital of Assyria. God told him that if you do what I tell you to do and you go preach to these guys, I'll keep them from coming down and clobbering you. He looks at it as a death sentence. Here's the point of being wise in your own eyes and leaning not to your own understanding. When God saw the nation of Assyria, he saw a people without God who needed the truth. But when Jonah saw them, he saw them as his natural enemies. When you go through life looking at people, the ministry, whatever God, when you look at them for your own understanding, through your own eyes, you as a child of God, you should have no other enemies as Christians. What's wrong with you? You don't have the luxury to have enemies as a Christian. You don't have the luxury to be at odds with somebody else in a church. You don't have that luxury. You're a child of God. You're supposed to work the problems out. We don't do it because we're like Jonah, we see what we want to see, and they're my enemy. No, they're your brother in Christ. His inability to see them as God saw them and understand them from God's viewpoint. He's wise in his own eyes and he's leaning to his own understanding.

You know how the story goes. God has to send him down through whale university. And I'm safe to say we've all been in whale university. You know what the real problem is? It only took one time through whale university for him. I've met God's people who keep going year after year after year after year after year to whale university. Whale university can be tough. I mean, boy, you're talking about a bad deal. I can't imagine being swallowed by a whale. I saw Jaws in 1974 when they came out. I've never gotten in the ocean again. I won't get into anybody's swimming pool because I'm sure one will sneak up the pipe. I'm telling you that's all I needed to see. That opening scene of that girl out there screaming and yelling and that fish eating her one piece at a time. I'll tell you what watching them it chewed that guy. You know what it's kind of a tough way to die. He got eaten alive by a whale. I know the Bible scholars say, "Oh, it was a great fish." Not in Matthew 12:40 it doesn't. It says it was a whale. You know how it goes? He wasn't willing to see. Jonah could only see what he saw. He couldn't see what God saw. He was one dimensional. Only what affected him. And when he got out of whale university he says, "Alright, I'm going but I'm not going to like it." He didn't want to have any discomfort in his life to do what God had called him to do. And boy, you might have a lot of God's people like that. They are wise in their own mind. "Oh, I'm doing it. I love the Lord. I love the Bible. Isn't it great?" You won't do one thing for God. You won't do one thing to disrupt your little world. God saw millions dying without God. Jonah saw only what affected his comfortable style of his life. Now that's probably the greatest example of what Proverbs is talking about in all of the Bible. Seeing things through your own eyes. Being wise in your own eyes and leaning to your own understanding. And that's a picture of God's people.

VII. Conclusion: Trust and Application

Until we as God's people are willing to honor God with our substance, who we are, and our firstfruits, what we have, we'll just go on from one bad problem to another. We'll live from one paycheck to another. We'll never get ahead in anything in life. We'll wonder why we can't get out

of the hole we're in. And the answer is simply trust. Trust. If you can trust him with your life, your family, and your salvation, I guarantee you can trust him with what you have.

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.

Our substance and our firstfruits. And you'll go through life two ways. We all will. You'll go through in your own understanding and wisdom or God's understanding and wisdom. Proverbs 1:7 of Proverbs is nothing more than simply getting us ready for what he's going to give us in chapter 8 through chapter 30. He does it this way so we can be ready to get everything in order to receive the greatest principles on the issues of life. Or by the time we get to chapter 8, some will simply say, "I'm done. There's just too much that I have to change in my life to get the wisdom of God." By the time we get to Proverbs chapter 8, you will have seen 28 different variations on a classic theme. How God keeps coming at it from a different angle. How to receive the knowledge of God found in chapter 8 through chapter 30. Chapter 1 through chapter 7 are the great defining chapters of the book. They define who we are by what we do with the instructions of our Father.

Now this is why the book of Proverbs is such a great book. It's why it's a book that absolutely, that you've heard me say it from the get go. It's something that I wish I could have total recall but I never will. It's the hardest book in the Bible not to read. Hardest book in the Bible to apply. So I'll leave you with that today and we'll pray here and we'll call you back up here in about ten minutes and we'll get ready for restart this afternoon and turn around. Everybody please again be on deck this week. Do whatever we've got to do and help out wherever you've got to help out.