

# Proverbs Week #5 (1:8,9)

---

Proverbs 1:8,9

**Hear, my son, your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching; indeed, they are a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments about your neck.**

The first seven verses of the book of Proverbs provided us with the purpose of the book and taught us the fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge. Those who are trained by God through this book will know wisdom and instruction, receive instruction in wise behavior, and will be given prudence and discretion. They will be equipped to live lives with the character qualities and virtues that will be pleasing in God's sight.

The next section begins with a command to hear ("Listen my son" שְׁמַע בְּנִי). It presents the context of family (of father and mother) as a place to learn wisdom. While the son is mentioned here certainly this also applies to daughters. The command to listen directs the child to obey the instruction of their father (מִיָּדָד which can also mean discipline) and the teaching of their mother (literally תּוֹרַת אִמִּי). It is in the context of the family that the discipleship of the next generation is accomplished. To both the parent and child the lessons we learn must be taken to heart and "fleshed" out on a daily basis.

What will be the result according to the verse we read above? Listening will be like a graceful wreath to your head and ornaments about your neck. What does that mean? Looking at further context can help us understand the meaning of this verse.

**The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; and with all your acquiring, get understanding. Prize her, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a garland of grace; She will present you with a crown of beauty." Prov 4:7-9**

Kings and warriors returning from victories were adorned and crowned in Biblical times and I suggest it is this imagery that this proverb is teaching. In our day we may not recognize the power of this symbol but we can learn to appreciate its significance. Many people in our world are driven to succeed and be recognized publically. True success can only be defined from understanding those things that are important to our Creator. Our Maker will bestow honor on the child who learns to be godly from their mother and father.

The discipleship of the next generation is also a community matter. It will take all of us seeking God, living faithful lives to Him, trusting in His grace, and placing our hope on His faithfulness for us to succeed in raising the next generation to be wise and godly.

Listen to these next words from Psalm 119 and consider your relationship to our Father who is in heaven. Our Father desires to teach us and we can learn from Him. As you listen to this inspired song consider what it teaches. If you take these words to heart, memorize them, and repeat them out loud you will discover as I have that they contain the basic elements of prayer (declaration--proclaiming truth, petition, and blessing God). Listen to these words (listen – as in shema).

**How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping *it* according to Your word. With all my heart I have sought You; do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You. Blessed are You, O Adonai; teach me Your statutes.**

**Psalm 119:9-12**