

# Proverbs Week #45 (4:20-22)

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*My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body. Prov. 4:20-22*

As I mentioned last week I want to review the lessons we have learned so far as we have been studying the book of Proverbs. We started by learning that there were four different groups who compiled/wrote the collections of proverbs (King Solomon, the men of Hezekiah, Agur, and King Lemuel) and we emphasized 3 basic reasons for why the book was compiled. In the beginning I asked you to commit three things to memory:

- 1) To know wisdom and instruction -- this was seen not in just knowing but also in having skills – like playing an instrument or baking a cake.
- 2) To receive instruction in wise behavior, righteousness, justice, and equity – when one receives a gift they should value and treasure it (what would one do with the gift of a puppy?)
- 3) To give prudence to the naïve, to the youth knowledge and discretion – knowing the difference between what is good and bad is a basic skill of wisdom.

Wisdom starts with a proper fear of the Lord. The wisdom we are seeking to understand and know finds its source in God and must remain true to who He is and what He does to be truly considered wisdom. This wisdom is learned in relationship to our Creator but also in relationships God has given us on this earth. Sometimes following instructions of those God has placed in our lives as teachers is a part of what God expects of us. A long time ago Mr. Hegg and I asked you what today is and you were supposed to answer differently depending on who asked the question. Do you remember the answers? (Today is the Sabbath and a day to be kept holy)

Practice makes permanent and the things that influence us will become part of who you are. Not everyone in the world is following God and at times others will try to persuade you that following God is not a good idea. If you listen to them and ignore God you will not be wise but a fool and it will lead ultimately to death (separation from God) if you do not change your ways. That is a hard statement but true.

A person who is wise listens to correction and is eager to learn. They may not always like being corrected but they understand that because they have set a goal of being wise it is more important to learn than to feel good at any given moment.

Throughout these first few chapters of the book of Proverbs a strong emphasis has been placed on the importance of family. If parents and children are learning together and seeking God's wisdom they can expect that God will be present and involved in the learning process. God Himself will guard and protect those who seek Him and place a high value on His wisdom.

God's wisdom shouts aloud and can be heard if our ears and hearts are prepared. Do you remember the lessons that the parable of the sower teaches? The real problem is not in the message being available but in the way the message is received or heard.

Wisdom does start with knowing facts but it is best seen in the skills that come from applying what is learned. Today's verses direct us to pay attention to words of wisdom and keep them within your heart. Lord willing, next week we will continue our review and listen to what Proverbs teaches about our hearts.