

WISDOM & WEALTH conclusion

Proverbs 3:5-10



JULY 14, 2019 | DAVID ANDERSON

Every waking moment of our lives, we operate from one of two viewpoints: human or divine. Our human perspective is desperate for control; we clamor for control as if this whole thing depends on us. We remain willfully and stubbornly limited to our human perspective. We prefer to do it our own way. When we take a deep breath and trust, God takes us to places we could have never gone on our own. He gives us a life we could never have on our own. He launches our lives into a hopeless and loveless world to be His agent of healing and reconciliation.

All of this is clearly seen in the area of our lives we are most desperate to control. Probably more than any other area, the area of finances is where we grasp for control and security and pleasure. What we do with money shows what is going on in the depths of our hearts with Jesus. Are we clinging and fearful? Has our heart been captured by the pleasures and enticements of the world? Do we believe He is telling the truth and is reliable? Does He really want to do us good?

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;
⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.
⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.
⁸ It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.
⁹ Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your
increase;
¹⁰ So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new
wine.
(Proverbs 3:5-10)

Starting in vs. 5-6, there are four active verbs: “trust, lean not, acknowledge”. The first three have to do with us; the fourth one has to do with God: “He will make your paths straight.” The word trust is the idea of laying down and putting all your weight on something or someone. Trusting means to put oneself wholly at the mercy of another (Jer. 12:5b; Ps. 22:9b). Leaning is not just reclining against something, but relying on it for total support (Prov. 28:26).

How do you know if you are trusting the Lord with all your heart? You are not leaning on your own understanding. Most of us are going to run through a lot of possibilities before we choose to trust the Lord. He’s our last resort after we have exhausted all of our personal resources. Why should I lean not on my own understanding? Because His wisdom is beyond you; He knows better than you.

Paul says in Romans 11:33-36: Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him? For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

Operating in the flesh, leaning on our own understanding, we cannot be trusted. God can. There is something we try to sort out in our own flesh; it makes sense to us, but in reality it may be a total mess.

In all our ways acknowledging Him is not a quaint recognition. We aren’t tipping our hat to God. Solomon is talking about an intimate response based on relationship and understanding which is about pleasing that person now. God wants to be the leader of this relationship. He wants to be

acknowledged in everything you do. There's two ways we consult: 1) intuitively or 2) personally. You can make decisions because you know that's what He wants, and when you don't know you need to spend time asking Him and listening to His response through the Word of God, through the indwelling Holy Spirit or the Body of Christ.

And the fourth active verb is the one that God is in charge of—He will make your paths straight. We take our roads for granted. But in the ancient near east travel was made safe by leveling the road so the traveler could reach his or her destination. No road meant no path to your destination. Solomon says: He will make your paths straight. He will, which means that you don't have to.

Solomon says, "Do not be wise in your own estimation; fear the LORD and turn away from evil. This will bring healing to your body, and refreshment to your inner self" (vs. 7-8). Trusting God with your life and not being wise in your own estimation allows for spiritual, emotional and physical healing. The word *riput* is the restoration to a former state of well-being.

Solomon says - here is a way you can test the faithfulness of God: "Honor the LORD from your wealth and from the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled completely, and your vats will overflow with new wine" (vs. 9-10). "Honor" the Lord from your wealth and from the first fruits of all your crops. Honor means to view it heavy or have weight. It's a term of worship. It's esteeming a person as having value and to declare him such, to give him prominence.

For the Israelites, like us, it was an act of faith to give from the first of their crops. It is a terrifying thing to start by giving back to God. It's scary when your first check, your first withdrawal is for the church. Why does God get the first check? Because you are acknowledging to yourself and to God that the harvest comes from Him and the remainder of the harvest will come from Him.

What's a steward? When you own something, you have certain rights that a steward doesn't have. You have a "right" to do whatever you want with what you possess. Keep it or give it; it's up to you. When you're a steward, you don't have ownership rights. Why? Because it's not yours. The rights remain with the owner, not the steward.

Give God weight in your finances. If you do, your barns will be filled completely and your vats will overflow with wine. We know this was a promise to the godly Israelite (Deut. 28:1-14; Mal. 3:10), but this is a proverb to us which means it isn't always the case. Our barns aren't always filled and vats don't always overflow, do they? What we are promised as disciples of Christ, in my opinion, is even better:

- 2 Corinthians 9:8: "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all contentment in all things at all times, you may abound in *every good work*."
- Jesus says in Matthew 6:33: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and *all* these things will be added to you."
- Philippians 4:19: "My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Proverbs 23:4-5: "Do not wear yourself out to become rich; be wise enough to restrain yourself. When you gaze upon riches, they are gone, for they surely make wings for themselves, and fly off into the sky like an eagle!" Proverbs 11:28 says, "The one who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf."

Trust the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding!

This morning, where are you asking Him to direct your paths?

How is He asking you to trust Him with all your heart in that situation?

Where are you leaning on your own understanding?