

Proverbs Chapter 4

Proverbs 4:1; *Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, And give attention that you may gain understanding, ² For I give you **sound** teaching; Do not abandon my **instruction**.*

➤ This message that Solomon penned in chapter 4 was apparently written by him to his own children as well as to all young men for instruction, it is what Solomon received from his own father. _____ principles are instilled and will fortify them, from godly men who have experienced God's deliverance, therefore godly wisdom is linked to Scriptural doctrine. There is no substantial value to wisdom except that which is linked to virtuous doctrine, which should be the focal point of all instruction.

➤ Repetition in the proverbial _____s reveals that it is the mother of knowledge and while it may seem at times to be repetitive, covering the same ground over and over again, has the purpose of driving home a sanctifying lesson, or to pick up additional insight to supplement the truth about godly living. wisdom is divulged as a subject as well as a belief, which is exhibited and recognized as faith. In David's day, instructions in God's law came from the father and was handed down to the son. The law was very specific and to the adherent, it was critical not to leave out even a minor detail. We are no longer under the penalty or condemnation of the Law on this side of the cross, but the principles contained within are, by all means, still valid, for our God is unchanging.

Proverbs 4:3 *When I was a son to my father, Tender and the only son in the sight of my **mother**.*

➤ Verse 3 is speaking of David and Solomon's _____ Bath-sheba.

If you wonder about this phrase "*When I was a son to my father*"; we might better understand the emotions that

accompanied it if we remember that Solomon was not David's first choice to replace him as king, Absalom was!

Solomon was reared in the women's palace, was more or less of a sissy without male responsibility which may have lent itself to an effeminate nature developing in him and the warrior King David probably didn't have much in common with him, which leads Solomon to confess, I am my father's son, but it was my mother who really loved me and taught me.

Whether Solomon ever realized why he had a very special and protected place in Bath-sheba's heart is not made clear; from our perspective, we should recall David's first child with Bathsheba was taken by God in retribution for David's dastardly deed against Uriah the Hittite. We read in 2nd Samuel 11:3, Bath-sheba, was at the time the wife of Uriah the Hittite, a soldier in David's army.

Proverbs 4:4; Then he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; Keep my commandments and live;

However, even if Solomon wasn't David's first choice to replace him as king, God worked around this and eventually, David did instruct Solomon in right living, as well as giving him detailed information about Jewish History, the Law and the temple that was to be built in Jerusalem. Solomon was instructed by his father and he, in turn, is sharing with us on the importance of the Law and its principles, which will lead to the promise of a God-pleasing and everlasting life. We read in 1st Kings 2:1-2; when Solomon was made king, David said to him, "show yourself a man". For reasons already stated, perhaps David did not think his son to be very manly. *"As David's time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying, ² "I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man."* (NASB)

The life of David was something that Solomon could emulate. David's awful transgressions were committed before Solomon was even born, and David had repented and turned from that type of life altogether. Solomon is now passing that sound advice along to the young person in question.

Proverbs 4:5-7; Acquire **wisdom!** Acquire **understanding!** Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth. ⁶ "Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you. ⁷ "The beginning of wisdom begins with our commitment to Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding.

➤ **Now Solomon is giving clear and cognitive advice to a young man; Get _____, get _____ and be careful not to forget or compromise it.**

Solomon, as you can see here, treasured wisdom and understanding as the most important things we can gather, and by the way, he was not considering man's philosophy or worldly wisdom, his focus was on God's Word.

Taught by his father, and being gifted with wisdom from God, he realized that wisdom and knowledge about the things of God are those that will bring a person ever closer to God, keeping him from failure. He speaks of wisdom as if he understood that Wisdom is a Spiritual entity abiding with Him.

Proverbs 4:8-9; "**Prize** her, and she will exalt you; She will **honor** you if you embrace her. ⁹ "She will place on your head a **garland** of grace; She will present you with a crown of beauty."

➤ **I have encapsulated 1st Corinthians 12:3-11, highlighting portions to make it apropos to our studies discovery of godly principles. Verse 3b begins, . . . no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. ^[4] Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. ^[8] For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; ^[9] to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ^[11] But one and the same Spirit works all these**

things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.
(NASB) [12:3-4,8-9,11]

The interesting thing is that we are to love wisdom just as a tender woman is to be loved. The Apostle James 3:17 says ***"the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."*** This is undoubtedly a work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. When we get to the New Testament, this has changed since the Spirit of Christ is now able to indwell a true believer and is the power of resurrection and restoration. He has been made unto us wisdom, and we are to love Him. We read in 1st Corinthians 12:8; ***"For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another, the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit."***

What is missing in our day is that in natural born mankind there is neither the intensity of love or heartfelt longing for God and for the things of God as we are overwhelmed by fleshly distractions. When the Spirit resides in our heart, the Bible will begin to open up, and the Spirit of God will become a mind-renewing Teacher, restoring us to the likeness of Christ.

" _____ her, and she shall exalt the believer. Wisdom brings _____ instead of shame to God our heavenly Father just as a foolish son or daughter brings shame to their human parents; on the other hand, children filled with godly wisdom bring honor to their parents.

- _____ The wisdom of God will adorn one's life as a _____ of Grace for all to witness.

Proverbs 4:10; ***Hear***, my son, and accept my sayings And the years of your life will be many.

- For those who _____ and listen to wisdom, their days may be long upon the earth. Ephesians 6:2 brings this promise into the New Testament; ***"Honor your father and mother, which is***

the first commandment with a promise." Leviticus 19:3 ***"Each of you is to respect his mother and father. You are to keep My Sabbaths; I am Yahweh your God."*** (HCSB)

Proverbs 4:11-13; *I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths.* ¹² *When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; And if you run, you will not stumble.* ¹³ Take ***hold*** of ***instruction***; do not let go. ***Guard*** her, for she is your life.

- **I am sure that our Creator's heart breaks when He sees so few young men failing to seek His wisdom. "Take _____ of instruction"—it is something that should have top priority.**
- **Solomon in his God-given wisdom has given _____ in these matters and has taught the way of wisdom; He doesn't want to see the lad end up going down blind alleys, wisdom will lead you down straight paths and you'll not fall prey to hidden potholes.**
- **_____ wisdom with your life, keep a firm grip and don't let go. We read in 2nd Timothy how important the Word of God is in the life of a true believer. 2nd Timothy 3:16-17 *All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,* ¹⁷ *so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.* (HCSB)**

Proverbs 4:14; *Do not enter the path of the wicked And do not proceed in the way of ***evil*** men.*

- **We have noted before that the warning in this book is against _____ men. The generic term would also likely apply to the promiscuous woman who is probably a prostitute in some order or another. It is easier to deal with the temptation of sin before we allow ourselves to take the detour back toward the broad way the leads to destruction.**

Proverbs 4:15; ***Avoid*** it, do not ***pass*** by it; ***Turn*** away from it and ***pass*** on.

- These four words identify the facets necessary in instantly dealing with sin before we start to yield. If possible, we should _____ the sinful situation; _____ as far windward from it as is possible; be prepared to _____ away from the temptation and leave it in the dust as we pass on by.

This biblical plan is also the way that James in the New Testament lays it out. James 1:13-15: *No one undergoing a trial should say, "I am being tempted by God." For God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself doesn't tempt anyone.*¹⁴ *But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desires.*¹⁵ *Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.* (HCSB)

Proverbs 4:16-17: *For they cannot sleep unless they do evil; And they are robbed of sleep unless they make someone stumble.*¹⁷ *For they eat the bread of wickedness And drink the wine of violence.*

- In these 2 verses, we see a person who has chosen a sinful way of life. Perhaps it is that old adage "misery loves company". The act as minions of the dark domain, not satisfied to ruin their own lives but they insist in dragging others into their _____.

- It seems that they have to sin to satisfy some inner craving and drink the wine of _____ before they can sleep, sin is like food for the wicked. This depicts how the nature of the evil man and promiscuous woman live. Here reflection on our lives before Christ helps us, and although we know how far we went, we do not know how despicable and how deep into sin the unredeemed mind can venture. History has shown us that there appears to be nothing in which the human mind and heart will not indulge or cannot conceive in the wickedness of knowing evil.

Proverbs 4:18; *But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day.*

- You will meet wonderful saints who have made the decision to walk in the New Way of the Spirit, but this is in total contrast to those who walk in darkness. Those who have been redeemed walk in the _____ in the dawn of a new age. These two passages come to mind; Ephesians 5:8: *For you were once darkness, but now [you are] light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.* And then in 1st John 1:7; *But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.* (HCSB)

Proverbs 4:19: *The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know over what they stumble.*

- There are two ways that the psalmist displays this contrast. These are in keeping with the New Testament where Jesus calls the way of the lost, the Broad way that Leads to destruction and the other is the narrow, minimally used and difficult way. References to an unnoticed or ignored door and the gate is found in Luke 13:24 and Matthew 7:13-14 which says; *“Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. ¹⁴ How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.”* (HCSB)

Through the narrow door is the way in which the righteous go. It is described as a “shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” in verse 18. There is another way, the way the lawless go. It is a way of darkness. It reminds us of the broad way that our Lord described, which I believe has been under taught and understated.

Many folks, if asked about which way they have chosen to go, will remark in not so many words; that they have stayed on the road with which they are familiar with, some even think that they will stay with the larger group, believing that they will have more fun on the broad way and casual way,

unfortunately, I think that is the impression plied from too many pulpits as they spout “easy believism”. Jesus spoke of offensive casualness in Laodicea in Revelation 3:15-16: ***“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot.”***¹⁶ ***So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of My mouth.*** ^{HCSB)} When Jesus said that those who will follow Him must take up their cross, keep in mind that crosses are to die upon. If we have been reconciled to our Creator, we must die to our old carnal nature and allow His Holy Spirit to restore and renew us so that we will become like a new creation reformed into the image of Christ. We read in 2nd Corinthians 5:16-17; ***“From now on, then, we do not know anyone in a purely human way. Even if we have known Christ in a purely human way, yet now we no longer know [Him in this way].”***¹⁷ ***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, [he is] a new creation; old things have passed away, and look, new things have come.”*** ^(HCSB)

The broad way—is what we are familiar with and are born into. It is full of glowing marquees and glittering lights. Have you noticed that this broad way gets narrower and narrower like a funnel the further we proceed along it, it is the way of the lawless which gets darker along the way.

“The way of the wicked is as darkness.” There are the bright lights at the entrance, but down a little farther there are no lights and the people don’t even know what they are stumbling over. That is the broad way that the Lord Jesus described. It is just like going in at the big end of a funnel and then finding that it gets narrower and narrower until finally, it ends in destruction, and those that have stayed, _____ over their own unrecognized rebellion, having ignored the way of the Spirit. In Acts 4:12 we hear the words of Jesus ***“There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people, and we must be saved by it.”*** ^(HCSB)

And in contrast, the narrow way is very narrow at the entrance. The Lord Jesus said, "... I am *the way* ..." it is so narrow that it is limited by one Person: Christ. No one can come to the Father but through Him. Peter said in Acts 4: 12, "*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*". But unlike the broad way, Jesus said in John 10:7,9 that the path of righteous living widens as we proceed... "***I assure you: I am the door of the sheep. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.***

Compiler's note: The destruction at the end of the broad way is described in chapter 16: Proverbs 16:25: "*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*" (HCSB)

Proverbs 4:20-22: Solomon is saying things to his son that we have all spoken to our own: *My son, give **attention** to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. ²¹ Do not let them depart from your sight; Keep them in the midst of your heart. ²² For they are life to those who find them And health to all their body.*

➤ **David spoke these words from Psalm 119:11 to Solomon and now Solomon repeats God's words, which are the words of life to His own son in Psalm 119:11; " I have treasured Your word in my heart so that I may not sin against You."**

It is a father's plea for the one he loves so dearly; open your ears and pay _____ to what I am saying, neither incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from your sight, guard them in the center of your being for they are the very Word of Life to those that keep them and health to all their flesh. Don't let the cares of the world allow you to forget for they are life and health to you.

Proverbs 4:23 records one of the great verses in the Book of Proverbs. Most of us know it best from the KJV; *“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”* In the Holmen it reads; *Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.*

The heart is hyperbole and refers to the very center of our being. It is different from our eternal soul which commonly refers to the mind as the center of our intellect, reason, our will and the emotions that express it. However, the unredeemed heart is the depository of our flawed human nature. When we are born anew, reconciled to God, and restored, it becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit full of godly wisdom and the source of the power to renew our thinking. Romans 12:2: “. . . be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.”^(HCSB) The apostle Paul confirms this point when he decries the war going on within him. Romans 7:21-23; *“So I discover this principle: When I want to do what is good, evil is with me. For in my inner self I joyfully agree with God’s law. But I see a different law in the parts of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin in the parts of my body.”*^(HCSB)

Proverbs 4:24: *Put away from you a deceitful mouth And put devious speech far from you.*

Someone has put it like this: “What is in the well of the heart will come up through the bucket of the mouth.” The first battle of our transformation begins with the tongue. James in James 3:3-6 writes; *We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.*^(NLT)

We can either have a pure heart or it can be desperately wicked. It will be one or the other. God will judge our heart. The Spirit gives us the mental power to control the moral structure of our lives. A pure heart brings pure words. A foul mouth and perverse (evil), words come from an evil heart. We read in Luke 6:45; *A good man produces good out of the good storeroom of his heart. An evil man produces evil out of the evil storeroom, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart.* (HCSB)

Proverbs 4:25 Let your eyes look directly ahead And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.



Our eyes reveal what is going on inside of us as if they were windows to the soul. They speak loudly about what we are really thinking. The teacher here cautions against wandering eyes with a warning, our eyes are like little windows. Eyes that move quickly to the left and right ordinarily indicate the person has something they are covering up. Eyes that look straight at you say, "I am telling the truth". Wandering eyes focusing on the wrong thing can breed heartache and distrust.

Proverbs 4:26-27: *Watch the path of your feet And all your ways will be established.* ²⁷ *Do not turn to the right nor to the left; Turn your foot from evil.*

We must make sure that the _____ that we are heading out on paths that lead to righteousness. Make your path straight. Minions of darkness will invariably attempt to detour the Christian back onto the Broad way. The father's caution is to stay on the straight path that will lead you to heaven.

The soul's oppressive despot is "this body of living death." We are born with a nature knowing evil and in itself is no more than

corrupt animalism which the Bible calls our flesh. We read in Romans 5:8-12 *“But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us! Much more then, since we have now been declared righteous by His blood, we will be saved through Him from wrath. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, [then how] much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by His life! And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have now received this reconciliation through Him. Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all men, because all sinned.”* (HCSB)

Our Creator intended the human body, to be an instrument and servant of the soul, but it has become its sovereign, and ⁱ “keeps all its power of intellect and conscience in subjection.” The fallen nature of the natural born, unredeemed person is corrupt animalism that has become the moral monarch of the world. “It rules by deception in literature, politics, science, and even in some churches.” This despotic nature of the person who has not been born anew is death to all true freedom, progress, and happiness.

With so many of our children being raised in fatherless homes, it has become a social tragedy to see so many young men and women unable to walk the path through the narrow gate in into a Christ pleasing life.

ⁱ Biblical Illustrator - Biblical Illustrator – Romans.