

TRUTH NOTES

Be Wise – Daily Readings From Proverbs



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Illustrated by Steven Zeller

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About the Author:

Tim Swanson knows first-hand that the Bible is true and that Jesus Christ is the real deal. God gave Tim an alive heart and faith in Jesus Christ two days after his 20th birthday. Ever since then, Tim's life has been purposeful, changed and forgiven.

Adventure has always called Tim's name, which is why the Truth Notes videos are shot in so many different locations. Whenever he gets a chance, Tim goes on an outdoor adventure with his wife and kids.

When God called Tim from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, He gave him a mission to help young people and adults learn about Jesus and learn how to live truth-filled lives.

Tim's wish for you is that you would have a life full of forgiveness and peace. He wants you to have all of the truth you need to fight evil and live a life of friendship with God.



Truth Notes QR codes: If you have a smart phone, tablet or laptop, download a QR reader app. On each page, you find a QR code pointing to a video extension for what you just read.

Truth Notes Welcome Video



Creation

You and all of your friends will meet your Creator. You know it inside already. Someday, you will be given a face-to-face meeting with Almighty God.

The question that this daily truth book will help you answer is, “Will I survive my meeting with the pure and powerful God?”

Will I crash and burn in the everlasting fires of Hell? Or, will I be invited into never-ending peace, joy, purpose in the beautiful place called Heaven?

This question has been on the minds of humans since God created us about 6,000 years ago. God created time and began our world in a rhythm of a 7-day week. He did this intentionally, giving humanity a once-in-a-universe chance to live on an incredible life-sustaining planet.

The problems started pretty quickly though, because we blew it! Our first parents, Adam and Eve, decided that they knew better than God.

Can you make any connections to the “know better” business?

Who tells *you* what to do?



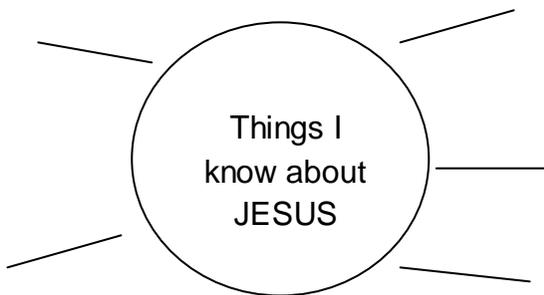
Creation Canyon

Saving the World

Adam and Eve cowered in the shadows, knowing that they had just sinned against their Creator God. God spoke to them and held out His hand of love. He promised that a Savior would arrive one day to crush the Devil and destroy sin. Over the next 4,000 years, God kept in communication with humanity, letting us know that our Savior was coming. He told us that a Savior would be born in Bethlehem and would be born from a young virgin girl. God wrote in the Bible when the Savior would show up to destroy sin, when He would be born, and when He would die. God even told us how He would die.

When God's Son, Jesus, showed up just a little over 2,000 years ago, it wasn't a surprise. He was expected. Adam and Eve had failed to live life showing God's goodness in every action. But, Jesus would not fail. In fact, Jesus lived 33 years without making one mistake. He took His time and made the right decisions, obeying God in every thought, action, and word. He blazed the trail of righteousness.

In just **five** words, what do you know about Jesus Christ?



The Bible and Proverbs

God wrote to us in a book that we call The Bible. This book is truth. It is nonfiction.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

All of the books of the Bible either talk about Jesus or point to Jesus. One of those books is called the book of Proverbs. The wisest man to ever walk this earth besides Jesus was King Solomon. God told Solomon what to write, and Solomon wrote a book of truths to live by for one of his sons.

A proverb can be defined as a small bit of truth. And, that is just what Solomon wrote down: small bite size pieces of truth. Truth that originated from God's mind.

Just like in math, the small bits of truth add up to some bigger true ideas. In the book of Proverbs, God tells us how to: 1. Find truth, 2. Find wisdom, and 3. Find the path of righteousness.

Our guide will be a young Christian named Josh:



Bible Points

To Know Wisdom

***The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:
To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words
of understanding. Proverbs 1:1-2 KJV***

We are aware that we don't know everything. But, most of us feel like we know enough to make it on our own. We agree with ourselves that we know how life should be lived. That's how our first parents, Adam and Eve, felt. And, look where it got them.

The problem that we face is that our enemy lives inside of us. And, who is that? The sinful nature has been inside of us since before we were born. The sinful nature tells us that everything is fine. Without God's help, the sinful nature is too powerful. We need God to change our thinking.

Think of one situation that you will face today.

**Wisdom: To know and obey
God's commandments.**

How does God want you to handle that situation?

Prayer: Dear God, You know me and my thoughts and feelings. Please teach me how to react to the situations I'll face today. Please forgive me for always following my own ideas.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

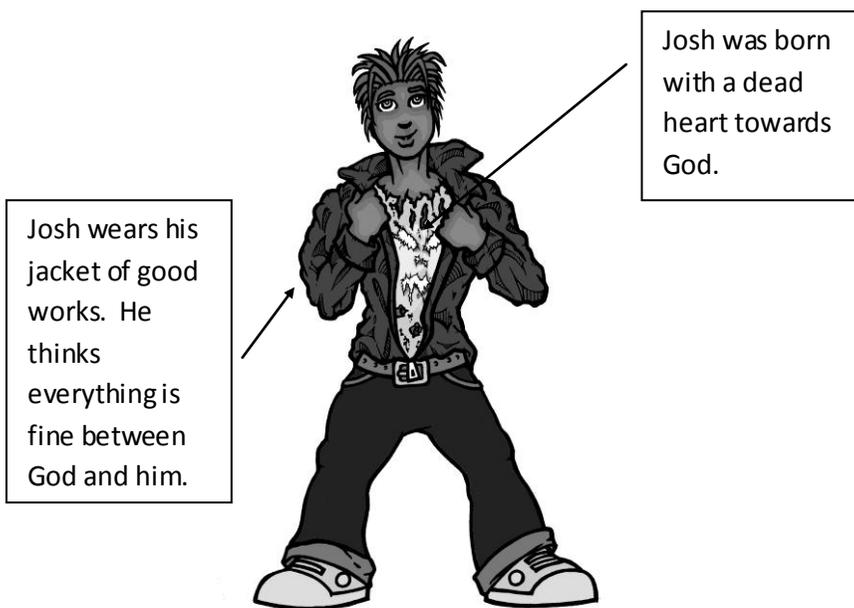


Turn Your Eyes

The Truth

God, who knows all truth, has written a book for you to read and learn from: The Bible

The problem that you face is that since Adam and Eve's first sin against God, all humanity has been born with a dead heart towards God. Not only that, we all think that we are decent people and don't really need much help from God. In the below picture, you see a metaphor for spiritual truths.



To make matters worse, you have your sinful nature inside of you, too. From your first day of life onward, your sinful nature and your dead heart always agree with each other!

Thankfully, there is help! God can give you an alive heart and teach you the truth about yourself. You'll learn more about God's answer to your heart problem and your sin problem as you turn the pages in this book.



Knowledge and Discretion

The proverbs of Solomon... to give... to the young man knowledge and discretion. Proverbs 1:4b KJV

All truth and knowledge come from the incredible mind of God. God's mind knows no limits. He is infinitely smart and knows all truth. So, that makes God best qualified to tell us what is really going on in the world.

Now, you have a serious problem. Your sinful nature puts just a little lie into the truth that you think about. That is a problem because untrue ideas cause you to do bad things. If you are acting on misinformation, you will make mistakes.

Enter the Bible. God uses truth in the Bible to help you see clearly. With God's help, you start to understand reality. You start to see the world around you like it really is: sinful and set against God.

But, that is only half the battle. Knowing what to do with that knowledge is where the rubber hits the road. We call that "discretion." Discretion is knowing the truth and knowing when to use that truth. It is like wisdom: You know and obey God's commandments.

Let's give it a try. God says, "Be angry and don't sin."

Think of a person in your life who gets on your nerves. How can you apply this truth when you are frustrated?

Obviously, we sin all of the time with anger. Thankfully for us, Jesus died on the cross to take our sins' consequences and forgive us. Part of discretion is knowing to ask for forgiveness today!



Fear God and Get Wisdom

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7 KJV

What? If I'm scared of God, I'll become smart? Actually, kind of yes. Do you remember what's been said about your sinful nature? Your sinful nature and your mind are naturally too self-centered to be worried about God. Sure, you might worry sometimes about sin and hell. But, you really aren't too concerned. Fear of God is like an alarm clock.

If fear of God is the gate to knowledge, then you need to know exactly what fear is.



Fear of God is like a rope made out of three strands. One strand is actually being scared because your Creator can crush you. The second strand is respect because God is the super, self-existing One who made everything! The third strand is the cord of loving trust. You know that God could destroy you but you also know that He is kind and that you can trust Him to take care of you.

Why is fearing God the key to you gaining knowledge?



Fear God

Don't Ignore Your Parents

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. Proverbs 1:8 KJV

As a young person, you are just starting on your life's journey of following God. Your sinful nature is powerful in your life, so God has put parents into your life to help you avoid your own bad thinking. It is a lie that you have to learn from experience.

Hear and don't forsake. Both of those words are active verbs. God wants you to listen to your dad. He's telling you to put into practice your mom's life instructions.

God has given a command to parents to introduce you to God through the way they act and through what they teach you. Listen to your parents – don't ignore them. Chances are, your parents have dropped the ball and have let you down. Nonetheless, God is telling you to give your parents your attention. Listen to what they say and obey, unless it is something sinful.

If you have no reliable adults in your life, then the burden is entirely on you to get your direction directly from your Dad in Heaven – God.

What is your attitude like towards your parents' instruction?

How do you see your sinful nature affecting your thoughts and actions?

Dear Dad in Heaven,

Please help me listen to the adults in my life and learn what you want me to learn. Please change my habits and thoughts so I can learn and follow you. Please teach me your truth from the Bible.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.



Don't Go There!

My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. Proverbs 1:10

Sometimes, the people around you draw you into their web of sin. God says – just say NO! There are two ways that sinners entice you. 1. It looks like fun or feels good, so you join them. 2. They put pressure on you to join in their sin. Either way, God says for you to get out of there.

Your sinful nature will want you to get in there. Your emotions and mind will vote that you get involved with the friends and the sin. That's where you have to take a stand.

Without God's help, you will probably join in the sin. You will walk in the sinful way with your friends. But, there is another way. And, that is the way of Jesus Christ. Jesus is, in his very existence, the definition of the way. Leave sin and self and walk in the way of the One who is 100% truth and 100% life. He lived the path of purity 100% of the time.

Since you are a sinner who has sinned many times, you need help from someone who has walked the way of truth and life and who didn't sin. First, you need to get Jesus' help. Then, you need to walk in His path.



Spider Soldiers

Sin is what separates you from God.

How to Not Be Scared of Evil

³³ *But whoever listens to me will dwell safely, and will be secure, without fear of evil.* Proverbs 1:33

God compares the two types of people: foolish and wise. Wise people find forgiveness in Jesus. Wise people fear God and follow Him. They listen to wisdom and apply it every day. Foolish people hate correction and laugh at wisdom. Foolish people depend on their own good works to try to earn forgiveness from God. They do what makes sense to them.

Do you fear God with respect and trusting hopefulness? Do you find your forgiveness for sin in Jesus?

Wisdom says, “Go to Jesus and ask Him to take away your sins!”

Remember, whoever listens to wisdom will dwell in safety. Today, put your trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior and you will live in safety.



The Bible says that the paycheck for sin is death. That sounds pretty serious! But, that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Think about yourself. Are you the foolish person or are you the wise person?



Get Wisdom

My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you,² so that you incline your ear (listen) to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding;³ Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice (call out) for understanding.⁴ If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures;⁵ Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.⁶ For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; Proverbs 2:1-6

Wisdom is a verb: Knowing and obeying God's commandments. It could be said another way: Do The True! The Bible gives you the truth. Now, do it!

The way to get wisdom in your life is also full of action.

- Receive God's words into your mind.
- Listen to the Bible to find wisdom
- Cry out for discernment (Don't take no for an answer)
- Call out for understanding in a loud voice
- Search for wisdom like a treasure

Do you remember your old enemy the sinful nature? That old tyrant is going to stand in your way and divert your attention from the actions of listening, crying out, and searching for wisdom. You must use your weapons against your sinful nature.

Pray for God's help because, without God's help, you are powerless. Your sinful nature is too strong for you. The truth in the Bible is hidden from you. You must have God's help to understand and do the true. Ask, Read, Listen – God gives wisdom.



Only God Can Help You

He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; *He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;* ⁸ *He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints.* Proverbs 2:7-8

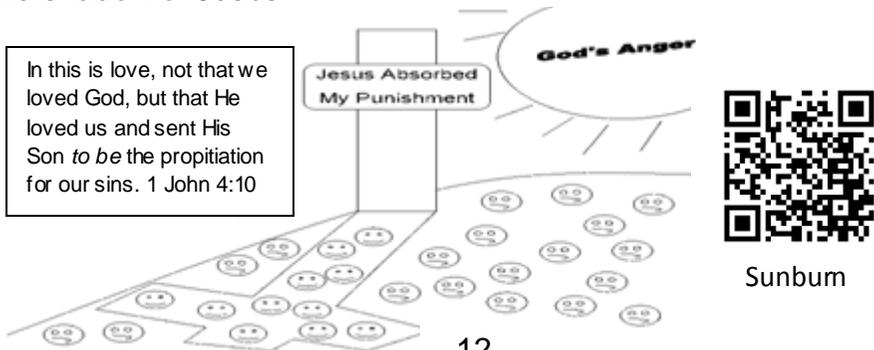
God collects wisdom that has your name on it! In other words, God knows how you should act in every situation you come to in your life. When was the last time that you asked God what He thought you should do?

What is something that you've been struggling with lately? How does God want you to handle this?

Not only does God store up wisdom for you, He is also a shield for you. He does this in several ways. First, Jesus, God the Son, became a shield for His people from the anger of God. Every sin that you commit has to be paid for because your sin has brought on you the eternal anger of God. So, either you suffer under the eternal anger of God in Hell. Or, you need a shield to absorb the heat of God's anger against you.

On the cross, Jesus became like a thirsty sponge and drank up God's fierce anger against the sins of His people. That is a pretty tough shield!

Your good works aren't good enough to be your shield. So, Jesus became the shield for His people. Are you standing in the shadow of Jesus?



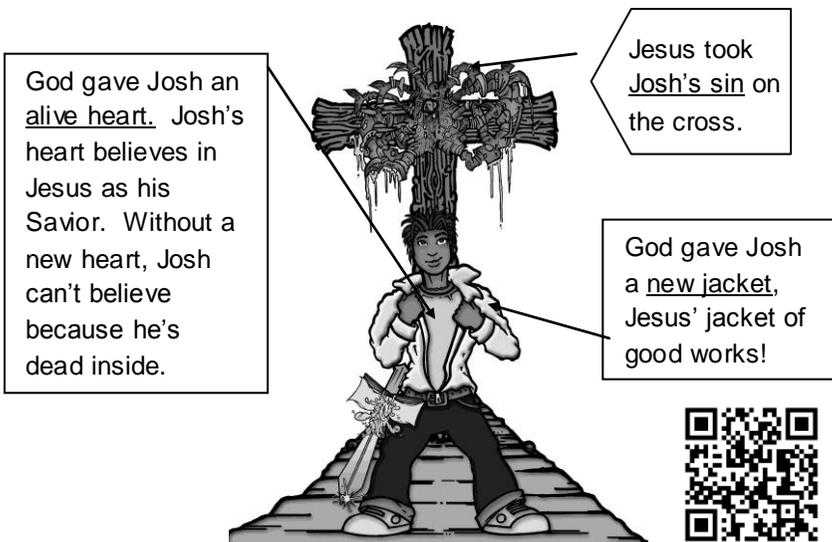
Two Kinds of Righteousness

Then you will understand righteousness and justice, equity and every good path. Proverbs 2:9

The goal of wisdom is to understand righteousness, and justice, and equity, and every good path. There are two kinds of righteousness that you want know about.

1. God's expectations for you and how He wants you to show His character in your life.
2. The righteousness of Jesus that is given to all who believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Jesus perfectly obeyed God's commandments for 33 years. He gives it like a jacket of good works to His friends. Without this second type of righteousness, the first kind of righteousness isn't any good.

So, there are two types of righteousness: Obeying God and Jesus' righteousness. To help you understand Jesus' righteousness, let's use a metaphor. We'll call it Jesus' jacket of good works. If you aren't wearing Jesus' jacket of good works, obeying God doesn't help you any. You still owe God your obedience. But, your sin ruins all of your good works. That is why you need Jesus' jacket of good works.



Jesus' Jacket

The Good Path

Then you will understand righteousness and justice, equity and every good path. Proverbs 2:9

God created Adam and Eve to do something special. They were designed to show how amazing He is through their actions. Humans were designed to be like a mirror to show how wonderful God is. BUT, when we sinned against God, we died inside. It was like our mirror became cracked and broken and we couldn't show God's beauty any more. Instead, humanity showed fractured characteristics of God's awesomeness. For example, we love but we love selfishly. We build and create but we create with greed and pride. Everything we do is only a twisted reflection of the pure characteristics of God.

When Jesus became human, he became 100% God and 100% human at the same time. So, Jesus was able to be the perfect mirror! From the time He woke up in the morning until He went to bed at night, Jesus always reacted and acted just like God would. Jesus did what we are supposed to do but can't because we are broken. Jesus earned a jacket of good works by being the perfect mirror. Jesus walked the good path for us.

The first thing you need to do is ask God to give you a new, alive heart that is able to believe in Jesus and love Him. Then, you follow Jesus down His good path. The Bible says that Jesus is the path, the truth, and that He is life itself. Wearing Jesus' jacket of good works, you walk down the good path. You follow Jesus' footsteps, asking yourself, "What would Jesus do in this situation?" Walking in Jesus' path, you become a mirror and start to show people around you God's character.



Jesus' path starts at the cross.



Wisdom Enters Your Heart

When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, ¹¹ Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, Proverbs 2:10-11

For wisdom to enter your heart, you must go to God for a heart operation. Naturally, you are born with a heart that is dead to God and alive to the sinful nature. So, what happens is that your dead heart always agrees with your sinful nature. The result is that you are incapable of obeying God.

Jesus said that you must be born again by the work of God the Holy Spirit. And, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to make you alive.

Reading the Bible and studying it at home and at church is the best way to find God and to be born again – to get a new, alive heart from God. It is in God's timing. He knows the best time to give you an alive heart that will love Him and open itself to wisdom. It's best to start seeking Him now and don't be satisfied until you've found Him.

If you want wisdom to enter your heart, the message is simple: **Read the Bible and pray for God to change you and teach you!**

Do you remember that the gateway to wisdom is the fear of God? Without a healthy fear, loving trust and respect for God, you will probably lose interest in your quest for wisdom. To tell you the truth, your very life and eternity depends on wisdom entering your heart.

Dear Jesus,
Please help me to read Your Bible and please give me wisdom in my heart! I want to know and obey Your commandments! I want to be friends with You! Your friend,



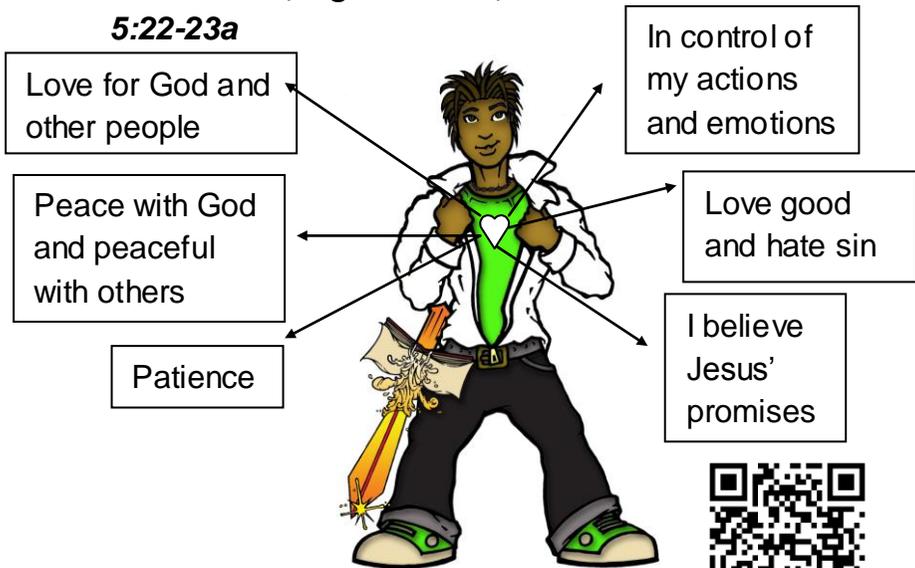
Alive

A New, Alive Heart

When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, ¹¹ Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, Proverbs 2:10-11

“When wisdom enters your heart, and understanding is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you.” Yes, I had to say it again! When God the Holy Spirit changes your heart, your desires change. The ways of God become very appealing to you. Knowledge of God’s personality and understanding of how He conducts Himself becomes something you desire and enjoy. You like what God likes and you hate what He hates. That is how you can know if you have a new, alive heart! Do you like God’s ways and hate your own selfish ways? Look at the list of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Do you have these coming out of you?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Galatians 5:22-23a

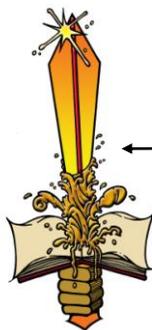


Discretion

¹⁰ When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, ¹¹ Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, Proverbs 2:10-11

“Discretion will preserve you.” Discretion is all about timing – knowing exactly what to do at the right time, not ten minutes later when you’ve already said the wrong thing. You’re sitting in class and you have a split second decision to make. Exaggerate the truth about some homework or take the heat and tell the exact truth. Discretion empowers you to open your mouth and tell the truth regardless of the outcome. Discretion is not natural for you. Discretion is a gift that God gives you as you walk down Jesus’ path. Your old dead heart would have chosen the easy way. Your new, alive heart helps you make wise decisions. In your own will, you are powerless. Your sinful nature is too strong. Only through the work of God the Holy Spirit in your heart and mind can you begin to have discretion. If you have a new, alive heart, God the Holy Spirit starts changing your desires, thoughts and actions through the Bible, church, and prayer. **The Bible is your weapon of choice! It is your sword!** When you read the truth from the Bible, you learn what Jesus would do in each situation you face. Knowing and obeying God’s commandments is called wisdom. Discretion is knowing when and where to put that wisdom into practice. **In short, Do The True!** And, do it at the right time - not twenty minutes after you mess it up!

**Wisdom:
Do The
True!**



Nectar

Wisdom Will Deliver You

(Wisdom will) deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things, ¹³ from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness; ¹⁴ Who rejoice in doing evil, and delight in the perversity of the wicked; ¹⁵ Whose ways are crooked, and who are devious in their paths; ¹⁶ To deliver you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words, ¹⁷ who forsakes the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God. ¹⁸ For her house leads down to death, and her paths to the dead; ¹⁹ None who go to her return, nor do they regain the paths of life. Proverbs 2:12-19

Wisdom will deliver you from the ways of evil people. Many of the people around you will gossip, talk or text about sexual topics, put others down, bully others, lie, and put God down. Wisdom helps you guard your ears and your tongue. Wisdom gives you the discretion to walk away.

If you have a new, alive heart, God changes your desires and corrects your thinking so that you start to find enjoyment in good activities. Instead of hanging out with sketchy friends, you start to want to be around people who love Jesus and are mirrors for God's character.

What wholesome activities do you enjoy?

Stop! Read the Bible verses from Proverbs 2:12-19 again. Notice that God is repeating something. He keeps talking about this immoral woman who will kill you. When God wants you to listen to something, He repeats Himself.



The Trap

(Wisdom will) deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things, ¹³ from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness; ¹⁴ Who rejoice in doing evil, and delight in the perversity of the wicked; ¹⁵ Whose ways are crooked, and who are devious in their paths; ¹⁶ To deliver you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words, ¹⁷ who forsakes the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God. ¹⁸ For her house leads down to death, and her paths to the dead; ¹⁹ None who go to her return, nor do they regain the paths of life. Proverbs 2:12-19

There are two paths in life: the path of life or the path of death. Jesus blazed the path of life for you. In fact, Jesus is the path of life. You start at the cross and you follow Him through life, living life in the light of What Would Jesus Do?!

Your sinful nature loves to leave the path of Jesus and walk in dark paths. The world and Satan love to see you leave the path of wisdom and walk in the path of foolishness.

There is a path that is a trap for your soul – it literally ends up in death and Hell. That trap is sexual immorality. You are designed by God to be a special gift for your future spouse. But, the odds are against you, unless you walk in wisdom. There are “friends” who speak easy words of appreciation for you. They want to suck the spiritual life out of you by trapping you into a sexual relationship.

It all goes back to building a life for yourself that is God-honoring. Every time you avoid sin or walk away from filthy behavior, you build a wall between yourself and sin. Every time you choose wisely, you put another brick in your wall of defense. Do The True!! Use your Sword!



Walking: Be The Light bulb

So you may walk in the way of goodness, and keep to the paths of righteousness. Proverbs 2:20

Think about walking. It takes balance, strength, and muscles. In the same way, you build your spiritual balance, strength, and muscles by exercising your wisdom. Be proactive Do The True every day. Don't wait for the world to put you in a submission hold before you start working out. Walk in the ways of God, not in the ways of sin.

Follow the paths of righteousness. Where do you usually hang out? What interests you? Do you actively walk in the paths of those who obey God? Does your life lead you through places where people do the true?

Who do you know that lives righteously? _____

Where do they usually hang out? _____

What choices do they make? _____

Do you know a Man who IS the path of doing right?

Have you met Jesus? Has God changed your heart, given you Jesus' jacket of good works, and forgiven your sins?

If so, then you have Someone very powerful living inside of you, who will keep you on the path – God the Holy Spirit. He will help you to desire the good path. Do you see any evidence of these desires for the good path in your heart?



Grow!



Camouflage

Do The True

My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands. Proverbs 3:1

This is a dad talking to his kid. He's saying, "Obey my rules and don't forget what I've taught you about God and life." The rules parents make up say something about what is important to them. Quiet parents like quiet kids. At school, you can learn a lot about a teacher by the rules that he/she has for the class.

With God, rules and commandments come from inside of Him. Rules and commandments show you the heart of God. His commandments show you what is important to Him. God is 100% infinite moral purity. So, when He tells you something that you should do, that command comes from inside of His infinitely moral and pure being. This is why sin is so bad. Sin spits on the moral character of God and says, "Go take a hike, God! I don't like You."

If you love Jesus, you will obey His commandments because you will see that His commandments are based on what He cares about. God's laws and commandments for His children make sense because they are consistent with the God that those children know and love. Eventually, true Christians grow to value and love God's requirements and life instructions because they make sense. They come from inside of the God that they know and appreciate. This process happens as God the Holy Spirit grows new desires inside of your alive heart. He helps you fight against your sinful nature. He helps you Do The True!

How do you feel about obeying God?

Do you love God's commandments?



Commandments

Love God and Love Others

My son, do not forget my law. Proverbs 3:1a

The Ten Commandments can be summarized in this verse, “Love God with all of your heart, mind, and soul and love your neighbor as much as you love yourself.” In just a few words, all of the commandments are summed up.

1. Love and worship only God and get rid of your idols. If your music or friends dominate your life, get rid of it/them for a while. Focus on God because He is the only One worthy of your undivided attention. As the most incredible Being who is bigger than the universe and smarter than a million geniuses, God deserves your attention, obedience, and worship. Will you give it to Him?
2. Treat your fellow humans with respect, be truthful and generous. Don't covet, envy, backstab, or steal. To bring that down to earth, don't steal from your future spouse by having sex before marriage. Ask yourself: Do I care more about my popularity or hormones than I care about other people? Take a break from the social scene. Spend time serving God and helping others see how good God is.

The important thing is to know right up front that you are a failure in the obeying God department. You will never fulfill God's requirement that you always show His amazing character in your every word, thought, emotion, and action. That is why you can never earn God's love or His forgiveness. You can never earn God's friendship. That is why Jesus died and became alive again. Jesus did that to suck up God's eternal anger for your sin. He did it to forgive you, give you His jacket of good works, and change you to obey His commandments! Trust Jesus – Love God!



Trust in Jesus

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. Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord: **“Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.”** (Psalm 16:1) Life is full of mistakes, stress, workloads, and tensions. Friends backstab you and bully you. Words overheard slice your soul. Homework deadlines lurk and coaches stretch your limits.

On your own, you'll wear out and snap like a rubber band. Put your trust in Jesus. Just the other day, I backed myself into a corner by making a mistake. I was in trouble, and I felt sick, stressed, and a little bit like a cornered stray cat. I realized at that moment that I was doing too much on my own. I had cut God out of the decision-making process. Instead of asking God to tell me what to do, I was doing whatever came to mind.

So I prayed and told God that I needed help. I woke up the next morning with a clear head, and I knew what to do next. I had been leaning on my own understanding and had made some mistakes by reacting to life in ways that seemed right but were actually sinful.

1. Trust in Jesus to help you out with your mistakes.
2. Trust in God to show you a better way.
3. Ask God for His opinion on an hourly basis.
4. Read the Bible and pray so God can reprogram your thoughts.

Your sinful nature tells you to just go for it. The truth is that you must trust in God and not depend on your own understanding.



Be the Mirror by Focusing on God

In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:6

As was mentioned a few pages back, God created you for a purpose. That purpose is for you to glorify Him. (But let me add one more part to your purpose... and enjoy God forever. We'll talk about enjoying God at the end of this page.)

Glorifying God means that you live your life so that other people can see how amazing God is – just by looking at you. You become a mirror where people look to see the power, beauty, patience, kindness, purpose, justice, and moral purity of God.

When Adam and Eve rejected God's authority in the garden of Eden about 6,000 years ago, that mirror shattered and the image of God being reflected became distorted and shattered.

When God the Holy Spirit gives you a new heart, He starts to fix your mirror a little bit at a time. Over time, you begin to bring God glory because you are giving your friends and family a better picture of God's character qualities.

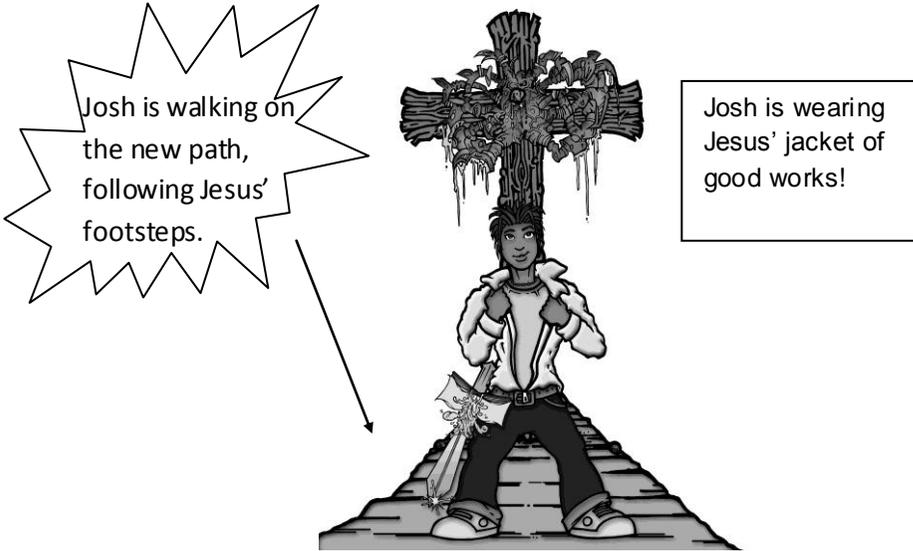
So, in all of your ways, acknowledge or focus on God. In doing so, He will begin to fulfill your destiny in life. You will find your destiny when you start to reflect and enjoy God.

Oh! Did I say enjoy God? Yep! Here's how it works: As you lean on God through-out your day, you'll start to enjoy a friendship with Him. He will amaze you, and He will surprise you. You will end up feeling purpose for your life. And, you'll have a Friend for life! The secret is to stop focusing on yourself and start spending time with God. Jesus, Who is the way, the truth, and the life, will lead you in His path.

Why do you need Jesus to direct your path?



New Life, New Jacket, New Path



It is all grace. From start to finish, salvation and the Jesus life are all an undeserved gift from God. Faith, forgiveness, and the Jesus' jacket of good works are all given to undeserving sinners by the Holy Spirit. Along with being saved, Christians are given a path of good works on which to walk. Every Christian's life is laid out ahead of time in God's mind. We walk down this path following Jesus. Our salvation is not dependant on our works. Actually, we are on the path of good works because God has put us there. It's His free gift that lasts a lifetime. Our good works grow out of the new heart.

Draw a picture of you with a new alive heart, forgiven, and wearing Jesus' jacket of good works. Put yourself on the path of righteousness following Jesus.



Right Path

God Cares About You

My son, do not despise the chastening (disciplining) of the LORD, nor detest His correction ¹² For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights. Proverbs 3:11-12

God does something for His kids! He corrects and disciplines them. While this is not our idea of fun, it is necessary. This is how He keeps us off of the evil path and in the righteous path. God's discipline is His way of building godly habits in you. Through teaching and disciplining you, He teaches you discretion and wisdom. He teaches you to Do The True, no matter what.

God the Holy Spirit uses three things to help you develop into a godly child of God: the Word, prayer, and church to

Discipline: To train or develop by instruction and exercise especially in self-control. www.merriam-webster.com

produce godly desires within your new, alive heart. Along with these three, God uses hard times to help you pay attention to Him and grow in obedience. He uses circumstances and consequences to point you back to Himself.

If God does not discipline you and produce godly desires inside of you, you need to talk to Him about it. God is really clear in the Bible that He only trains and disciples those who are His kids – those to whom He has given a new, alive heart.

What has God been using in your life to train and correct you?

Part of being a Christian is repenting of your sins. This means to Stop, Turn, Look to Jesus, and Obey! Is there something that you need to repent of today?



Two Paths

Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, ¹² to deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things. Proverbs 2:11-12

There are two paths: the path of evil and the path of righteousness. We've already talked about how Jesus walked the path of righteousness and was the perfect mirror for the glory of God. Jesus didn't sin. Then, He modeled perfect self-control on the cross when He was soaking up God's infinite anger for the sins of His people. You could say that Jesus was the pioneer who made the path of righteousness. He obeyed God perfectly in every thought and action and pioneered that way of living. So, when you believe in Jesus as your personal Savior, you are given a special privilege. You get to follow Jesus on the path of righteousness. The difference is that you still sin! You mess up a lot!

When you are born, you are born right in the middle of the path of evil. You love it! Your dead heart loves it! Your sinful nature rolls around in it like a pooch in steaming poop. That is why God the Holy Spirit comes down to rescue you by making you alive! He gives you faith to believe that Jesus is your Savior, AND He gives you the ability to see that you are a sinner... a self-centered scumbag. After all of this takes place, you wake up smack dab in the center of a new path, the path of righteousness.

How do you think that you stay on the path of righteousness? Look at the verse... Discretion and understanding keep you off of the way of evil.

Now, think hard: How does God the Holy Spirit give you discretion and understanding? What does God use to produce the fruits of the Spirit in you?



Wisdom

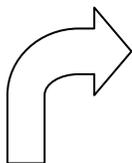
Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding; ¹⁴ For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. ¹⁵ She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her.
Proverbs 3:13-15

What do you desire? What are you passionate about? Wisdom is more valuable than cash or the latest technology. Wisdom is like a GPS (global positioning system) for your thoughts. She points the way for you to take and shines into your thoughts to straighten your **path**. Let me ask you a question: Where has your **path** been a little crooked lately?

Now, connect the dots. If it has been crooked, what is it that you desire more than wisdom?

The word “**path**” should stimulate a healthy connection in your head. We all know Who the path is: **Jesus!** Jesus is the one who used wisdom to evaluate every thought, emotion, and action. He made all of His decisions based on wisdom, which is how He earned the jacket of good works! You know - the jacket that Jesus gives to every person who believes in Him as King and Savior!

Wisdom says: Go to Jesus. Believe, Repent, Follow the Man Who is the way, the truth, and the life. Do The True!



Happy

Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding. Proverbs 3:13

Happiness comes from wisdom because if you fear God, know God's forgiveness, and apply God's commandments to your daily life, you will find yourself fulfilled.

You were created to be in a relationship with God. Your purpose in life is to glorify God (be the mirror) and enjoy Him. When you are in a peaceful, loving friendship with the God who created EVERYTHING, you will feel incredibly fulfilled. You will be happy inside your soul.

Proverbs says that wisdom is a tree of life. In fact, eternal life is defined as knowing God personally. By now you might have guessed that wisdom personified Jesus. Jesus is the tree of life because He gives life to dead sinners. When alive-heart sinners are plugged into Jesus, they start to see changes. Thoughts and desires turn towards God. The fruits of God the Holy Spirit start to show up. You start to say "no" to the sinful nature and "yes" to wisdom, which basically means that you say yes to Jesus! Over time, your life starts to take on a luster. Your life starts to shine the light of Jesus into your daily experiences. You start to be the mirror that reflects the beauty and moral purity of Jesus into your classroom and your home.



Peace

Is This the End?

The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; By understanding He established the heavens;²⁰ By His knowledge the depths were broken up, and clouds drop down the dew.²¹ My son, let them not depart from your eyes — Keep sound wisdom and discretion;²² So they will be life to your soul and grace to your neck.²³ Then you will walk safely in your way, and your foot will not stumble.²⁴ When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet. Proverbs 3:19-24

“Ahhhhhhh!” he screamed as the capsule plummeted towards earth. Hands pressed against the plexiglass, thoughts of past sins shooting through his head. It seemed like the worst time to die. Nightmares couldn’t describe what he felt as his life slipped through his gaze. Earth’s surface was fast approaching with surprising clarity. It wouldn’t be much longer now. If only he wasn’t taking so many mistakes, so much sin into his eternal grave. His death would be anything but peaceful. And, his sleep certainly wouldn’t be sweet.

~ ~ ~ ~

In wisdom, God put this world together in six 24-hour days by speaking it into existence about 6,000 years ago. Yep, that’s power! You can be proud of God because He used His powerful words, not evolution, to create you and the universe. The entire stretch of space shouts God’s greatness. As we’ve discovered, this is your job, too! You were created to glorify and enjoy God. But, the only way to do that is to walk in the path of wisdom, also called the path of righteousness. A relationship with Jesus empowers you to apply truth in every situation, thought, and emotion. That same relationship with Jesus is what gives you peaceful sleep at night. In Jesus, you are forgiven and loved.



Life and Safety

My son, let them not depart from your eyes — Keep sound wisdom and discretion;²² So they will be life to your soul and grace to your neck.²³ Then you will walk safely in your way, and your foot will not stumble.

²⁴ When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.²⁵ Do not be afraid of sudden terror, nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;²⁶ For the LORD will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being caught.

Proverbs 3:21-26

There are two issues at stake here: life and safety. In this text, you are put at a crossroads. You either choose the road of life and safety or you choose the highway of eternal death and danger. Notice that God calls the effects of choosing the path of wisdom *life to your soul*. When you follow Jesus, it is life to your soul. In fact, that is how you start down the path of safety. God gives you an alive heart.

A long time ago, a prophet of God told a group of people who didn't want to obey God to **“choose for yourselves right now whom you will serve.”** A decision like this cannot be put off. The stakes are way too high: eternal hell fire or eternal friendship. Which will you choose?

God commands you to repent and seek Him through Jesus. He says, **“Repent and believe in the gospel.”** Mark 1:15b

Repentance

Stop depending on your own works to be right with God.

Turn to God by reading the Bible, praying and church.

Look to Jesus for forgiveness and His jacket of good works.

And Obey by walking in Jesus' footsteps, obeying God.



Which Path?

My son, let them not depart from your eyes — Keep sound wisdom and discretion;²² So they will be life to your soul and grace to your neck.²³ Then you will walk safely in your way, and your foot will not stumble.

²⁴ When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.²⁵ Do not be afraid of sudden terror, nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;²⁶ For the LORD will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being caught.

Proverbs 3:21-26

You are young! Your whole life is ahead of you. What does it matter which path you walk on? What if you walk on the path of the wicked for a while? Can't you always jump back onto the path of safety?

No! You can't afford to waste any more of your life, if you haven't already rejected the path of the wicked. When you apply God's command to repent and seek Jesus, you are moving towards the path of life and safety. Turning to Jesus is the first step towards life and safety. Remember, wisdom and discretion will keep you safe. The best time to obey God and turn to Jesus is now! That is ultimate wisdom and discretion.

It is during this journey towards friendship with Jesus that you will see God the Holy Spirit change your heart and fill your life with the fruits of the Spirit.

One of the first fruits that you'll see is repentance. This is a gift that God the Holy Spirit gives you. You need to be praying for repentance every day!

As you walk in the path of wisdom, you will gain more confidence and trust in Jesus. Do it God's way and you will experience God's safety. Your feet will not stumble.



Search

Pride

For the perverse person is an abomination to the LORD, but His secret counsel is with the upright. ³³ The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, but He blesses the home of the just. ³⁴ Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble. ³⁵ The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the legacy of fools.
Proverbs 3:32-35

Let me summarize this into a helpful statement: God hates sinful people who are proud of their own works and are not honest about their need for Jesus.

Your sinful nature loves itself and thinks highly of you. Pride elevates your opinion of yourself. It tells you that you are doing fine without God's help, which takes away the value of God's moral character and gives that value to your own moral character. Pride says that your sin is less offensive and that you are a pretty good person. Remember, God's law is simply a picture of what is important to His inner, incredibly pure being. Pride makes you worth more and God worth less.

How do you feel about your own goodness?

On a scale, how would you rate yourself? sinful 1 2 3 4 5 great

Wicked people think highly of themselves. God curses them. Wicked people pass on their pride and shady ways to their children.

So where is your hope? How can you avoid the curse of God on your house?

Jesus once said that only sick people need a doctor. He meant that when you see yourself as you really are, then you will need a Savior. Ask Jesus to show you your real self.



The Sinful Nature

Sin and pride are super strong. They are so strong that they take your thoughts, emotions and actions captive. Before you meet Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you have a dead heart. Your dead heart always agrees with your sinful nature. After God gives you an alive heart, you still have the sinful nature. It continues to feed your mind lies, hoping that you will choose sin instead of obedience.



The sinful nature tries to take over your life. In this picture, Josh is trying to battle the sinful nature but is not using the right weapons! His hands aren't good enough!



Fight is On

The sinful nature uses movies, friends, books, music, and even your own thoughts to try to get you to sin. It takes truth and spins a little bit of lies into it. You probably wouldn't believe something that was totally a lie. But, you would believe something that was kind of true.

To fight the sinful nature, you must use the right weapons. Turn the page to read more about those weapons!

Your Weapons

You are inundated with information that your sinful nature uses to get your emotions worked up. You hear information that sounds correct and it impacts your thoughts. Your emotions and thoughts turn into sinful actions.

How do you fight this battle that is inside of you? There are several avenues that God uses to give you grace or undeserved help. He uses prayer. When, you pray, you are asking for help and God likes it when His kids ask for help. Without God's help, you will fail. You can't do it without Him.

Another way that God helps you is by having you go to church. At church you hear the Bible taught and you hang out with Christian friends. God uses church and Christian friends to give you power against your sinful nature.

I certainly don't want to leave out the S word of the Spirit! God uses the truth in the Bible to change you. By reading the Bible and praying about it, God changes your thoughts. He starts to weed out the lies in your emotions and thoughts.

God tells you to take every thought, capture it, and give it to Jesus. Kill the lies with 100% truth!



Secret Meeting

What Will You Get?

The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, but He blesses the home of the just. ³⁴ Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble. ³⁵ The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Proverbs 3:32-35

God gives grace to those who are humble. Humility means to be realistic and truthful about yourself. That doesn't come naturally. As you ask God to change your perspective about yourself, He will. Be realistic with God. He gives grace to those who are humble. (Remember, grace is an undeserved gift.)

God will do several things that you don't deserve. He'll help you look at life through the truth of the Bible. He'll give you truth glasses, so you can see life as it really is. As God teaches you the truth, you'll begin to be humble and realistic. Also, God will give you forgiveness for your sins. And, God will give you a daily dose of repentance.

The wise shall inherit glory. As you walk in the way of Jesus, you will become a light in your dark world. You will live a life that shows God's amazing character, and you will enjoy God's friendship. Inheriting glory is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. We usually think about glory as Heaven. It is that, too. But, for Christians, Heaven starts here on earth. In fact, the definition of eternal life is to know God through Jesus. It begins now and lasts forever.



Treasure

Which frame of the cartoon are you experiencing now?

Your Vision for Your Future

The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked, but He blesses the home of the just. ³⁴ Surely He scorns the scornful, but gives grace to the humble. ³⁵ The wise shall inherit glory, but shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Proverbs 3:32-35

As you develop habits of wisdom in your life, you are building a wall around your life. This wall will help you not fall when you are tempted to sin. Every time you choose to sin, you gash a gaping hole into your wall.

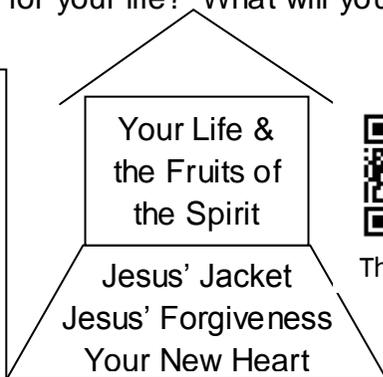
The question that you need to ask yourself is: What kind of person do I want to be? _____

What kind of people do you want your future children to be? Do you want God-honoring children and grandchildren? Or do you want shame to plague your descendants? Will you give your children a gift of shame or a gift of glory? Choose wisely!

Remember, your foundation is Jesus Christ. The house that you build is your life. Every time you apply God's commandments and do it God's way, you build a stronger house.

What kind of vision do you have for your life? What will your legacy be? Glory or Shame?

In one sentence, write your vision statement for your life: _____



The Vision

Listen to Dad

Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, and give attention to know understanding; ² For I give you good doctrine: Do not forsake my law. Proverbs 4:1-2

God has given many of us fathers who can help us learn Biblical truth. If you happen to not have a godly dad, God has a special promise for you. God promises to be your daddy. He will teach you His law and help you apply it every day. Seek God and He will become your dad.

Hear your father's teaching. This is a verb or action word! You, pay attention is another way to say listen. God gives you truth glasses to look through at your life, your schoolwork, you emotions, and your thoughts.

Pay attention! When you get up in the morning, pay attention to what God has to say about your morning. Read your Bible and listen to Christian music. When you eat lunch, pay attention to what God says about your lunch conversations. Throughout your day, look at the incoming information and your choices Biblically! Use the 100% truth of the Bible to judge and weed out the lies and errors in the information that you're learning and receiving.

Think about your attitude towards parental instruction. Are you able to listen respectfully to the instruction of your parents? What is your typical reaction to parental advice and instruction? _____

I give you good doctrine. Doctrines are God's statements of truth about Himself, you, sin, Hell, Heaven, forgiveness. Earthly dads give advice, but God gives rock-solid doctrines. You must build your thinking and your life on the truths of the Bible. Who do you depend on to teach you life's truths? Does he/she depend on the Bible for his/her doctrines?



Who Are You Listening To?

He (my dad) also taught me, and said to me: "Let your heart retain (hold onto) my words; Keep my commands, and live. Proverbs 4:4

Put God's words in your heart. Think about it this way: Plant a seed and it will become a plant and produce fruit. Plant the truth in your heart by reading the Bible and listening to your parents. You water it by reading the Bible, praying, going to church, and learning more about God. With the help of God the Holy Spirit, the truth will grow up and produce fruits in your life. Truth becomes wisdom if it is applied in your life. If you live the truth, you are walking on the path of wisdom. God says to believe in Jesus and repent. He says to plant the Word in your heart.

**Repentance: Stop,
Turn, Look to Jesus,
and Obey!**

Are you producing fruit? Read these verses and see if you are:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Galatians 5:22-23a

Think about the information that you put in your heart. You do this by listening open-mindedly to TV, movies, books, teachers, music, friends, and family. What is it that you spend most of your time thinking about?

Draw pictures of the people and things that you listen to the most:



Times Square

Do The True... And You Will Live

He (my dad) also taught me, and said to me: “Let your heart retain (hold onto) my words; Keep my commands, and live. Proverbs 4:4

Keep my commandments and live. Wow! The stakes are high! The paycheck for sin is death! You can never be good enough to deserve Heaven. That is why Jesus did it for you. You must come to a point in your life where you depend trustingly in Jesus as your Savior who absorbed all of God’s justice and anger for your sin. In a matter of hours, Jesus sweated out the justice of God and sucked up the anger of God for the sins of His people. Did He do it for you? Do you depend on Jesus or on yourself for God’s forgiveness?

Keep my commandments and live. God’s commandment to you is believe in my Son Jesus. If you keep that commandment, you will live. To keep that commandment, you must ask God to give you a new, alive heart and trusting dependence on Jesus as your wrath-absorber.

Keep my commandments and live. Here’s the beauty in this truth. If you are alive in Jesus, you will keep God’s commandments. The desires of a new, alive heart change you immediately to love God’s commandments and hate sin.

If you walk in the way of Jesus and obey Him, you are alive. If you walk in the way of your own goodness and obey yourself, you are dead. **The end of a life lived for God is life.** The end of a life lived for self is Hell.

What will you put in your heart today? Which path will you choose – your path of foolishness or Jesus’ path of wisdom?



Wisdom is Jesus Christ

Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Proverbs 4:5

God is speaking to you. He is giving you your to-do list for today, tomorrow, and every day. Listen to the words coming out of God's mouth through the Bible. Don't forget them.

When you watch that new release DVD that paints a picture of God as an unpredictable superman who just wants humanity to be its best, remember God's words about Who He really is. Remember that God is a Spirit Who does not change, does not have limits, and is eternal. God is just, loving, and fair.

When you are sitting in your science class and the teacher is telling you that everything has evolved from a piece of dense matter the size of a period on a page, remember Who really won the science fair of the universe by creating everything! Remember that God created the world about 6,000 years ago and that He thought up every color, smell, cell, organism, ecosystem, and created all of it by His limitless power.

Do not forsake her (wisdom), and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you.⁷ Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore, get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. Proverbs 4:6-7

Jesus is all wisdom poured into His *fully-God-and-fully-human* person. The way to get wisdom is to fear God and trust in Jesus for your salvation. As you become friends with the Man who is Wisdom, you will start to change from the inside out. You will begin to love and obey God, which means that you will be walking on the Jesus-path of wisdom.

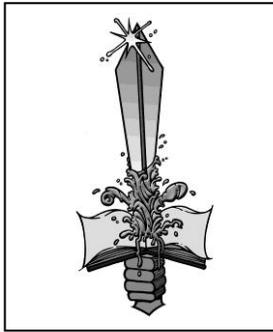
Is this you? *Are you forsaking Jesus or loving Jesus?*



The Way of Wisdom

Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of your life will be many. ¹¹ I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. ¹² When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble. Proverbs 4:10-12

This is the voice of Jesus speaking from the page, “I have taught you wisdom; I have led you in the right paths.” He is saying this to His children. Are you one of His children? Notice that the focus is on you being taught and led. Who is teaching you and leading you? Is it Jesus or your sinful nature?



The way of wisdom is a path that you walk along each day. It is a path that starts at the cross of Jesus and continues in Heaven. Have you started that journey? Which picture below describes you best right now?



Grab Onto Jesus and Don't Let Go

Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life. Proverbs 4:13

God wrote the Bible as your source for ultimate, trustworthy truth. And, He sent God the Son, Jesus Christ, to be your living, breathing source of truth. In this verse, God tells you to grab onto instruction and don't let go because instruction is your life. Do you want to live? Do you want to fulfill your purpose to glorify God and enjoy Him forever? Then, grab onto Jesus and don't let go. Read the Bible regularly and sit at the feet of Jesus.

The most important instruction that God gives you is to do two important actions:

1. Repent
2. Believe on Jesus as your personal King and Savior.
Both of these are impossible for you without the work of God the Holy Spirit in your life, which is why Jesus tells you to ask for help. If you haven't yet, ask God to give you a new heart that hates sin, loves God, and believes in Jesus as your Savior. Ask until He gives it to you!

What kind of repentance do you have in your life?

Draw a picture of you grabbing onto the instructions of God. What does that look like in your life?



Hang On

What kind of belief do you have in Jesus?

Saving Belief = Know Facts + Personal Trust

Path of the Wicked

Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. ¹⁵ Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on. ¹⁶ For they do not sleep unless they have done evil; And their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. ¹⁷ For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. Proverbs 4:14-17

There are two names for this path: The path of foolishness and the path of the wickedness. Both names refer to the same path. And, the people on this path are either called foolish or wicked.

This is the path of selfishness, violence, and disrespect for God. The people on this path aren't obeying their parents, listening to instruction, or obeying God.

God tells you to turn away from the gossiping that is like food to the back stabber. He says to turn from the bullies who drink up teasing like lemonade. Instead, God wants you to walk in another path – a path of justice, and light. God calls this path the path of wisdom or the path of righteousness. The people who choose to walk down this path are called wise or righteous people. They follow the footsteps of the God-man Who is the light, Who is the truth, Who is the righteous one: Jesus.

In order to walk in this path, guess where you start? You start following Jesus. You follow Jesus right to the cross and give Him your sin. You follow Jesus down the path of wisdom, obeying God and handling your situations like Jesus would, carrying your sword of truth!

**Repentance: Stop,
Turn, Look to Jesus,
and Obey!**

44

**Wisdom:
Do The
True!**



Choose Wisely

Identity in Jesus Christ

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17

Who am I? I know that there is the little person inside of me. But, who really am I? Am I popular enough, smart enough, skinny enough, muscular enough, good-looking enough? I find my self-worth in how I perceive myself and in how I think others see me. That's not healthy!

I am a new creation in Jesus Christ. I used to be a creature who had a dead spiritual heart, and I found my identity through worldly things. Now, I am dead to that identity and ALIVE to my Jesus Christ identity. I have Christ-identity instead of I-identity. So what does this all mean for me?

It means that I am no longer a slave to what others or I think about me. I no longer have to be that perfect person. Instead, I am a slave to what Jesus thinks about me. Guess what! He really likes me. As a new creature in Jesus Christ, I have been adopted into God's family. So, I start to take on the family resemblance. I start to look and act like my family.

Jesus tells us not to worry about what other humans think about us. Instead, consider what God thinks about us. He says that God has the power to destroy our souls in Hell. What?? For an old worldly creature, God thinks of him/her as a rebel and an enemy. For the new creature in Jesus Christ, God thinks of him/her as a beautiful child who is valuable and to be loved.

"All things have become new." New desires. New words on my tongue. New thoughts on my mind. New friends. New peace. New King. New self-image. New life!

I'm free to discover who I am. So, *who* are you?



Freedom in Christ

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Galatians 5:1

What do you spend your time thinking about? What tangles around your thoughts and sucks up your time and energy? What eats at your emotions and tears peace from your conscience? It is different for each of us. Some try to be the good person. Others just give in to the sinful nature. Some serve the idol of gaming, while other sacrifice time to the goddess of beauty.

Freedom in Christ means just that. Free to be the person that God created you to be. You are free to glorify God and enjoy Him immensely. You don't have to earn this. Jesus already earned it for you. You can't earn a gift.

Before one is made alive in Christ, he/she has to obey the sinful nature. If a naughty thought sits on the brain long enough, the person usually ends up sinning. After years of obeying the sinful nature, it is hard to realize that you are free. If you are in Christ, you DON'T have to obey your sinful nature.

Think about what you are in bondage to from your past or in your present. What tortures you?

It's time to do battle. You don't have to obey those things anymore. In Christ, you are free to think, obey, love, and live. Take every though captive. Bible/Prayer/Church. Cling to Jesus and live free in Him.



New King



Car Wreck

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