

Proverbs: Choosing Wisdom in a Foolish World
The Importance of Wisdom – But How Do I Get It! (Part 2)
Proverbs 3:1-26
Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, May 27, 2018

Proverbs 3:1-26 shows us three ways to get onto the path of wisdom.

I. You'll Need to Commit to a Lifetime of Obedience That's Willing to Put God's Word into Practice Even When It Doesn't Line Up with Your Own Thinking

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

Regardless of what you think you understand, what you feel, or strong opinions that you may have, wisdom is found in following God's way, submitting to His will, and leaning on His Word.

The Hebrew word for 'acknowledge' is 'yada,' which means to know something by experiencing it. You know what God's Word says and you choose to do it and experience it for yourself.

Wisdom starts to get traction in your life when you choose to put God's Word into practice. It's the same thing James, brother of Jesus, was driving home in **James 1:22-25**.

The Hebrew concept of a fool was not an ignorant person, but was someone who had the truth and simply did nothing with it.

Every day you are becoming someone who is either wise or foolish. Who you are becoming is a product of what you choose to do every day, one choice at a time, one attitude at a time, and one action at a time. Much of it can seem insignificant and uneventful, but obedience is critical in determining who you are.

Two different ways God's Word brings us to a point of obedience:

A. The Simple Use of God's Word

The simple use of God's Word is just what it sounds like.

Direct commands in Scripture that tell us what to do and what not to do. They're not always easy to obey and they don't always line up with our own thinking or feelings, but they are simple, direct statements.

You gain wisdom by submitting to God's Word and putting it into practice even when it contradicts what you and the rest of world are thinking about that subject.

B. The Big Story or Narrative Use of God's Word

Reading all of the Bible begins to shape your thinking and gives you desires that are fed by bigger categories of how to view or frame up your life. We don't just need specific answers to specific problems. We need an expanded framework of how to even view life.

Those big themes can feed and fuel our desire to obey many of the specific commands.

II. You'll Need to Admit that You Need a Relationship with God and Other People Far More than You Need a List of Biblical Principles

Proverbs 3:7 "Do not be wise in your own eyes..."

The wise person seeks counsel, cultivates friendship, looks for advisers and wants to be mentored. That all happens best in the context of relationships.

The Bible was meant to enhance your relationship with God and others, not replace them.

You won't get up on the path of wisdom and stay there without exhortation, confrontation, and the comfort and prayers of other people in your life at close range.

III. You'll Need to Submit to the Crucible of Suffering that Happens Outside of the Academic Classroom of Knowledge

Proverbs 3:11-12 "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor detest His correction; for whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a Father the son in whom he delights.

V. 11-12 say the path of wisdom will also include hard things like trials and suffering, because it's part of our training and discipline as a child of God and it's not because God is mad at us!

As God's children, He loves us and delights in us, but that love and delight doesn't translate into a hurt-free, pain-free life because then we'd also have a life that's devoid of wisdom.

When suffering comes, there's a temptation to jump from the path of wisdom and to reject what God is doing in your life.

Let suffering drive you to know God more, know your own heart more, know His Word more, and more into the arms of your Christian friends.

If you go through suffering in the context of these things, you will grow in wisdom much faster than any other time in your life. Trials and suffering are the very season in which you can gain wisdom the most.

God understands something about us that we struggle to accept – that pain and suffering awaken us to God and refine us for God.