

## Wisdom For The Ages

### Proverbs 4:1-9

#### Intro

- In honor of Father's Day, we'll be looking at a straight up Dad text today, but this is still applicable to all – No excuse for tuning out. If nothing else, stay tuned in to make sure your husband or Dad is listening.
- Multiple "Dad experiences" represented in the room
  - Ranging from "amazing" to "horrific" or even "non-existent"
  - Our "Dad experiences" influence us whether we want them to or not
    - They are a large part of our foundations as people
    - Usually result in some of the following thoughts as you grow up:
      - I'm going to do this as a Dad, because that's how my Dad taught me...
      - I will never do that as a Dad, because I couldn't stand it when my Dad did that...
      - I wish I would have had a Dad to show me how to do this...
- Fathers are tasked with great responsibility to love, lead, and teach
  - This is an area that fires me up due to the fact that as Matt Chandler put it in a recent sermon, "There are so many dads and husbands who are **punting** on their marriages and God-given responsibilities."
- Prayer for this text and sermon has been that God will use it in three ways:
  - Challenge – See the high calling of a Dad, get in the game, and crush it
    - I have been challenged in preparing
  - Comfort – If you had a negative or non-existent Dad experience, your children's story doesn't have to be "that same story"
  - Convict – See that you have nothing good to offer on your own and that you need Jesus more than anything else in this life

#### Proverbs Reminders

- Proverbs are probabilities (truisms) but NOT promises
- Wisdom for daily living
- Theology of Work Bible commentary: “Central concern of Proverbs is to live life in awe of God.”
- Justin Self: Book of Proverbs summed up: “Learn and Live” or “Live and Learn”
- **Still can be confusing...NIV First Century Study Bible Commentary**
  - *If I love wine and olive oil, will I never be rich ([Pr 21:17](#))? If I wink at someone, is it always perverse ([Pr 16:30](#))? To be a wife with a noble character, does a woman need to rise before dawn ([Pr 31:15](#))? If I raise my kids properly, give them the right start, will their life always turn out the way I desire ([Pr 22:6](#))? Will a sluggard always cause his own death because he refuses to work ([Pr 21:25](#))?*

*It is tempting to think of the proverbs as formulas for success or failure. It's tempting to read them as promises for good behavior or warnings for bad behavior. But wisdom literature is not meant to be formulaic. One can think of dozens of exceptions for all kinds of wise sayings in the book of Proverbs. Instead of reading each proverb literally, we need to see the truths communicated here more like patterns of truth. They help point the reader toward a life of wisdom, but they are not a guarantee of a certain action equaling a certain result. Wisdom literature is to be reflected upon and pondered.*

*For example, [Pr 27:1](#) says, “Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.” Jesus appears to hint at the wisdom found in this proverb: “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” ([Mt 6:34](#)). **The truth behind the proverb is universal and found repeated throughout Scripture.***

- Examples:
  - Diligence and Work Hard **likely lead to** Success
    - **Proverbs 21:5 - The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.**
  - Properly disciplining your children **likely lead to** not having brats

- **Proverbs 29:17 - Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart.**
- Guarding your tongue ***likely leads to*** not getting punched in the mouth
  - **Proverbs 18:6 - A fool's lips walk into a fight, and his mouth invites a beating.**
- Not messing around with somebody else's wife will ***likely lead to*** higher chance of staying alive
  - **Proverbs 6:34 - For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge.**
  - **Sign me up for prison ministry from the inside**

**So Proverbs is part of wisdom literature, but...**

### **What is Wisdom?**

- NIV Application Commentary - "Wisdom" in its most general meaning is the acquired learning that helps one know what to do in a given situation.
- "The ability to live life skillfully." — Dr. Charles Stanley
- Reference "Foolishness of Wisdom" sermon from Ecclesiastes – Unsatisfied Series (3/7/21)
  - Godly wisdom vs. Earthly Wisdom
    - Earthly wisdom has some value but is ultimately unsatisfying
  - Definition of Wisdom: Living life according to the truth of God
- **Proverbs 9:10 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.**
- **Proverbs 1:7 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.**

### **Read Proverbs 4:1-9**

### **Background**

- David and Solomon

- 1 Kings 2:1-4 -- When David's time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon his son, saying, <sup>2</sup> “I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a man, <sup>3</sup> and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, <sup>4</sup> that the Lord may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack<sup>[a]</sup> a man on the throne of Israel.’
- 1 Kings 2:12 -- So Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingdom was firmly established.

- Solomon’s Prayer for Wisdom

- 1 Kings 3: 3-12 -- Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. <sup>4</sup> And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. <sup>5</sup> At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” <sup>6</sup> And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. <sup>7</sup> And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. <sup>8</sup> And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. <sup>9</sup> Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?” <sup>10</sup> It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. <sup>11</sup> And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, <sup>12</sup> behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.

## Main Idea

Fathers are to get wisdom and teach wisdom, in hopes that their children get wisdom and teach wisdom. (TLC Core Value: We are disciples who make other disciples)

**\*\* Remember that observing universal truths in these proverbs \*\***

**\*\* Also, since wisdom literature is to be reflected upon and pondered, we'll consider some questions \*\***

### **(Verses 1-4)**

#### **1. Fathers are to teach wisdom to their children and the home is the primary arena for it**

- “Hear O Sons” = Solomon is desperately trying to impart wisdom to his son, despite not always adhering to his own counsel – Most of us can relate to that plea
- **Question: Are you calling for your children’s attention?**
  - Doesn’t say “Listen to your Momma” – many guys leave the teaching/training to the Mom – **“Hear, O sons, a father’s instruction, and be attentive”**
- Everywhere and everything else is supplemental to the home
  - **For I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching**
- **You can only teach what you have (Jimmy: You can’t give what you don’t have)**
  - **Question: Do you currently have wisdom?**
    - Remember definition: Living life according to the truth of God
    - More than knowledge – It’s applied knowledge
    - Advice from friends:
      - **Broke friend giving you financial tips**
      - **Friend with multiple jacked up relationships giving you relationship advice**
      - **Fitness advice from guys at the gym**
- How did Solomon get wisdom?

- Foundation was laid by David's exhortation and instruction (quoted in Proverbs 4)
- He asked (1 Kings 3)
- How do we get wisdom?
  - We ask -- **James 1:5 - <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.**
  - One of my "go to" verses as a leader of the home and church

## 2. Teaching our children to "get wisdom" is ultimately pointing them to Jesus (Verse 5,7)

- Remember:
  - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 9:10)
  - Reverent fear of God leads us to see ourselves for who we are in our sinful state
  - That shows us our need for a Savior
- Wisdom is ultimately found in Jesus
  - Jimmy: "God's wisdom is not discovered but revealed in the person of Jesus Christ."
  - **Colossians 2:1-3 - For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, <sup>2</sup> that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, <sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**
  - **1 Corinthians 1:30 - And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God...**
  - **Matthew 12:42 - The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.**
- "Get wisdom" – At all costs or whatever the costs!

### 3. Fathers can either continue a legacy or begin a legacy of teaching wisdom (Verse 3-4)

- Once again, some could say and some couldn't, "When I was a son with my father...he taught me and said to me,"
- Solomon was passing down what he was given
  - East TN: "This is what Papaw David said..."
- That's the opportunity that exists!
  - I want Uriah to be able to say, "I'm going to do this as a Dad, because that's how my Dad taught me."

### 4. Wisdom produces character that becomes evident and recognizable

- "Prize her highly"
  - Personified as a female throughout Proverbs, including this passage
  - Contrast of "Woman Wisdom" and "Woman Folly"
  - Sons: Before you try to go after a girl, you better get wisdom!
- "Garland on the head" or "beautiful crown" denote "Honor"
  - We teach with our lives and our words
  - e.g. Children are more likely to ask for forgiveness when they see it modeled
  - Do you model what you're teaching?

### Conclusion

- Challenge – Step up and take the lead teaching wisdom in your home
- Comfort – You can start a new legacy
- Convict – You need Jesus above all else. Wisdom flows through Him.

### Prayer over Dads

- Colossians 1:9-14 -- <sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to

him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; <sup>12</sup> giving thanks<sup>[d]</sup> to the Father, who has qualified you<sup>[e]</sup> to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

- Encouragement: Make it a habit of reading daily the Proverb to align with the day of the month