

Proverbs - Chapter 3

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In chapter 3, Solomon lays further groundwork for the teachings of Proverbs by showing just how valuable wisdom can be.

I found the chart below indicating 12 significant people in the Bible that were known as "wise". They can prove to be helpful role models for us as we seek God's wisdom.

The Person	Their Role	Reference	How They Practiced Wisdom
Joseph	Wise Leader	Acts 7:10	Prepared for a major famine; helped to rule Egypt
Moses	Wise Leader	Acts 7:20-22	Learned all the Egyptian wisdom, they graduated to God's lessons in wisdom and led Israel out of Egypt
Bezaleel	Wise Artist	Exodus 31:1-5	Designed and supervised the construction of the Tabernacle and its utensils in the wilderness
Joshua	Wise Leader	Deuteronomy 34:9	Learned by observing Moses, obeyed God, and led the people into the Promised Land
David	Wise Leader	2 Samuel 14:20	Never let his failures keep him from the source of wisdom – reverence for God
Abigail	Wise Wife	1 Samuel 25:3	Managed her household well, in spite of a mean and dishonest husband
Solomon	Wise Leader	1 Kings 3:5-14; 4:29-34	Knew what to do, even though he often failed to put his wisdom into action

Daniel	Wise Counselor	Daniel 5:11-12	Known as a man in touch with God; a solver of complex problems with God's help
Wise Men	Wise Learners	Matthew 2:1-12	Not only received special knowledge of Jesus' birth, but checked it out personally
Stephen	Wise Leader	Acts 6:8-10	Organized the distribution of food to the Grecian widows; preached the Gospel to the Jews
Paul	Wise Messenger	2 Peter 3:15-16	Spent his life communicating God's love to whoever would listen
Jesus	Wise Youth Wise Savior Wisdom of God	Luke 2:40, 52 1 Corinthians 1:20-25	Not only lived a perfect life but died on the cross to save us and make God's wise plan of eternal life available to us

READ [Proverbs 3:v.1 – v.2](#)

v.1 – v.2 - Solomon begins this chapter by once again reiterating the importance of wisdom and the benefits wisdom can bring. He references "long life" which reminds me of one of the Ten Commandments referred to in Ephesians:

"Honor thy Father and Mother, which is the first commandment with promise. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." ([Ephesians 6:2 – 3](#))

READ [v.3 – v.4](#)

v.3 – v.4 – Two important character qualities are mercy and truthfulness. Both involve actions as well as attitudes.

A merciful person not only feels love, but they also act responsibly and faithfully. A truthful person not only believes the truth, they also have

their actions rooted in justice for others. Thoughts and words are not enough. Our actions reveal if we are truly merciful and truthful.

Jesus Himself spoke about these qualities. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, **“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”** ([Matthew 5:7](#)). In His darkest hour on earth, just before He was crucified, He actually prayed for his disciples saying, **“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth.”** ([John 17:17](#)).

The Apostle Peter goes on to say that obedience to the truth of God brings about love among each other. **“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”** ([1 Peter 1:22](#)).

Love and mercy are two of the most important character traits we can ever possess – and they should go hand in hand.

READ [v.5 – v.6](#)

[v.5 – v.6](#) – Did you ever have an important decision to make where you felt you could trust no one – maybe not even God? We forget that God is the one who knows what is best for us. He’s a better judge of what is best for us than we are. We must learn to trust Him completely in EVERY choice we make. When should think carefully about decisions we have to make and use our ability to reason (“common horse sense”). But we should not trust our own ideas at the expense of ignoring God’s leading. We should always be willing to listen and to be corrected by God’s Word and His counsel. We need to bring all of our decisions before God in prayer, use the Bible as our guide, and then follow God’s leading.

Leaving Oak Grove and accepting Powhatan

“And that from a child, thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” ([2 Timothy 3:15](#))

To receive God’s guidance, Solomon states that we must acknowledge God in all we do. When Jesus came, He reiterated this fact. **“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”** ([Matthew 6:33](#))

Think about your values and priorities. What is most important to you? Where is God on that list? If we make Him a vital part of all we do, then He will guide us because we will be working to accomplish His purpose, not just our own.

READ [v.7 – v.10](#)

v.7 – v.10 – Again, Solomon states we should not trust our own instincts, but rather lean on the Lord. He tells us this will benefit us both in body and in spirit.

He then gets into giving back to God in v. 9 and v.10. Many people give God their leftovers. If they can afford to donate anything, they do. Although these people may be sincere and contribute willingly, their attitude is somewhat backwards. It is better to give God the first part of all we have. This includes not just our finances, but our time, our talents, and our resources. That, in and of itself, demonstrates that God, not the possessions that He has blessed us with, has first place in our lives, and that our resources belong to Him. We are just managers of what He has entrusted to us. Giving of ourselves to God helps us conquer greed, helps us properly manage God's resources, and opens us up to God's special blessings. You cannot outgive God.

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” ([Malachi 3:18](#)) – *Mrs. Joyce Blinson's favorite verse*

READ [v.11 – v.12](#)

v.11 – v.12 – When you raise a child, for example, you love them, provide for them, and when necessary, you discipline them. Correction is a vital part of discipline. To discipline means “to teach and to train”. Discipline sounds negative to most people because many times discipline is done without any love involved – and it shouldn't be as such.

Parents have long told children that discipline “hurts me more than it does you”. I don't think there is a kid alive that believed that when it was said to them, but as they grew older and wiser, they realized their parents really did have their best interests at heart.

We must remember that the source of love is God. He doesn't punish us because He doesn't love us, but because He is genuinely concerned about our Christian development – and occasionally, correction and discipline is needed (just as it was for the Children of Israel, God's chosen people). He knows that to become morally strong and good in our Christian lives, we must learn the difference between right and wrong. His discipline, given to us with love, helps us to do just that.

It may be difficult sometimes for us to know when God has been discipling us until we look back at the situation some time later. Not every bad situation we encounter comes from God. But if we rebel against God, and refuse to repent when His Holy Spirit has helped us to identify some sin in our lives, God may use guilt, crises, or some bad experience to bring us back to him. Sometimes, difficult times come our way when we are trying to live a Godly life and have not rebelled against God. It is in those times that we need to have patience, integrity, and trust that God will show us what to do.

READ [v.13 – v.15](#)

v.13 – v.15 – Did you ever see successful people in business or sports and wonder how they became that successful? Some of it may be sheer natural ability, but most of it comes through hard work and consistent discipline. Business people constantly try to further their education and involve themselves in various organizations to remain current on the trends in the marketplace to help them make better decisions. Athletes constantly train in the gym and maintain a strict diet to ensure they are at a level capable of high performance.

The life of a Christian should be much the same. It is work being a Christian and serving God – but anything worthwhile involves hard work. Being a Christian is not a shortcut to an easy life. In fact, it probably makes our life harder in many ways, as Satan works hard to pull us away from God.

"If you're not running into the devil, you're probably running with him."

When we search for wisdom, working hard at living a Godly life as He expects, we soon find that no amount of worldly success can compare with the joy of knowing God.

READ [v.16 – v.18](#)

[v.16 – v.18](#) - Proverbs has many strong statements about the benefits of wisdom including long life, wealth, honor, and peace. If we aren't experiencing these in our own life, does that mean that we are short on wisdom? I really don't think so.

Instead of guarantees, these statements are general principles that are meant to make us stop and think. In a perfect world, you would think that living out these behaviors on a daily basis would lead to all of these benefits in our lives. But, unfortunately, the world we live in is far from perfect. However, even in these troubled times we live in, we can be blessed by living a wise life – but not always.

Sometimes, sin gets in the way, and sometimes our blessings are delayed or withheld by God because He knows we are not ready to receive them. Never forget that He is the One who always knows what is best for us. That is why we “...**walk by faith, and not by sight...**” ([2 Corinthians 5:7](#)).

We can be assured; however, that wisdom ultimately leads to blessings, whether here on this earth or in our Heavenly home.

READ [v.19 – v.20](#)

[v.19 – v.20](#) – Solomon seems to pause here to once again bring to our attention what an awesome God we serve. He formed the earth, formed the heavens, made the oceans, and allows rain and dew to fall from the sky. Man can do none of this.

In essence, he is saying that even nature speaks about the wisdom of God.

When I flew in to Cleveland, OH and saw the Great Lakes for the first time, it was one of the most awe-inspiring sights I have ever seen. When you see the NC Mountains or the oceans off NC's Outer Banks, there is no way a rationale person could look at this and say there is no God.

READ [v.21 – v.26](#)

[v.21 – v.26](#) - In v. 21 and v.22, Solomon speaks about discretion. Discretion is the ability God gives to many people to think and to make correct choices. But there is a difference between wisdom and

discretion. Wisdom is given only to those who follow Him. Wisdom includes discretion, but it goes much further. It also includes the knowledge that comes from instruction, training, and discipline (as Solomon has mentioned already many times before). Wisdom also includes the knowledge that comes from discernment of God's will, and the insight that comes from knowing and applying God's truths to our daily lives.

The following 4 verses speak about the peace that God gives to all who live a life that is full of wisdom. He gives us safety, He gives us a sure path to walk on, He takes away our fear, He makes us to sleep soundly, and gives us confidence. In the times we live in (war, terrorism, economic collapse, unemployment, crime, etc.), it would be easy for us to give in. But Solomon reminds us that God is in control, and He cares for His own.

That's a comforting thought.

READ [v.27 – v.28](#)

v.27 – v.28 – It's really easy to get into debt, and harder to get out of it. Debts owed to friends can destroy trust and even divide best friends. Delaying payback, especially when you have it at hand, is not fair and puts the one to whom the debt is owed in a difficult position. Be as eager to repay those whom we owe as we were to get the loan in the first place.

READ [v.29](#)

v.29 – Jesus tells us, **"...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself..."** ([Matthew 19:19](#)).

We have neighbors all around us, many of whom we've never been to see, invited to church, or stopped by and offered help. Solomon tells us not to be evil to our neighbors. I am sure none of us have ever attempted to harm our neighbors. But if we are truly concerned about their soul, and we fail to tell them about Jesus, isn't that, in essence, what we're doing? We should have enough care about them as one of God's creation that, even if we feel uncomfortable witnessing to them about Christ, we at least invite them to a place where the Gospel can be shared.

Never forget – YOU may be the one God will use to bring that neighbor to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

READ [v.30 – v.35](#)

[v.30 – v.35](#) – My Mom used to use the phrase “pass and repass” for the way she dealt with people that just didn’t seem to be able to get along with anyone. But this section seems to imply that there is a time for fighting. There are times when you must stand up for what you believe, even if you stand alone. Injustice, evil, and sin must be confronted whenever it shows up.

What we don’t need to do is waste time and energy on needless fights, matters that are trivial, or things that may inconvenience us personally. The real battles that we will encounter in our lives will be against sin and the enemies of the God we serve.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” ([Ephesians 6:12](#)).

Opposition to Christ is where the real battle lines are drawn. And we must be prepared to defend our faith, now more than ever.