

Paths of Life

Proverbs 4:1-27

4:1-27

Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching. When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will keep you; love her, and she will guard you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a graceful garland; she will bestow on you a beautiful crown." Hear, my son, and accept my words, that the years of your life may be many. I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness. When you walk, your step will not be hampered, and if you run, you will not stumble. Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; guard her, for she is your life. Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil. Avoid it; do not go on it; turn away from it and pass on. For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong; they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble. For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day. The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know over what they stumble. My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you. Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure. Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.

At TED, brilliance is rampant!
The good news is that you don't
need to be brilliant to be wise.
The bad news is that without
wisdom, brilliance isn't enough.
[Brilliance] is likely to get you
and other people into as much
trouble as anything else.”

-Barry Schwarts: Our Loss of Wisdom
(TED Talk)

**Wisdom is doing
the right thing at
the right time in
the right way. It is
knowing how, why
and when.**

**Wisdom starts with a
decision (v. 1-9)**

**Wisdom leads to a path
(v. 10-19)**

**Wisdom flows from the
heart (v. 20-27)**

**The Beginning of
Wisdom:
Get Wisdom.**

MAKE A DECISION!

**Wisdom requires a
decision**

**Though it costs you
all that you have...**

**Choosing wisdom will
cost us everything
else that has been the
object of the good life
we are seeking.**

“I am progressing along the path of life in my ordinary contentedly fallen and godless condition, absorbed in a merry meeting with my friends for the morrow or a bit of work that tickles my vanity today, a holiday or a new book, when suddenly a stab of abdominal pain that threatens serious disease, or a headline in the newspapers that threatens us all with destruction, sends this whole pack of cards tumbling down. At first I am overwhelmed, and all my little happinesses look like broken toys. Then, slowly and reluctantly, bit by bit, I try to bring myself into the frame of mind that I should be in at all times. I remind myself that all these toys were never intended to possess my heart, that my true good is in another world, and my only real treasure is Christ. And perhaps, by God's grace, I succeed, and for a day or two become a creature consciously dependent on God and drawing its strength from the right sources.” – C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

**Wisdom leads to a
path.**

Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evildoers; avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way. For they cannot rest until they do evil; they are robbed of sleep till they make someone stumble. They eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence. - Proverbs 4:14-17

**For they cannot rest
until they do evil; they
are robbed of sleep till
they make someone
stumble.**

**...the way of the
wicked is like deep
darkness; they do not
know what makes
them stumble.**

-Proverbs 4:19

**The path of the
righteous is like the
morning sun, shining
brighter till the full
light of day.**

-Proverbs 4:18

Jesus says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”

-John 14:6

Are you tired?

Jesus says, “Come to me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

-Matthew 11:28

Are you lost?

**Jesus says, “I am the
good shepherd; the
good shepherd lays
down his life for the
sheep.”**

-John 10:11

Are you thirsty?

Jesus says, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scriptures has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

-John 7:37-38

Wisdom flows from the heart.

Above all else, guard your heart for everything you do flows from it.

-Proverbs 4:23

**Life doesn't flow from
the outside in, it flows
from the inside out.**

Our character, the development of wisdom, is made and formed by each little step, not major shifts.

**A long obedience in
the same direction**