

On Father's Day
Proverbs 1-3
June 16, 2019 (Father's Day)

1:7-9 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

⁸ *H*ear, my son, your father's instruction,
and forsake not your mother's teaching,
⁹ for they are *a* graceful garland for your head
and *k*pendants for your neck.

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

1:15-16 my son, *a*do not walk in the way with them;
*r*hold back your foot from their paths,
¹⁶ for *s*their feet run to evil,
and they make haste to shed blood.

2:1-5 My son, *u*if you receive my words
and treasure up my commandments with you,
² making your ear attentive to wisdom
and inclining your heart to understanding;
³ yes, if you call out for insight
and raise your voice *w*for understanding,
⁴ if you seek it like *x*silver
and search for it as for *y*hidden treasures,
⁵ then *z*you will understand the fear of the LORD
and find the knowledge of God.

3:1-8, 11-12

My son, do not forget my teaching,
*z*but let your heart keep my commandments,
² for *a*length of days and years of life
and *b*peace they will add to you.
³ Let not *c*steadfast love and *d*faithfulness forsake you;
*e*bind them around your neck;
*f*write them on the tablet of your heart.
⁴ So you will *g*find favor and *h*good success
in the sight of God and man.

⁵ *i*Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and *j*do not lean on your own understanding.

⁶ In all your ways *k*acknowledge him,
and he *l*will make straight your paths.

⁷ *m*Be not wise in your own eyes;
*n*fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

It will be *o*healing to your flesh²
and *p*refreshment³ to your bones.

¹¹ My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
¹² for the LORD reproves him whom he loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights.

Main Point: These proverbs are written from a father to his children. There are promises and warnings and more promises and warnings. A father shares life with his children out of his own experiences. A Christian father is helped by remembering that he is first a child, himself a son of God. Out of that dependence, a father is able to be a life-giving presence to his household, and to his world.

SI: Proverbs filled with contrasts and comparisons. The nature of Hebrew poetry to do this. Repetition. Seemingly saying the same thing over and over again.
Holding up a treasure, a beautiful thing. Let's look at it, marvel at it. It's wisdom.
Fathers are givers of wisdom.

Focus on the "My son..." passages. Each section starts with 'My son'

"My son" is saying something – saying that I am taking up this opportunity to teach, to offer, to give, to present. You came from me, you live with me, you are part of me and what has been given to me. I have a vested interest in your development.
Reminder of who you are as a father. Not what you do, but who you are, what you have been given, and what you have to give.

So Solomon gives his sons here these promises and these warnings:
Read and pray.

Intro: ILLUS > Recently went backpacking with my son. Learning how to tie a knot to a tree and hang up a hammock. Ever had to go through a lesson over and over again?

How many things do we learn once and then never need to learn again?

Look how much Solomon devotes to this... over and over the same theme, and again, and again. Nature of Hebrew poetry, yes, but more than that. It is a bombardment. Thorough, complete, persistent, consistent, just overwhelm me with truth telling.

2:1 Fatherhood is about offering. Assertive, aggressive, opportunistic, warrior training. Giving a taste of something good. A taste that is offered.

Fatherhood is about the big stuff, first. The big rocks first. This is what Solomon is doing here – do you see this? Principles, overarching truths, big picture stuff.

Some men, some fathers are stunted bc the big rocks weren't big.

So many fathers need to know, receive, believe, absorb, soak in the huge pool of God's love, His Father Love.

You are His. He is Yours. His Father Love is your only hope.

These words are from Solomon, but they are from the Father. He is the Author. He is Pleading with you intimately, gently, strongly, firmly, resolutely.

3 big rocks, big picture qualities of fatherhood:

1A Father is a Dependent Child

1:1 > Solomon writing as a king, but first as a son.

A Father is first a dependent child, a son himself who is dependent upon his Father in Heaven.

Some Dads are like 12 year olds forever... and this is good to be fun-loving and goofy with your kids. I love embarrassing my kids... the eye-rolls are happening right now...

Solomon is a dependent child, but he's not child-ish, living only in the moment. He's paying it forward.

Solomon offering up what he has received from his father, and not just David, but his Father in Heaven so that he gives his children the repetitive wisdom: the **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of knowledge. 3 times (1:7, 2:5, 3:7)

All of this has come from the beginning. **The fear of the Lord.**

To fear the Lord is to revere the Lord.

Fear of the Lord is off-putting phrasing. It is difficult to translate into English and into heart-level receptivity channel English, English that I want to take in.

What does fear of the Lord really mean?

I know, son, daughter, this is hard to get – so let's look – look at 3:5-6.

Trust.

Lean in.

Regard.

Pay attention to. Because He is good and does good. My soul rests in Him for

He has made me His child. And I want the same for you, my son, my daughter.

It has to begin at the level of motivation. Why you do what you do. I do what I do because I fear the Lord. I am a child, a son, with a Father who sees me, loves me, cares for me, provides for me, protects me, infinitely more than I am able to do those things for you. And I want to honor Him, trust Him, lean into Him, listen to Him.

This isn't me... it's God through me...

I have to seek wisdom for how to lead this family...

I need God as much as you do, and really more than you do b/c I have greater responsibility.

ILLUS of me as a new father... no idea really what to do... couldn't ask my father... read up on it... ok, now I know! Ha!

Dads: stay a child – dependent, reliant, asking for help -- takes the pressure off of being a great Dad, being controlling or permissive!

One Application> Read the instructions to the lego set. Step by step doing it right the first time is much better than having to tear it apart and start over b/c you didn't read the directions first. You are the model.

Trans to 2:

How can I do this? This sounds like a lot of responsibility.

Watch out for Americanized individualistic idolatry of self-made hero Dadness!

That is a good path to isolation and to failure >

2A Father is a Team Leader

1:8-9 > So right off, Solomon brings his son up with respect for his mother.

Dads are team leaders, head coaches, With wife

Together

Loving your mother

Team direction as a team, not individuals, but a unit of unity

Let's do this together, kids, let's enjoy being children of God, sons of God together!

We are all going in the same direction. Led by me, the father.

The responsibility...Wives give this to their husbands – the responsibility for the direction of the family... call it out because it is in there. Wives – emphasize the positive... see the good and call out more of that...

Trans to 3 (which is main portion of sermon)

As a dependent child, and a team leader, what does a father do?

He serves with loving sacrifice as a benevolent servant king.

3A Father is a Benevolent Servant-King

Solomon writing as a king. As a servant-king. Eager to give what he has been given. This wisdom is not just for him and the expansion of his own personal kingdom. It is for sacrificially loving, serving, equipping, enabling the future.

And if you fathers could just see what power you have for good!

Giving what has been given

Fathers, this is where your power is found. In your receiving what has been given to you and passing it on.

Take up what you have been given

*Be who you are in Christ... men who used to be dead but are now alive, with new hearts, with supernatural enabling grace inside of you by the Holy Spirit.

Then plead with your children. Appeal to their conscience. Appeal to their motivations. That's what King Solomon is doing here!

So for example: I know you think that multiple hours looking at a screen are what is going to bring you life... I have something greater for you than that in these 10 minutes of family devotions and its called the Fear of the Lord. (How come I haven't heard of that video game, Dad?).

Look at the **promises** you are giving your children >

1:9 > garland for your head, pendants for you neck. > symbols of honor and life > victory and vindication, power, prestige, and high status. Physical items pointing to victory and protection. A crown.

3:3-4 > The promises of steadfast love and faithfulness, so you will find favor and good success with God and man.

Echoes of Deut 5:33, where God reminds us that His law is for our good: "You shall walk in all the way that the lord your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess."

Not to mention the 5th of the 10 Commandments: "Honor your father and mother, that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you..."

The appeal here is to those of us who are fathers – we want our children to find favor and success!

Just go to a Little League baseball game and listen to the dads coaching and encouraging their sons! If you stay in the batters box, if you pay attention, if you watch closely, if you wait on the ball, if you stop playing in the dirt...

These really are the **promises of listening**. There is such good for you if you will lean in, take in, receive, tune your heart – cry out to the Lord to tune your heart to His channel more and more.

*... which leads to 3:11-12 – discipline... A father, because he loves his children,

takes up the hard calling of disciplining his children. Done in love, with patience, carefulness, and consistency – it promises to produce good fruit.

Fathers are like God in this – God does the same with his children – in whom He delights! B/c I delight in you, I'm not going to let you go your own way. That way is danger ahead. That's why I'm giving you all these word pictures.

Look at the **warnings** you are giving your children >
1:10, 15-16 > resist the gang, peer pressure... here is what they are going to talk about, here's what they are going to present to you – get rich quick scheme

And here's why it's going to be appealing, enticing, tempting: they are your peers. They say 'let us, we, us' as if you are already in with them. Watch out. If everyone is doing it, look a little closer before you join in. Their wisdom is worldly wisdom that sounds good at first, but is based on fearlessness b/c there is no God who upholds justice.

I want you to succeed, son, daughter. I want you to find life, so I am telling you like it is out there beyond my protective covering.

3:7 > watch out for being an individualist know it all. Solomon later writes in Prov 26:12 > "Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him." Instead, fear the Lord.

Conc: 1 Kings 10 > Story of the Queen of the South who brought to Solomon bookloads of gifts seeking to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and she did.

In Luke 11:31, Jesus says, behold, something greater than Solomon is here. What is He saying? That He is wisdom. And if you seek Him, you will find success, peace, rest, and every good gift. Every father longs for those things for his children. They are found in Christ alone.

Because what else is found in Christ alone is forgiveness. This is a hard sermon for me to preach b/c I am good at rehearsing my failures. But we find our strength renewed, and our listening empowered by the shocking scandal of grace that Christ earned for us. That grace is what forgives all of my failures, all of your failures.

*And that might just be what children most need to see... their father fail... and run to Jesus for His cleansing blood. B/c a cynical person could hear all of Solomon's wisdom and remark – yeah, but he didn't even listen to his own words!

He ended up going with the crowd, marrying 1000 women, and seeing his heart go astray from the Lord.

The ultimate example of the lie of 'do as I say, not as I do.'

Don't do that to yourself, to your church, or to your children. Take up the promise of forgiveness that Jesus has earned for you and model that above everything else. For that is wisdom that will last... and never forsake you... for it will last into eternity...

