

The Effects of Wisdom: Preservation and Deliverance

Getting focused

Some very profound revelations are made in this chapter concerning the function or role that wisdom will play in our lives. The priority and supremacy of obtaining wisdom is expressed by the statement, “wisdom is the principal thing.” As we have observed in previous lessons, the purpose of wisdom is to enable us to avoid making foolish decisions before we actually experience them. This leads the inspired writer to teach us the importance of putting first things first.

As we turn to God for wisdom He will return to us many blessings. Many of these blessings are discussed now. It is important in this stage of our study that we fully recognize the effect and blessings we receive from taking God at His word.

First things first—listen, learn, and live

Read Proverbs 4:1-9

The repeated admonition, “hear my children,” is given as the introduction to the ensuing instructions. This admonition is given again in verses 20-22. The motivation for laying hold of wisdom is seen in the positive results she brings.

- **Love her**, she will preserve and keep.
- **Exalt her**, she will promote, honor, graciously adorn, and deliver.

The instruction we receive from God must be given a preeminent place in our heart. If we think highly of or love someone, we find ourselves thinking of them often. This must be our attitude toward the instructions given by God through His word.

Learning from the past clears the path to the future

Read Proverbs 4:10-13

Verse 11 speaks of the instructions that have been given in days gone by. It is because of this the future looks bright

“Wisdom is the **principal** thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.”

- Proverbs 4:7

Memorize and meditate

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.”

- Proverbs 4:23

and unimpeded. The essence of the future is based upon our holding to instruction.

Through applying wisdom, our lives will not be cut short due to foolish decisions or careless activities.

The blinding effects of darkness

Read Proverbs 4:14-19

In contrast to the sweet sleep discussed in Proverbs 3:24, wickedness obstructs rest. Also depicted in this text is the consuming effect of evil. Consider Jesus' description of those who follow Him in Matthew 5:14—“Those who walk in the light are as a city set on a hill, whose light cannot be hid”—in contrast to the wicked, stumbling in darkness all the days of their life. Though they may find temporary joy, when they look to the future there is nothing there!

Pursuits in life begin from within

Read Proverbs 4:20-27

Our heart involves our intellect, emotion, and volition. The attributes of the spiritual heart are utilized for thought (23:7), meditation (19:14), reason (Mark 2:6, 8), understanding (Matthew 13:15), and serving (Deuteronomy 10:12). The emotional aspect is exercised in love (Matthew 13:15) and sorrow (Romans 9:2). It is through our personal examination of our own actions that we know our heart (1 John 3:19-21).

The condition of your heart will determine the wisdom of your walk in life. The parable of the sower illustrates perfectly who will retain wisdom and honor (Luke 8:11-18).

What we say is a reflection of what is in our heart. To control the tongue is to begin to gain control of the heart (Matthew 15:18; James 3).

We must look straight ahead and remain focused. It is essential that we consider the direction we are heading today. We can and must know we are walking in the light of truth. If we are not, we must respond by moving into the light.

Questions to consider

1. Explain how wisdom can preserve or extend your life. _____

2. How are honor and grace created by wisdom? _____

3. What is the relationship between what we say and what is in our heart? _____
