

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

FATHERLY TALK ABOUT THE FATHER, PROVERBS 3:1-12

A. Introduction

1. This is one of the “Fatherly Talks” in Proverbs
2. Basic Pattern
 - a. Appeal
 - b. Virtue of wisdom
 - c. Main theme
 - d. Destiny of the foolish

B. Examination of Proverbs 3:1-12

1. Appeal - from a father (1-2), ***My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.***
 - a. Remember and obey parental instructions
 - b. Such a life will be long and fruitful (peaceful).
2. Virtue of wisdom - commendation (3-4), ***Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man.***
 - a. Covenant relationship is built on love and faithfulness (3).
 - b. Such a life will be commended by God and man (4).
 - c. Chrysostom, *There is nothing that brings us as near to God and makes us so much like Him as doing these good things - showing gentleness to those who offend and wrong us.*
3. Main theme - What does it mean to love God? (5-10)
 - a. Trust Him (5-6), ***Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.***
 - 1) God demands our complete trust (5).
 - 2) He will smooth out the rough paths in our lives (6).
 - 3) David Atkinson, *the believer is being encouraged to trust in the Lord even when things are unclear, and to lean not on your own understanding, even when we think we know best. For the God who holds the future can see further than we can, and His covenanted love is promised as a deeper security than anything our dimmer understanding can comprehend or our straining eyes can glimpse.*
 - b. Fear Him (7-8), ***Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.***
 - 1) Wisdom demands that we not think more highly of ourselves than we should (7a).
 - 2) A holy fear of God will keep us on the right path (7b).
 - 3) Augustine, *God has given us free will, but we must exercise it by choosing to keep God’s commandments*
 - 4) It promotes physical, emotional and spiritual health (8).
 - a) It is not a guarantee of physical health.
 - b) It is a commendation of a lifestyle centered on God.

c) From a daily devotional,

*If I had my life to live over, I'd pick more daisies.
I would take more trips and travel lighter.
I would take more chances.
I would eat more ice cream and less beets.
I would have more actual troubles and fewer imaginary ones.*

*If I had my life to live over,
I would try to be more in touch with God and those I love.
I would pray aloud more and not care what people think or expect of me.
Yes, I would pick more daisies next time.*

c. Honor Him (9-10), ***Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.***

- 1) Our trust in God demands stewardship (9)
- 2) He blesses those who handle His resources wisely (10).
- 3) Venerable Bede, *We do not honor the Lord by our good works if we attribute them to our merits rather than to God's grace.*

d. Accept His discipline (11-12), ***then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline or be weary of his reproof,***

- 1) Be willing to learn through discipline, note Hebrews 12:3-11.
- 2) God's discipline is selective - Jerome, *The father schools only him whom he loves.*
- 3) Clement of Alexandria, *The Lord gently admonishes His children, not as a teacher speaking to his students, not as a master to his servants, but as a Father to His children.*
- 4) All difficulties for believers are not corrective measures from God.

CONCLUSION

A. Are you ready to pick more daisies. There is no next time but there is this time.

B. Pursue the covenant relationship with your God.

1. Trust Him.
2. Fear Him.
3. Honor Him.
4. Accept His discipline.

C. The pursuit of wisdom is not an intellectual exercise but the development of a covenant love relationship with God.