

Insights for Life – Right Paths

6 November 2022 PM – Proverbs 4:10-13 – Insights – Scott Childs

Introduction: Jim and Jan were hiking in the bush. At first, the path was easy to follow. After some time, they came to a fork in the road. They were not expecting that and did not know which way to go. They finally decided to follow the path to the right, but after several minutes of walking, the path disappeared. They tried to retrace their steps, but could not find the path. They were lost. That is a terrible feeling. The same thing happens to people who do not follow the right path in life.

Transition: Read Proverbs 4:10-13. These verses give us **several insights** about life's right paths that we desperately need to take to heart.

1. These verses give insights to parents

The Lord had Solomon mention four things that parents must give to their children before they leave home.

a. Parents must communicate words (v.10)

- 1) Solomon calls these words his **sayings**. These included his comments, his counsel, his promises and his commands.
- 2) In general, a parent's sayings are his **daily conversations**. There are no substitutes for good communication with our children as they grow up.
- 3) When our children say silly things, ask foolish questions, or ask "Why?" (in a non-rebellious way) when we give them a command, we must respond prayerfully. We need God's wisdom. We want them to know they can talk to us about anything. If they do not sense this, they will not talk to us when they need counsel. Instead, they will talk to their peers. (cf., That was Rehoboam's mistake).

b. Parents must teach wisdom (v.11)

- 1) The word **taught** literally means to throw or to shoot an arrow.
- 2) As parents, we must shoot our children in the right direction. They need to know that we have been down the road before and that we can safely direct them.
- 3) Solomon taught his son wisdom. Obviously, you cannot teach something you do not understand. You need to get

c. Obedient children will know right paths

- 1) Some paths are so seldom travelled that they are very hard to detect, and it is easy to get lost. However, the path Solomon is describing was a trench. It is a well-worn road with ruts in it that you could not possibly miss.
- 2) Not only were these paths rutted and obvious, but they were right or righteous paths. Many paths along life's road that are not right. They will lead you astray. The path of evolution is a popular, yet wrong path. The path of children's rights is another popular, but dangerous path. The devil has many secret paths like the path of pornography, and the path of sex outside of marriage. Those wrong paths will ruin your life.
- 3) Follow the well-rutted, right, Bible path taught by your parents.

d. Obedient children will enjoy carefree steps

- 1) If you follow the right paths, your steps will **not be straightened**.
- 2) That means your steps will be carefree steps that are not hindered by the burdens of sin.

e. Obedient children will gain stability

- 1) You will not **stumble** on life's road. We have all tripped and fallen on our face. That is not an enjoyable experience, is it?
- 2) If you follow the good paths, God will give your life stability.

f. Obedient children will receive life

- 1) The warnings in these verses, if followed, will lead to a better physical life and direct you to an eternal spiritual life.
- 2) These insights give life.

Conclusion: We have looked at several insights about right paths in life. God directed some to **parents**, others to **children**, and some describe the **benefits** of obedience. Will you take these insights to heart and let them guide your life? Review main and sub points.

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wisdom from God. Last week we talked a lot about wisdom when we looked at Pop's Pointers. If you missed that sermon, please take the time to listen to it.

c. Parents must exemplify leadership (v.11)

- 1) Solomon said that he had **led** his son in right paths.
- 2) To lead is to exemplify leadership. Good leaders lead by example and inspire others to follow them.

d. Parents must give instruction (v.13)

- 1) The word **instruction**, speaks of chastening, reproof, warning, or restraint.
- 2) While this is not enjoyable for parents or children, it is essential. Without this biblical instruction a parent's words, teachings and leadership will have minimal effect on the child's conduct. (Jeremiah 17:9) "**The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?**" (Proverbs 22:15) "**Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.**"

2. These verses give insights to children

God also had Solomon address the children's duties while at home.

a. Children must hear

- 1) This word does not simply mean to **hear** a sound in the ear, but to hear and obey.
- 2) Solomon gave it to his son as a command.

b. Children must receive

- 1) Not only must children hear what their parents say, they must also **receive** it. The primary meaning here is to take to heart what was said. It is accepting that your parent is right.
- 2) A father told his rebellious little boy to sit down. Reluctantly, the boy obeyed, but then he rebelliously said, "**I am sitting down on the outside, but standing up on the inside.**" That kind of obedience is **not** receiving your parent's words.

c. Children must take fast hold of instruction

- 1) To **take fast hold** means to hang on tightly or to retain it.
- 2) Solomon commanded his son to hold tightly his

instruction. Remember that this instruction is warnings and restraints from your parents enforced with discipline. The sooner you learn to hold such warnings tightly and to heed them, the sooner you will enjoy a happy life.

d. Children must not let instruction go

- 1) Why did God have Solomon add the words **let her not go**? God does not want you as a child to abandon those warnings. Do not relax your diligence in following them. Do not forsake one of them.
- 2) God knows the weakness and the tendency of your sinful heart.

e. Children must keep instruction

- 1) To **keep** something means to guard it safely.
- 2) We have security doors and locks on our houses to keep our possessions inside safe from thieves. God wants you to have a security door on your heart so that your sinful flesh, bad friends, unbiblical philosophies and the devil himself cannot steal the warnings given by your parents.

These verses give insight to parents and children, in addition ...

3. These verses give insights regarding the benefits

The Lord had Solomon include several benefits that would follow if parents taught right and children did right.

a. Obedient children will receive long life

- 1) Disobeying these insights from God will shorten your life. Sin has shortened the lives of many people through drug overdoses, sexual disease, suicide, drunken accidents, etc.
- 2) Obeying God's insights will allow you to live your life to the full.

b. Obedient children will receive wisdom

- 1) In last week's sermon (Pr 4:3-9), Solomon emphasised our great need for God's wisdom and her many benefits. I urge you to review that sermon again.
- 2) Your parents desire to teach you in the way of wisdom. If you follow their words, teachings, leadership and warnings, they will lead you to wisdom. Wisdom will give you the God-given ability to make right decisions in life.