

PROVERBS 3 TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART!

This chapter is one of the most excellent in the whole Book – both for reasons to persuade us to be religious, and also for directions therein. In the first six verses, we learn that we must have a continual regard to God’s Providence; we must acknowledge and depend upon it in all our affairs – both by faith and prayer. By faith, we must repose an entire confidence in the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Lord – assuring ourselves of the extent of His Providence over all His creatures and all their actions. We must, therefore, trust in the Lord with all our hearts; we must believe that He is able to do what He wishes, wise to do what is best, and good (according to His promise) to do what is best for us if we love Him and serve Him. It is unwise to lean to our own understanding, as if we could – by any forecast of our own, and without God – help ourselves and bring our affairs to a good outcome. But we must also depend upon the Lord’s Providence by prayer (verse 6): “In all thy ways acknowledge God!” It is good for us to ask His advice and beg direction from Him – not only when the case is difficult, and we do not know what to do; but even in every case, although it may appear plain and easy. And for our encouragement to do this, it is promised that “he shall direct thy paths” – so that our way may be safe and good, and the outcome may be happy at last. Those who put themselves under Divine guidance shall always have the benefit of it. God will give them that wisdom which is profitable to direct them, so that they shall not turn aside into the by-paths of sin. Those who faithfully follow the pillar of cloud and fire shall find that although it may lead them through the wilderness, it leads them through the right way; and it will bring them to the heavenly Promised Land at last!

If the Lord visits us with trials and sickness, let us not forget that such exhortations speak to us as to children, for our own good. We must not faint under affliction, although it may be heavy and long; nor must we be driven to despair, or to use wrong means for relief. The father corrects the child whom he loves, *because he loves him*; and he desires that his beloved child may be wise and good. Afflictions are so far from doing God’s children any hurt, that rather – by the grace of God – they promote their holiness. The Apostle quotes this passage in his Epistle to the Hebrews, and he makes a beautiful comment upon it (Heb. 12:5-11). It is blessed to be patient and submissive under chastisements – not receiving them with sullenness, for this would reveal a rebellious mind; nor to sink or faint under them, for this would imply unbelief and distrust (as if the Lord had forgotten to be gracious). Let us pray for grace to patiently receive all of the chastisements of our kind and wise Father – Who cannot make a mis-

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ Exhortations to obedience, faith, and submission under chastening – verses 1-12
- ❖ Exhortations to gain Wisdom, and the blessing of being led by her – verses 13-26
- ❖ Exhortations against strife, and encouragement to humility – verses 27-35

take regarding the well-being of His children, and Who is ordering all things for their good. Jesus has said, “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten” (Rev. 3:19). They are *chastisements*, not vindictive *punishments* or *judgments*; for those have been placed upon Christ. They are only intended for *correction*, in order to accomplish many blessed purposes in grace. What a sweet thought, which ought to be always kept alive in our hearts!

No precious jewels or earthly treasures are worthy to be compared with true Wisdom! We must make wisdom our business. We must venture all to obtain it, and we must be willing to part with all for it! This Wisdom is the Lord Jesus and His salvation, which are sought and obtained by faith and prayer. If it were not for our unbelief, sinfulness, and carelessness, we would find that all of our ways would be pleasantness and peace – for that is how Christ’s ways are. But too often, we step aside from His paths, to our own hurt and grief.

Without question, the attainment of Christ and all His blessings must be the summit of happiness! And it is delightful to see, in this chapter, how sweet the correspondence is between what is here said of finding wisdom, and what the Gospel speaks of finding the Savior. “We have found him,” said Philip, when he had made this discovery, “of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth!” (John 1:45) He is the goodly pearl, for which the wise merchant searched long and hard; and when it was found, he sold all that he had and bought it (Matt. 13:45-46). All other pursuits and attainments are found to never satisfy us; but to those who seek and find Him, Jesus gives durable riches and righteousness! (chapter 8:18-19) He is indeed the Tree of Life in the Paradise of God; and under His shadow, by faith, believers now sit and find the fruit sweet to their taste (Song of Sol. 2:3). And before long, they will sit down forever to enjoy the fullness of His presence by the river of life, in the Kingdom of glory! (Rev. 22:1-2).

Let us not allow Christ’s words to depart from us! Rather, may we keep sound wisdom and discretion, and then we shall walk safely in His ways. The natural life, and all that belongs to it, shall be under the protection of God’s Providence; and the spiritual life, and all its interests, shall be under the protection of His grace – and thereby, we shall be kept from falling into sin or trouble. By observing the precepts of Christ, and by imitating His example, it will come naturally to us to do justice, to love mercy, to beware of covetousness, and to avoid needless strife and quarrels. The wise truths found in these verses may be despised by the covetous and luxurious men of the world; but everlasting contempt will be the portion of such scorers, while Divine favor shall be shown to the humble believer.



Lord, may Your Holy Spirit impress upon our hearts to seek and find the One Who is Wisdom Himself, and to trust in Him with all our hearts! Amen.