Proverbs 4: Hear, O sons, The Instruction Of A Father Now.

How do children learn? When they are very small, they learn from their parents by watching and trying to do what parents do and say. So, parents are the first teachers. But that learning process continues throughout their young lives. They learn what “No” means, what they can, and cannot, do.

As they continue to mature, they learn about discipline. They learn that there are consequences when they do something wrong. Parents’ actions are very important as children grow into adulthood. Finally, those children grow into young men and young women, and they will be making their own decisions in life.

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When Solomon wrote the Book of Proverbs, especially ***Proverbs 1-9***, it seems like the person, or persons, he was writing to had reached that stage in life. In verses ***1***-9, Solomon wrote, *“Hear, O sons, the instruction of a father, and give attention that you may gain understanding, for I give you sound teaching; do not abandon my instruction.*

When I was a son to my father, tender and the only son in the sight of my mother, then he taught me and said to me, ‘Let your heart hold

fast my words; keep my commandments and live; acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding!

Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; and with all your acquiring, get understanding.

Prize her, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a garland of grace; She will present you with a crown of beauty.'"

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Solomon would have been referring to his father David and the teaching and guidance that he gave Solomon. Yes, God had given Solomon the wisdom to rule, but he still needed to follow God's Will in his life.

At first, he did serve the Lord faithfully, but later his heart was drawn away into pagan worship and idolatry. Intelligence, education, and worldly wisdom has never been a substitute for God's Will and teaching from His Word.

One of the common themes found in both the Old and New Testaments is that righteousness and life depend upon a person's desire to

gain knowledge of God's Will. A person must be receptive and must be willing to hear and submit to the Lord God's teaching in His Word.

Faithfulness and obedience to God's Will does not necessarily lead to a life of material wealth. Today, there are false teachers that proclaim that faith will lead to money and material success. As Paul stated in his letter to the Galatians, if anyone, even an angel, preaches a different gospel (which is no gospel at all!) let him be accursed!

God's promise is different. There are only two paths that a person can take. One is the path of Godly wisdom, and the other is the path of evil and sin. When a person learns and applies the principles of the Bible, especially the New Testament, to his/her life, then that person will gain so much. These include a good reputation for integrity, compassion, and honesty. Such a person will be held in high respect.

Advertisements

Proverbs 4: Hear, O sons, The Instruction Of A Father Now

One man served with distinction in World War II. When he returned, he worked in his community as a handy man his entire life. He would be called in to do small repair jobs for people and businesses. He never had a big business and lived modestly.

He was married and raised sons and daughters that were good people in their right. The town was small, but when he died, over 1,200 people attended his funeral. Why? Because he had lived a good and Godly life.

Solomon wrote in verses 10-13, *"Hear, my son, and accept my sayings and the years of your life will be many. I have directed you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in upright paths. When you walk, your steps will not be impeded; and if you run, you will not stumble. Take hold of instruction; do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life."* Life will still have troubles and trials, but a God directed life will miss so many of the obstacles in life.

But the other path leads into a very different direction. *"Do not enter the path of the wicked and do not proceed in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not pass by it; turn away from it and pass on. For they cannot sleep unless they do evil; and they are robbed of sleep unless they make someone stumble. For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence."*

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Yes, in some ways a person can demonstrate good qualities in life without following God's Will. A person can be honest, work hard, and build up a good reputation within a community. But without a solid foundation, all of that can be destroyed.

How many apparent “respectable” people have been found guilty of fraud, sexual immorality or deviancy, violence, or abuse of power? Without God, there is no hope, because when death comes, every person will face the Living and Eternal God.

Verse 19 states, *“The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.”*

The main purpose in a race is to focus on the goal. If a runner looks to the left or right, he/she will stumble. A runner must focus attention on the finish line. Today, that goal is the hope of eternal life that can be achieved through Jesus Christ.

But a Christian must focus! Paul encouraged Christians to run the race to win!

What does proverbs 4:23 mean?

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"Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life."
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Solomon finished Proverbs 4 with these words, *“Let your eyes look directly ahead and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you.*

Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil.”