

Wisdom Blessings

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[0 : 00] Well, let's turn to Proverbs chapter 3, and we're going to begin reading tonight in verse 13. Proverbs 3, 13 to the end.

Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.

She's more precious than rubies. Nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand. In her left hand are riches and honor.

Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her. Those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

By wisdom, the Lord laid the earth's foundations. By understanding, he set the heavens in place. By his knowledge, the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.

[1 : 02] My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment. Do not let them out of your sight. They will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck.

Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid. When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Have no fear of sudden disaster, or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked.

For the Lord will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being snared. Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.

Do not say to your neighbor, come back later, I'll give it tomorrow, when you now have it with you.

Do not plot harm against your neighbor, who lives trustfully near you.

Do not accuse a man for no reason, when he has done you no harm. Do not envy a violent man, or choose any of his ways, for the Lord detests a perverse man, but takes the upright into his confidence.

[2 : 11] The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous. He mocks proud mockers, but gives grace to the humble.

The wise inherit honor, but fools he holds up to shame. Just listen to what the Lord says to you. Blessed is the man who finds wisdom. Blessed is the man that finds wisdom. That's good. That's good news.

As I read and reread the book of Proverbs, this bare-knuckle truth keeps hitting me, that the Holy Spirit can hardly speak high enough of wisdom.

Wisdom. It's not just once or twice. It's speech after speech. Wisdom will save you from regret.

[3 : 17] Wisdom will protect you. Wisdom will keep you from evil men. Wisdom will keep you from evil women. Wisdom will bring you to know God. It will make your paths straight.

Your vats will brim over with new wine. And we're just getting started. Chapter 4. Wisdom is supreme.

Therefore, get wisdom, though it costs all you have. Get understanding. Solomon, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is putting wisdom right there on the top shelf and saying, if you want anything, you should want wisdom more than that.

Anything that you desire. Last week, we talked about walking wisely with God. My hope was that we would get to walking wisely with man.

But there is just so much good stuff in the middle of chapter 3 that we just couldn't get to it. So tonight, we're just going to be talking about this middle section in Proverbs chapter 3.

[4 : 32] And it's the blessings of wisdom. The blessings of getting wisdom. And so tonight, we're going to talk about seven blessings of wisdom. I don't think that's exhaustive.

But that is what we have in this passage. Seven blessings of wisdom. Verse 13. I've already quoted it. Blessed is the man who finds wisdom.

Blessed. Happy. This person is living life optimally. Things are going his way. He's experiencing life the way it was meant to be lived.

So blessed is the man who finds wisdom. Now, what is the father? What is God trying to teach us as his sons and daughters?

What is the father here? So you can imagine this picture of he's in this Israelite home and he has his children before him. What is this father trying to do for his son?

[5 : 32] What is the Lord trying to do for us? He's trying to woo us to see just how good wisdom is so that we would be inspired and encouraged to go find it, to get it, to pursue it.

Now, he, the father and the Lord warns us in other places. He will frighten us in other places. Some of the imagery that we're going to find in the coming chapters are almost gothic and terrible.

We're going to talk about people whose basements, whose houses go down to the dead. He's going to frighten us. He's going to scare us into wisdom.

But now he woos us to get wisdom. So he's saying, do you want wisdom? You should. You should. Whoever you are, whatever age you are, wherever you're coming from, this is something that you should want.

So here's seven blessings of wisdom. We can't take long on any of them. But I want you to know, and I want really this to register on your mind and heart, that each of these things are seven deep mind shafts of truth.

[6 : 50] That we could, if we had the time, we could take a sermon and go over each one of them. Of just how good this is and this blessing and why wisdom gives it to us.

These are deep mind shafts of truth. And these should be something that you explore on your own. That you just realize that we're not going to get all the way to the bottom of any of these things.

But you need to go home and you need to think about these things more deeply. So seven blessings of wisdom. And the first one is this, that when you see this in verses 13 through 15, that she will give you life better than any amount of money can buy.

Wisdom will give you life better than money can buy. Now, if we're going to understand this, we have to come and we have to get on the same sort of footing as the book of Proverbs.

And we have to understand that the overarching lesson and the overarching assumption of the book of Proverbs is that money is good. Money is good.

[8 : 06] It's better to have money than to have no money at all. Remember last week, Fiddler on the Roof, Perchak, whoever that character is, says money is the world's curse.

And that is not the Bible's picture. Money can be dangerous. Money can become an idol. It can be all of those things. But God did not curse Job with more money and more children before and after his ordeal.

God didn't curse Abraham with wealth. Abraham's wealth was a sign that God was blessing him. So money is a blessing.

It's a gift from the Lord. It's a good gift that God gives in his wisdom. It's a gift from the Lord.

Ecclesiastes goes so far as to say money is the answer to everything.

And that, I think we could say, is a bit of an overstatement. But the author is driving home a point.

And the point is that in life under the sun, there are very few things that don't go better with a little bit of money.

[9 : 18] There are very few problems that aren't made slightly easier by having some money. So without putting money down, without assuming it's unnecessary or evil or anything like that, the author, the Lord, says, Blessed is the man who finds wisdom because she is more profitable than silver.

She yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies. Nothing you desire can compare with her. So wisdom is better than money.

Wisdom will give you a life that no amount of money could buy. So there's several ways that we could think about this. A fool and his money are quickly parted.

They're quickly separated. That's a common proverb in our world. So a rich fool will soon have no money. He'll find some way of spoiling that and ruining it and becoming poor.

But a wise, poor person may yet still become rich. And so wisdom is better than money. Wisdom yields better returns than gold. There's another way that we could think about that.

[10 : 35] Benjamin Franklin, he had his own proverb. He said, an investment in knowledge pays the best interest. And that is true. Earning a degree.

Investing in knowledge. Earning a degree in a specific field will give you a leg up over someone who doesn't have that degree. So anytime that you invest time or money into yourself, into becoming better at something, that is generally going to pay off.

So wisdom is better than in money in all those ways. But I think this is talking about something different than that.

Even though those things are true. As you read through Proverbs, you pick up on some things. Wisdom, our money will put food on the table. But it won't give you fellowship. It won't give you laughter around that table.

[11 : 45] Wisdom will. Money will build a house. But it won't necessarily build a home. Wisdom will. Our money will put pearls and jewelry on a woman's neck.

But it won't give her the love that she longs for. And wisdom will. Money will give your children an inheritance.

But it won't. They won't thrill your heart with their poise and their excellence and their skill and their hard work with their wisdom.

But wisdom will. A rich, spoiled son can be worse than no son at all. So a certain amount of money is usually necessary.

But no amount of money that you can have, no amount of money that you would ever possess, will give you what wisdom will give you if you seek it. Wisdom will give you a life that no amount of money will buy.

[12 : 55] And that's the blessing. So do you want a blessed life? Do you want a happy life? Then pursue wisdom. Now the second blessing is going to sort of seem kind of a weird thing to say. But the second blessing is financial.

The second blessing is money. The next verse, long life is in her right hand and in her left hand are riches and honor. Now we're going to come back to that idea of life.

Life is the overall blessing. Life is the blessing that all of these fit under and contribute to. But wisdom calls that life, shalom, the good life.

But in her left hand are riches. Talking about money. There is material blessing attached to the way of wisdom.

Now we could look at that and think about that in a hundred different ways to see how that happens and why that happens. But let me just sum it up like this.

[13 : 58] If you were to follow the book of Proverbs, so you work hard. You go to the ant you sluggard and you learn to work hard like an ant.

You work hard. You tie love and faithfulness around your neck so you're good to people. You're kind. You're loving. You're faithful. You're reliable. You're honest with the government.

You're kind to others. You think before you speak. You know how to handle yourself in whatever circumstances find you. When things are getting hot and hard and difficult, you have poise and you have calm confidence.

You have diligence and you have discipline and you're pursuing excellence. All of these things are what Proverbs is teaching us. If you were to pursue that life, you know what's going to happen.

By a great measure or by a lesser measure, money will generally start coming your way. And the money that you obtain, you will be able to keep and you'll be able to grow.

[15 : 07] And so all of this is hardly the recipe for lifelong poverty. Instead, it more looks like the recipe for financial success.

And Proverbs is very open about that idea. Proverbs is not saying that money is dirty and you're wrong to want it or to want more of it.

It is saying that it is wisdom that will bring that to you and be able to make you the kind of person that is able to handle it. So that's the second blessing is riches.

The third blessing is honor. So in our left hand, our riches and honor, honor is talking about social standing. It's talking about social significance.

It's social recognition. So you act wisely. And what will happen is honor and esteem will come your way.

[16 : 07] But if you act a fool, you act a fool. You say foolish things. You say things that don't need to be said.

You say them in a way that they shouldn't have been said. You say foolish things that are stupid and and don't match the situation that are unhelpful. So you say foolish things.

You do foolish things. You don't listen to people. When they're trying to tell you something, you know better than they do. So you don't like correction. You don't think about how people feel. You're not honest with them. You prove yourself unfaithful to them. You say one thing and then you do something else. You think you know better than everyone else. Well, what is going to happen? You're going to get shame. People are not going to look up to you. They're going to look down on you. People will not esteem you. They just won't.

[17:09] But the humble. The considerate. The thoughtful person. The insightful person. So when you put this person into a difficult situation.

They know what to say. They know how to say it. They don't come with glib advice. That doesn't match your circumstances.

They're insightful. That person will have honor. The wise wife is called the crown of her husband. A crown is a thing of beauty. It's a thing that makes you attractive. It's a thing that stands out. A wise woman is her husband's crown.

It makes him even attractive. Her beauty shines and he collects some of it. But it's also. A crown is also a sign. And a right to rule.

[18:10] To be heard. To be considered. So, you know, kings wear crowns. They have the right to rule. So in Proverbs 31. The wise woman's husband.

He works at the gate of the city. That's where the hard matters of the city are decided. Where business is transacted. Where government is done. That's where this wise woman husband can be found.

People listen to him. And they honor him. Because he and she are wise. So why should we listen to him?

Oh, look at his family. Look at his wife. Look at their children. And wisdom brings honor. And so the wise are honored and fools are ashamed. That's how Proverbs 3 ends.

God is going to set himself against the proud. And he's going to bring them down. But he's going to honor the humble. So the wise are honored and fools are ashamed.

[19:09] And the question is, which one do you want? Which one do you want in your life? What you sow, that is what you'll reap.

That's third. Fourth. Pleasant, peaceful paths. Smooth paths. Young people. One reason that your parents want you to understand.

And to take on board. To grab a hold of with two hands. What wisdom is talking about is because they love you. And they don't want to see your life like a sad country song.

Or like a bumpy road that's always having problems. In a fool's way. The fool's path. The way he is walking is just covered and strewn with thorns and thistles.

He can't walk two feet without having some problem come his way. It's the difference between going through the bush.

[20:17] And you're fighting all the weeds. And you're fighting all the undergrowth. And you're fighting all the tree branches. And you're fighting all the rocks. And walking on that path versus walking on a smooth prepared path.

I was talking to someone. And I know some of the boys just went up to Minnesota. And they went canoeing and hiking. And there were parts where they had to portage.

They had to pick up their canoes. And they had to walk them from one body of water to another body of water. And you have to walk. And it's not pleasant, smooth paths. It's hard work. And the path is bumpy.

And you're fighting against the trees and all the rest. It's not easy. And that is the life of a fool every day. That's the point.

That's the life of a fool every day. Doing everyday life can be hard for them. Work is hard. Doing family is hard.

[21:16] School is hard. Getting a job is hard. Keeping on that job is hard. Success is hard to come by. You can imagine some of the worst examples.

And I know you've seen these people. And you've met these people. Their whole life is just one difficult thing after another. And you're just like, it's because the way you're doing it.

It's how you're doing it. You're not doing it with any kind of wisdom. You're making your life unnecessarily difficult. And just the way you do life. What is the, again, the book of Ecclesiastes says, If the axe is dull, more strength is needed.

But skill will bring success. You get it. Fools try to cut down life's trees with dull axes. We all have trees.

We all have challenges. We all have things that need to get done. We all have things in our way. And fools try to use a dull axe to cut down a tree.

[22 : 19] Just this spring, someone I knew was trying to cut down a mulberry tree. And all they had was a weak, kind of cheap, dull chainsaw. And it was nothing but trouble.

It was nothing but trouble at all. And then the neighbor came over. And he had like one of those farm-sized, really expensive chainsaws. And he just cut right through the tree.

And afterwards, the first guy went out and bought a new chainsaw right away. And that's wisdom. Wisdom is having a sharp chainsaw. It makes even the hard things easier.

Wisdom is not saying that everything is always going to be perfect and wonderful. And you won't face any challenges or struggles or difficulties. But what it is saying is that wisdom will make the hard things easier.

Relationships go easier. You aren't always sticking your foot in your mouth and saying something that you shouldn't have said. And when you're doing good work, and you're saying the kind of things that you should say, and you're not always having to backtrack from something that you did or said, well, life is going to go easier.

[23 : 43] It will go smoother. And this is just not rocket science. Wisdom will make for pleasant, peaceful. We're talking about people.

We're talking about people. On the one hand, you see some of these people whose lives are full of drama and trouble.

Drama and trouble. It's always one thing or another holding them back. It's always one thing or another. And maybe you've met some and you've tried to help them.

And it doesn't seem like anything works. And I think nine out of ten times, it's fools reaping what they sowed.

Now, I could tell stories, but I think you can think of people like that. You've met these people. And someone's face is probably floating up right now in your mind's eye. Well, think about them.

[24 : 46] Wisdom makes for pleasant, peaceful paths. Fifth blessing is attractiveness. Beauty. Proverbs 3.21 and 22. Preserve sound judgment and discernment.

They will be life for you and an ornament to grace your neck. So you can think of a beautiful necklace, a beautiful jewel. And wisdom will catch people's eye.

They'll see it and say, wow, that's beautiful. That's attractive. Wise people are winsome. Wise people are attractive. People are drawn to them.

There's something about them that is likable. And these people are inclined to them. I want to hear what this person has to say. I like being with this person.

I like talking with this person. I like being with this person. And so it doesn't matter if you're the king. Proverbs 20. Through love, his throne is made secure.

[25 : 47] Or you could just be a regular old Joe. Proverbs 13.15. Good understanding wins favor. Good understanding wins favor. You understand people. You understand that person across the desk.

You know what they're trying to do. You think well of them. Well, you understand them. That's going to win favor. And that's attractive. And so do you want a beautiful life?

Beauty that follows you everywhere you go. Well, get wisdom. Do you want to be winsome with the gospel? Winsome with the gospel.

Well, don't just concentrate on getting the message right. Get the messenger right. Instead, maybe work on your personality and your winsomeness.

Rather than your technique. You can have the most perfect technique. You can have the most wonderful gospel presentation with all the best things put in there in just the right order.

[26 : 49] And yet, if you are not attractive, your message is going to be hard to swallow. And so don't sing a beautiful hymn with bad breath.

Brush your teeth. Make yourself attractive and winsome. And wisdom promises. Wisdom blesses you with that beauty. Wisdom will make you attractive. Maybe that's what we need more of.

You know, in those relationships that we have with people. Sixth, safety. Verse 23, then you will go on your way in safety.

And when you lie down, you will not be afraid. And when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. So wisdom will keep you out of dangerous situations.

Out of all kinds of dangerous relationships. Young men, young women. Wisdom will keep you out of dangerous relationships. In predicaments and situations that you shouldn't be there.

[27 : 56] That there's no good coming there. It's only dangerous. Wisdom will keep you out of those dangerous financial situations. Off the precipice of financial doom.

It will keep you out of dangerous predicaments of every kind. And we don't know the value of that until we find ourselves in one of those dangerous situations.

And then we say, how did I get here? This was so stupid. This is crazy. I am in danger. And when that fear is there, you'll realize, oh, if I had wisdom, I would have been kept safe.

But the fool is in constant danger. He's always walking on the edge. He's always setting himself up for failure. His schemes are almost always ready to fall apart.

You can see this in the youngest person, the youngest child, when they're lying and lying and lying and trying to cover up their things. And mom and dad are pulling back the cobwebs. And we know the truth.

[28 : 59] And the truth is going to be not so good. But the wise person walks uprightly and walks securely and safely.

But the further the fool goes down the road, the more Jenga blocks he's pulling out of his life. You know what I'm saying? The more he goes, the more decisions, every decision he makes, he makes his life more unstable, more unsteady.

Fool doesn't know what makes him stumble. The fool is a woman walking in the dark in a city, oblivious to her surroundings, not knowing what is going on, maybe texting on her phone. And all of a sudden she wakes up or she puts her head up and now she's in the bad part of town in a dark alley.

And she doesn't know how she got there. She doesn't know where she's at. She's in danger and she's afraid. But wisdom will keep you safe.

Wisdom is walking in the good part of town at noon. You know you're where you're at. You know where you're going. And you're safe. Wisdom is like putting more Jenga blocks into your life.

[30 : 12] You're creating more stability, more safety. So wisdom will keep you safe. And young people, it's a wonderful thing to have a stable, safe life where you're not being attacked by your own folly.

Life is dangerous and there's going to be enough challenges without making it worse on yourself. That's six. Now, seventh is confidence. And I'm not talking about false confidence, but I am talking about real confidence.

The Lord will be your confidence. Verse 26. False confidence is not what I'm saying, but real courage and optimism.

And that is the blessing of wisdom. The Proverbs 31 woman, it says she's not afraid of the future. She's not afraid of what tomorrow is going to bring.

She's not afraid of winter coming. When it's not sunshine, but when it's cold and the winds are blowing, she's not afraid. She's confident. And so this is the blessing of wisdom.

[31 : 21] You aren't afraid. You aren't uncertain. You'll have no fear of sudden disaster or the ruin that overtakes the wicked. For the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.

And so do you want to run through life like Usain Bolt? And I have this picture of him from the Olympics when he's a meter and a half or whatever ahead of his opponents.

And he turns to the camera and he smiles. Do you want to live that kind of life? Or Eric Little, seeing chariots of fire, and he throws his head back.

And he's running with joy. Why? Or do you want to toddle through life? Uncertain. Always afraid of falling.

Never able to make much progress. Well, wisdom gives you confidence. And so you can run with joy and you can sleep with peace. And if you say, well, that doesn't seem like my life.

[32 : 19] I'm anxious a lot. I'm worried a lot. My life doesn't seem set up for stability and safety. And I don't feel confident in what's going on. Instead, I'm worried about the future.

I'm worried about these choices I've made. Maybe this is where you could start. Am I pursuing wisdom? Am I living in wisdom?

So confidence, security, beauty, pleasant paths, honor, wealth, a life better than you can buy with any amount of money. That sounds good.

That is good. That is good. And if you think about it, that sounds awfully like what Adam and Eve had in the garden.

It really is. This whole passage is there's an echo of paradise, an echo of Eden. And it really is all over this passage.

[33 : 25] You see in verse 18, wisdom is a tree of life to those who embrace her. Wisdom is a tree of life.

Now, I want you to realize that that idea of the tree of life is not something that the Bible just throws around. It's not like everywhere in the whole Bible.

It's not something that comes up all the time. It's in Genesis. It's in Revelation. Two or three times in Genesis, four times in Revelation.

And the only other place that you will find the tree of life is in the book of Proverbs. Wisdom is how you, at least in part, as much as you can in this time, with all those qualifications, it's never going to be like it was, and it will never be like it's going to be.

But as much as you can in this life, how do you get back, at least in part, to Eden to experience shalom, wholeness, peace, blessedness, the tree of life?

[34 : 38] The answer is wisdom. Proverbs' answer is wisdom. Blessed, we began this way in verse 13, blessed is the Adam.

Blessed is the Adam who finds wisdom. Blessed is the Adam who finds wisdom. Blessed is this man. And if you go back to read Genesis 2, God didn't just plant the garden in any old place.

Moses actually gives some description of that place, and the place where the Garden of Eden was, what it was like. And he said there was lots of water and there was lots of trees, but he also said the whole area was full of gold and onyx, precious jewels.

There was wealth, is what Moses was saying. And wisdom is better than gold or silver. Adam was naked and unafraid.

He was confident. He had no shame. He had nothing but beauty and security and peace and honor.

[35 : 49] He had a life, Adam and he had a life that you cannot buy with any amount of money. And the whole creation was full of God's wisdom.

By wisdom, this is what it says in our passage in verses 19 and 20. By wisdom, God laid the earth's foundations, and by knowledge he divided the deeps.

That's talking about the creation. The earth was formless and void, and there was darkness over the deeps of the waters. And wisdom, and with wisdom and with beauty, God created day after day, and he split light from the darkness, and he brought glory out of this chaos.

And at the height of creation, the very zenith, he put man and woman into this garden, and everything was very good.

Now, that's the place that every human secretly aches for. That's where we were met for. That's where, as Christians, that's where we are going.

[36 : 58] Read Revelation 21 and 22. But that's what Satan took from us. When Adam and Eve had a choice to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and Eve saw that it was, fruit was beautiful, but it was also useful for attaining wisdom.

So Adam and Eve, this was their way to get wisdom apart from God. And that was the temptation. And that's how Satan took Eden from us. And that's what Adam lost. And so sin was the vandalization of the garden.

Sin was the vandalization of shalom. Sin took what was beautiful and perfect and scrawled ugliness all over it, all over us, all over the creation.

And so sin is our stupidity, because God gave us something beautiful and something wonderful and something good, and we broke it. Like little children that receive a wonderful Christmas present, and we break it.

[38 : 15] And so the question is, that's what sin has done. So how do we get it back? How can we in any measure enjoy this shalom again, and enter into these blessings again?

Wisdom's answer, or Proverbs answer, is wisdom. By getting wisdom. And that's why he says, whatever you get, get wisdom. Blessed is the man who finds wisdom.

So wisdom connects you again to God. And the fear of the Lord. You're now rightly connected to the Lord, where you're humble, and you're confident, and you're trusting Him, and you love Him.

That's the fear of the Lord. And next time we're going to see that it correctly connects us to man. And so now we're loving God, and we're loving man. And Adam and Eve, remember, they walked in the garden in the cool of the evening.

They were walking hand in hand with each other, and they were walking hand in hand with the Lord. So wisdom is living in harmony with God and with man, with reality.

[39 : 14] Proverbs is saying, that's life. That's the tree of life. So young man, young woman, do you want to really live?

Do you want to live as close to Eden as you possibly can in this fallen world, knowing that you're never going to get back to where you were, but what is in front of us is coming.

Live as close as you can to Eden, and now, how do you do that? You get wisdom. Wisdom. And you notice, wisdom is not some sad pauper, some sad poor person that can't give you anything. She is a queen on her throne. And she has a long life in her right hand, and riches and honor in her left hand. So then how do you get her?

How do you pursue, how do you get wisdom? If it's such a blessing, just look at the verbs. I just wanted to point out four verbs in this passage.

[40 : 18] And this is really the application for tonight. We've seen the blessing. It's life. It's rich, beautiful, deep, peaceful life.

Look at the verbs. Blessed is the man who binds her. You've got to look for her. You have to look for her.

And what does looking look like? What does looking look like? Well, a lot of this, in these early chapters, looking looks like listening to your wise parents.

Listening to your mom and dad. The next chapter, we're going to see listening and remembering what grandpa taught us. Listening to your wise parents. Listen, my son, to your father's instructions. Then how else do you find her? Well, now you look for her out in the streets. We've already seen all of these passages, but she's calling at the crossroads, at the marketplace, where all the roads and the ideas and everything is coming.

[41 : 22] She's saying, I'm out here. You can see me. You look at what, you just, you pay attention. You pay attention to life. Pay attention to life.

You look at what people do and then you look at what happens. You look at the choices that they make. They say the burnt hand learns best. But you know what?

If I see someone burning their hand, it's really smart for me to say, you know what? That looks like that hurts. I'm not doing that. That seems like a better way to learn something. You get wisdom by paying attention.

By paying attention. So how do you find anything? Well, you look for her. Look for her. I doubt you're going to find her on your smartphone. Not very much of her.

Read a book. Get off your phone. Listen. Maybe start with this book. This book.

[42 : 29] So find her. Second verb is desire her. Nothing you desire can compare with her. You'll get wisdom if you really want her. Desire.

Yearn for her. Want her. Watch for her. Seek her. More than anything else, desire her. See what God is saying.

It's not that He finds our desires too great. He finds our desires too small. We don't want the right things enough. Desire her. Number three.

Third verb is embrace her. She's a tree of life to those who embrace her. That means hold her. Hug her. Keep her.

And when you find her, you embrace her. And that's why you have to empty your hands of all your own wisdom. That's why you can't be wise in your own eyes because if you're wise in your own eyes, you're not going to have the empty hands that will be able to embrace lady wisdom.

[43 : 32] When you find her, embrace her. just to talk about how this is so intimate and this is so, this is talking about your heart and your soul going out and closing with wisdom.

Wanting her and holding her. There are, this word has sexual connotations. Why embrace, Proverbs 5 says, why embrace the bosom of another man's wife? How do you get these blessings? You hold wisdom intimately. Heart to heart and don't let her go. Give yourself to her and she'll give herself to you.

Take wisdom into your deepest confidence. Open your heart and open your life to her to be corrected, to be taught, to be trained. Embrace her.

Fourth verb is preserve. Preserve sound judgment and discernment. This is a word that has popped up a lot. It means keep, treasure, protect, keep sound judgment.

[44 : 41] There's, there's almost a physical violence to this idea that you're going to protect this thing. You love this thing and so you're going to protect her.

You're going to keep her. You're going to treasure her and you're not going to let anyone get near her and you're not going to let her get away from you. So keep, preserve, sound judgment.

And we have to just realize this, that we are leaky buckets and wisdom will flow out from us and we'll forget and she'll go on her way. And we can turn wisdom into folly and we can start loving other things and we can have our thoughts all confused and so the Father is saying, my son, preserve, keep, sound judgment.

treasure her, protect her, don't let her go. And if you do, she'll bless you. You will eat from the tree of life. Now there is something, actually, actually someone, even deeper and more important than even what we've talked to, talked about and what this is ultimately pointing to.

because this whole garden of Eden and tree of life imagery, it really is as close as we can get here and now.

[46 : 05] But the whole, the whole Bible is about how the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve can get back to the way it was supposed to be, to the way it was.

And the pivotal character of that story of how sinful men can now get back to where they should be and could be, it is not you and me getting really smart and figuring everything out.

It's not. It is Jesus Christ who is the wisdom of God. And when we get Him, we get wisdom.

When we embrace Him and seek Him and treasure Him and desire Him and keep Him, that's how, in the ultimate sense, we are connected again to God.

and He's our loving Father. And now we're connected to man and we're brothers. We're adopted into the family together. And only when we come to Jesus do we finally get put back into harmony with the reality, with reality.

[47 : 29] Until then, you know, we're all bent in on ourselves. We're selfish and we're puffed up and we want to write our own story and we want to do things our way and so what we end up doing is we end up destroying ourselves and we end up destroying others and whenever a little bit of shalom begins to happen, we vandalize that.

We step on it. We destroy it. We uproot it. And so any, you know, any part of the shadow of Eden that ever struggles to survive and struggles to appear, we end up smashing it and then that doesn't stop.

that doesn't stop until we come to Jesus and when we see ourselves as guilty, what I am doing is not right, not right towards God, not right towards man.

God is holy and I really need saved and we start to see ourselves right and we start to see God right and Jesus, then Jesus Christ becomes our wisdom.

He becomes our wisdom. we start to rethink everything and we think it in light of who he is. We just read 1 John, but 1 John chapter 1 in him was life.

[48 : 44] That life was the light of men. How do we see the world correctly? It's as we are living in him. So he's the word, the logos, the wisdom of God and only with him can you start to see yourself right, can you start to see the world right, can you start to see God right.

And so it's really only with him that you can be humble enough where you don't have to be self-righteous anymore, but you can actually be humble and say, I need to learn. You can be humble and honest enough to say, I need wisdom, and only with him can you have both that humility and confidence.

Humble because I have a lot to learn, and yet confidence because in Jesus Christ I am a dearly loved child. And so Jesus is this tree of life, and when you eat from him you will live forever, and that's how life begins now, and that's how the wisdom of God begins pouring out and coming into your heart, is when you embrace Jesus, and then all these other blessings will begin to flow.

So how do you get back to Eden? you get wisdom, you get Christ, embrace, find, keep, desire.

Paul said, I want to know him, I want to know him, and knowing him as life, to live as Christ, and to die as gain.

[50 : 17] And you can say that too. Anyone here, if you want Jesus, you can have him. He's not keeping you back, only you are keeping you back.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for condescending, for coming down to us, and speaking with us, and loving us, and teaching us, and we so need, and we want wisdom.

I pray that we would want your wisdom more than our own. It does feel good to be right in our own eyes. It doesn't feel good to say that I was wrong, but help us to put down the charade of wisdom, and call it what it is, it's folly, and to embrace what you have for us.

That you would teach us, and correct us, tune our hearts more and more to what you are doing in the world.

Tune our hearts to who you are, so that we would live in harmony with you, and with what you're doing. I pray this in Jesus' name, and for his sake.

[51 : 40] We want to be a people who are a blessing and a joy to him. if we are a love gift to the son from the father, help us to remember that and to give the son great joy in possessing us.

I pray this for his sake. Amen.