

# Trust in the Lord with All your Heart

Proverbs 3:1-12

**I want to start today with a quote from**

**Tony Perkins** entitled, “Freedom Has a Purpose.” He is the president of the Family Research Council and has taught here at Calvary in the past. He wrote this on **February 13, 2026**, in The Washington Stand a very good newsletter online. It is a bit long, but I really believe it has great value at this time and adds perspective for our passage today.

**S-** “**Exodus 9:1** records a command that shaped a nation: “*Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: Let My people go, that they may serve Me.*” Freedom, in the Bible, is never abstract. It is purposeful. It is directional. It is given so that a people might serve the God who delivered them. This truth did not escape the attention of America’s founders.

In 1776, when Congress requested designs for a national seal, Benjamin Franklin proposed a striking image: Moses standing at the Red Sea, Pharaoh and his army overwhelmed, and beneath it the motto, “Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God.” Though never adopted, the proposal reflected how deeply the Exodus narrative shaped the American imagination.

**S-** From New England to the southern colonies, pastors drew explicit parallels between Israel’s deliverance from Egypt and the colonies’ struggle for independence. Sermons frequently returned to a familiar refrain: “Let my people go.”

But they did not stop there.

On December 23, 1776, Sylvanus Conant preached directly from the full text: “Let my people go, *that they may serve Me.*”

Ministers such as Samuel West and Samuel Langdon made the same point clear. The goal was not autonomy for its own sake. The goal was ordered liberty under God.

That full phrase — “Let My people go, that they may serve Me” — appears seven times in Exodus.

**S-** The repetition is deliberate. God’s championing of Israel’s freedom was not so they could do what was right in their own eyes. **It was liberation unto obedience, worship, and covenant faithfulness. Deliverance was the doorway to devotion.**

Those colonial pastors understood that principle. They warned that liberty detached from moral restraint would decay into lawlessness — and eventually into tyranny. Rev. Langdon cautioned that nations blessed with freedom but unwilling to live under God’s law would follow the same tragic pattern seen in Israel’s history. Conant reminded his hearers that deliverance creates obligation. A people set free must respond with gratitude and obedience or risk forfeiting the blessing they were given.

Even among the Founders, that sober awareness was present.

**S-** Thomas Jefferson wrote words that still unsettle: “Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever.” Whatever his theological persuasion, Jefferson understood a fundamental truth — nations are morally accountable.

The Founders did not envision freedom as self-definition without limits. They sought freedom within a framework. Liberty was

granted so that a people might govern themselves under transcendent authority, not apart from it.

**S-** Now, in this 250th anniversary year of American independence, that original question presses upon us again.

**Are we living as though freedom has a purpose?**

Have we remembered that liberty is not merely the absence of restraint, **but the opportunity to align ourselves with truth?** Have we treated freedom as a gift to steward — or as an entitlement to consume?

Exodus confronts every generation with the same call. God delivers people not to independence from Him, **but obedience to Him.** When a nation forgets that freedom is meant for service to God, it loses the purpose of freedom — and soon, the freedom itself.

The words still echo: *“Let My people go, that they may serve Me.”*

The future of our liberty depends on whether we remember the second half of that sentence.”

**PK-** Our passage today in Proverbs 3 ties into this truth because **Without Trust, there cannot be Obedience to Serve.** As we turn to our text let’s keep in mind what we just read.

Quoting from the Open Bible notes: Solomon wrote some 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs. Only about 800 of his 3000 proverbs are included in our bible. No man was better qualified than Solomon to be the principal contributor. He asked for wisdom (1Kings 3) and God granted it to him.

Here Solomon is giving his son some of that wisdom, but his son must make the choice whether he will follow his father’s advice.

This is no different than any of us as we **hear** God's truths or **read** God's Word. The question is, are we going to receive it into our lives and live it or just listen to it and not allow it to change us and draw us into a closer walk with the Author Himself?

**One last note** before we read these Proverbs, notice that Solomon lays them out with first giving our responsibility than follows with the result if we obey the precept.

Let's read our passage.

**S- Proverbs 3:1-12,**

*“My son, do not forget my law,  
But let your heart keep my commands;*

*<sup>2</sup> For length of days and long life  
and peace they will add to you.*

*<sup>3</sup> Let not mercy and truth forsake you;  
Bind them around your neck,*

*Write them on the tablet of your heart,*

*<sup>4</sup> And so find favor and high esteem  
In the sight of God and man.*

**S- <sup>5</sup>Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding;**

*<sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He shall direct your paths.*

*<sup>7</sup> Do not be wise in your own eyes;  
Fear the Lord and depart from evil.*

<sup>8</sup> *It will be health to your flesh,  
And strength to your bones.*

**S-** <sup>9</sup>*Honor the Lord with your possessions,  
And with the firstfruits of all your increase;*

<sup>10</sup> *So your barns will be filled with plenty,  
And your vats will overflow with new wine.*

<sup>11</sup> *My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord,  
Nor detest His correction;*

<sup>12</sup> *For whom the Lord loves He corrects,  
Just as a father the son in whom he delights.”*

**PK-** Solomon was giving his son and us some of the wisdom that he had received from the LORD, it was good instruction then and it's still sage advice for today.

Again, as we break down this passage keep in mind the message that Tony Perkins just gave us, that our freedom's purpose is to serve God with every part of our existence both physical and spiritual.

Let's look at the first four verses again.

**S- Proverbs 3:1-4,**

*“My son, do not forget **my law**,  
But let your heart keep **my commands**;  
For length of days and long life and  
Peace they will add to you.  
Let not mercy and truth forsake you;  
Bind them around your neck,  
Write them on the tablet of your heart,*

*And so, find favor and high esteem  
In the sight of God and man.”*

**PK-** To begin with note the tenderness of Solomon’s delivery, “**My son...**” it gives us a picture of a loving father to his son. Also, these truths are not just suggestions but *laws and commands* that this loving father is directing his son to take heed to for a rich and peaceful life.

Solomon is doing what all good parents should be doing daily, teaching wisdom and truth to the minds and hearts of our children. When he says “law and command” he is referring to **God’s Law and Commands** not his own rules. Of course, children should obey their parents. But if they are taught to obey God’s Law and commandments they will naturally honor and obey their parents as the fifth commandment states. We should not leave this important task to anyone else, not a teacher, a relative, social media or the streets. A vitally important part of teaching **is doing** what you teach as an example for them to see that what you are teaching you apply to your life.

Then Solomon shares the results of obedience with,

**S-** *“For length of days and long life  
and peace they will add to you.”*

This is a principle in life and heart, as we obey our Lord’s commands and precepts.

**S- David Guzik** explains, “We say *in principle* because this is largely how Proverbs was written and should be regarded. The principle of Proverbs 3:2 is not an absolute promise; there are some people who truly are given to obedience in both conduct and heart and die relatively young. Some godly persons have trouble living in **peace**. We regard these as true principles, not absolute promises.”

Solomon goes on to entreat them to

**S-** “*Let not mercy and truth forsake you...*” or as the Amplified version reads “*Let not mercy and kindness [shutting out **all** hatred and selfishness] and truth [shutting out **all** deliberate hypocrisy or falsehood] forsake you;*”

**PK-** Solomon like all loving parents desires that their children plant these truths in their hearts, which is the center of our motivation. We desire that they obey because they **want to** not because they **have to**. It’s the “**Get to, not Got to**”. We want to see in our children hunger after God’s Truths. Remember we are God’s representatives to our children and the world.

The apostle John expresses the heart of all loving parent in his third epistle.

**S- 3John 4** “*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*”

**S- Charles Bridges** wrote, “The heart is the first thing that wanders away from God, and it is also the first thing that returns to God.”

**PK-**We all want our children to follow us into the Kingdom, AMEN?

**Next**, we come to a very familiar passage in verses 5 & 6.

**S-** “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding;  
In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He shall direct your paths.*”

**PK-** Remember the passage in Exodus, “*Let My people go, **that they may serve Me.***”

How are we to serve our Lord if we do not trust and obey Him. This is the doorway into peace, contentment and salvation.

**S-** Warren Wiersbe paints a good picture of this, “The word translated ‘trust’ in Proverbs 3:5 means ‘to lie helpless, facedown.’ It pictures a servant waiting for the master’s command in readiness to obey, or a defeated soldier yielding himself to the conquering general.”

**Wiersbe also wrote:**

**S-** “The key verses in this chapter are verses 5–6, a promise God’s people have often claimed as they have sought the Lord’s direction for their lives. And this promise has never failed them—if they have obeyed the conditions God has laid down in verses 1–12. **God keeps His promises when we obey His precepts, because our obedience prepares us to receive and enjoy what He has planned for us.**”

**PK-** God historically prepares and equips everyone before He implements His plan. Here again Solomon speaks of **the heart**. But this time he emphasizes it by adding “**all**”. God doesn’t want a percentage of our heart, He demands complete surrender, every part of us, soul, mind and body.

God knows our weaknesses, so He clarifies this with contrast.

**S1-** *“And lean not on your own understanding;  
In all your ways acknowledge Him...”*

The **NLT** puts it this way,

**S2-** *“...do not depend on your own understanding.  
Seek **His will** in **all** you do,”*

**PK-** As Jesus did in the garden,

**S-** *“**Not my will but yours be done.**”*

**PK-** Even unto death upon the cross.

**S-** **Adam Clarke** gives us a good perspective, *“It is on GOD, not on yourself, that you art commanded to depend. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool.... Self-sufficiency and self-dependence have been the ruin of mankind ever since the fall of Adam. The grand sin of the human race is their continual endeavor to live independently of God.”*

**PK-** We serve a faithful God; we can trust Him for all eternity.

**Verses 7-10** Solomon continues to put forth more benefits we find from trusting the Lord and following His precepts.

**S-** *Do not be wise in your own eyes;  
Fear the Lord and depart from evil.*

*It will be health to your flesh,  
And strength to your bones.*

**PK-** Let me interpret this first part, if I may, “Don’t be conceded or puffed up in yourself.” Only a fool thinks he doesn’t need any advice or counsel. Humility is a key to being a true servant/slave.

**S-** **Irving Jensen** adds lays this out well, “Prosperity for the believer takes many forms: long life (3:2), favor and a good name (3:4), straight paths (3:6), health (3:8), wealth and provisions (3:9–10). These may be interpreted literally and figuratively. Whatever measure of these is attainable for each individual comes only when wisdom (righteousness) is guarded.”

**PK-** Again, we have a responsibility to walk in the truth of God’s Word and wisdom, we have choices, choose well.

**Next** Solomon seeks his son and us to exercise our Trust in the Lord, to demonstrate that we truly believe that all our possessions are from God therefore we desire to give freely back with gratitude and a cheerful heart.

**S-** *<sup>9</sup>Honor the Lord with your possessions,  
And with the firstfruits of all your increase;  
<sup>10</sup> So your barns will be filled with plenty,  
And your vats will overflow with new wine.*

**PK-** Now we want to check our motives here, we do not give to get, we give from gratitude. If I know that I am a child of God and I know who my God is, a loving, kind faithful Father, then I can give out of obedience trusting that **He will** supply ALL my needs. I will take that step of faith with confidence.

We close this passage where Solomon again is giving God's wisdom and truth, lovingly.

<sup>11</sup> **S-** *“My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord,  
Nor detest His correction;  
<sup>12</sup> For whom the Lord loves He corrects,  
Just as a father the son in whom he delights.”*

**PK-** Study after study; scripture after scripture shows that the child that is not corrected or trained up ends up in rebellion and sin. Loving correction instills in us the evidence of a Father that cares for our future.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us that this is still true today.

**S- Hebrews 12:5-6,** *“And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as His children? He said,  
“My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline,  
and don't give up when He corrects you.  
For the Lord disciplines those He loves,  
and He punishes each one He accepts as His child.”*

**PK- Jesus Himself** affirmed this in His letter to the churches in the Book of Revelation.

**S- Revelation 3:19,** *"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent."*

**S- Bruce Waltke** gives us a quote from, "C. S. Lewis who illustrates the truth by noting that an artist may not take much trouble over a picture drawn to amuse a child, but he takes endless effort over his great work of art that he loves."

**PK-** Now I want us to read this passage one more time to allow the Holy Spirit to write it on our hearts and remind us of God's great love for us.

**S- Proverbs 3:1-12,**

*"<sup>1</sup> My child, never forget the things I have taught you.*

*Store my commands in your heart.*

*<sup>2</sup> If you do this, you will live many years,  
and your life will be satisfying.*

*<sup>3</sup> Never let loyalty and kindness leave you!  
Tie them around your neck as a reminder.  
Write them deep within your heart.*

*<sup>4</sup> Then you will find favor with both God and people,  
and you will earn a good reputation.*

**S- <sup>5</sup> Trust in the Lord with all your heart;  
do not depend on your own understanding.**

*<sup>6</sup> Seek his will in all you do,  
and he will show you which path to take.*

*<sup>7</sup> Don't be impressed with your own wisdom.  
Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from evil.*

*<sup>8</sup> Then you will have healing for your body  
and strength for your bones.*

**S-** <sup>9</sup> *Honor the Lord with your wealth  
and with the best part of everything you produce.*  
<sup>10</sup> *Then he will fill your barns with grain,  
and your vats will overflow with good wine.*  
<sup>11</sup> *My child, don't reject the Lord's discipline,  
and don't be upset when he corrects you.*  
<sup>12</sup> *For the Lord corrects those he loves,  
just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights."*

## **Trust and Obey**

**One last comment,** Please go and vote if you haven't already.  
If our whole church votes, we can elect our next Mayor.

## **Let's Pray**