

Walking the Wise Path of Parenting

A devotional summary from the Family Life series

Bible Text(s) Used

Proverbs 3:5-6ⁱ; Proverbs 3:11-12ⁱⁱ; Proverbs 4:20-27ⁱⁱⁱ; Proverbs 13:20^{iv}; Proverbs 14:26^v; Proverbs 22:6^{vi}; Proverbs 29:15^{vii}; Matthew 3:17^{viii}

Summary of Each Main Point

1. Wisdom begins by trusting God

Pastor Bo reminded the church that parenting, mentoring, and influencing the next generation cannot be done by simply copying the picture culture puts on the box. Proverbs calls us back to the instruction manual of God's Word. Wisdom begins when we trust the Lord with all our heart and refuse to make our own understanding the final authority. This does not mean we stop thinking; it means we bring our thinking under the loving leadership of God. Parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, aunts, uncles, and church family members all shape young hearts. When children see adults sincerely trusting God on Monday as well as Sunday, that faith becomes a refuge for them.

Reflection / Discussion: Where am I most tempted to lean on my own understanding instead of seeking God's wisdom?

2. Wisdom grows through loving correction

The sermon carefully explained that biblical discipline is not anger, revenge, abuse, or harsh control. Discipline is correction that rescues a child from danger and guides them back toward the wise path. Proverbs says that "the rod and reproof give wisdom," but Pastor Bo described this as the shepherd's loving tool, not a weapon of fear. Children left entirely to themselves are not truly free; they are unguided. The goal of correction is not to win a power struggle, but to help a child grow into a wise, healthy, God-honoring adult.

Reflection / Discussion: How can correction in my home or influence become more like a rescue mission and less like a reaction?

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3. Wisdom is strengthened by delight

Correction must be joined with delight. Pastor Bo used the Father's words over Jesus in Matthew 3:17, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," as a model for how parents and leaders speak love before performance. Delight means showing children that they are treasured because of relationship, not because they always get everything right. Words of affirmation, quality time, listening, and entering their world fill the heart like a reservoir. Then, when correction is needed, it can be received as love rather than only noise. Without delight, correction can feel empty; with delight, it becomes a gift.

***Reflection / Discussion:** Who needs to hear from Me this week, clearly and personally, that I delight in them?*

4. Wisdom requires protection

Proverbs tells us to guard the heart because the heart shapes the course of life. Pastor Bo explained that to guard means to stand watch like a sentry at the door. In an open-door culture of constant screens, headlines, voices, and peer pressure, love sometimes says no. Protection is not meanness; it is stewardship. Parents and spiritual mentors are called to pay attention to influences, friendships, habits, media, and conversations. Since wisdom is contagious, but foolishness can be contagious too, families need wise boundaries and caring adults who will stand together for the good of the next generation.

***Reflection / Discussion:** What influence, habit, or voice may need a wiser boundary in order to guard the heart?*

5. Wisdom is a path we choose and model

The final emphasis was that wisdom is not merely a destination we hope our children reach someday; it is a path we choose in front of them today. Children watch our feet even more than they listen to our words. They learn how to follow Jesus, handle pressure, speak to others, repent, forgive, worship, and persevere by watching the adults around them. This is humbling, but it is also hopeful. God does not demand perfect parents or perfect mentors. He gives grace to imperfect people who are willing to choose the wise path again.

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Reflection / Discussion: What one visible step can I take this week to model the path of wisdom more faithfully?

Closing Thought

This message ended with grace for every season of the journey. Some are raising young children, some are influencing students, and some carry sorrow over strained relationships with grown children. The good news is that our hope is not in our flawless parenting skills but in our perfect heavenly Father. He corrects us with love, delights in us before we have cleaned ourselves up, guards us with wisdom, and invites us to start right where we are. Wherever the path has been difficult, God can give a fresh start, a softened heart, and a renewed opportunity to walk wisely.

ⁱ Proverbs 3:5–6

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

ⁱⁱ Proverbs 3:11–12

“My son, do not despise the LORD’s discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.”

ⁱⁱⁱ Proverbs 4:20–27

“My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. Put away from you crooked speech and put devious talk far from you. Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure. Do not swerve to the right or to the left; turn your foot away from evil.”

^{iv} Proverbs 13:20

“Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

^v Proverbs 14:26

“In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.”

^{vi} Proverbs 22:6

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

^{vii} Proverbs 29:15

“The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.”

^{viii} Matthew 3:17

“and behold, a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’”

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