

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

04.14.2023 | The Blessing of Wisdom | Proverbs 3:13-35 | Ben Day, Senior Pastor

If you have a Bible this morning, I want to invite you to turn with me to Proverbs chapter 3. We're in the second week of our series in the book of Proverbs, and we're not going verse by verse through the whole book, but we are considering some of the major themes of the book. And in this first month, we really want to kind of lay the foundation, the big picture of what Proverbs is about and the wisdom that it's seeking to impart. So last week, we began our series by talking about, well, what is wisdom? We discussed how wisdom is the ability to humbly discern between right and wrong and the ability to act rightly. God has made this wisdom available to us, and we come to it when we come to a right relationship with Him, that as we fear the Lord, we begin to receive His wisdom. And as we receive His wisdom, it leads us to walk in a right relationship with the rest of creation.

So today, I want to talk about, well, what is then the blessing of wisdom or the value of wisdom? In other words, we might know what wisdom is, but why would we choose wisdom? You know, I mentioned last week, isn't this just that kind of that definition of wisdom, in some ways, it's going to be between choosing, between maybe right and wrong, or the book of Proverbs often gives us this idea that there's kind of two paths for us, the path of wisdom or the path of foolishness, the path of righteousness or the path of the wicked. And in reality, it's not that you just pick one of these paths and then you're there for the rest of your life. You know, that you could just choose, well, I'm going to be a wise person, and then you're just always choosing wisdom. It's almost a daily moment by moment decision. You kind of have to ask yourself, well, today, am I going to be guided by God's wisdom? In this decision that I'm making, am I going to choose to walk on the path of wisdom?

And I say that there's two paths, but really that other path, the non-wisdom path, I think takes a lot of different forms. Sometimes we might not want to choose wisdom because we might want to choose what seems. Maybe we want to choose what's popular with other people, what will help us to get ahead, what seems like it's going to bring the most fun and pleasure. See, we really have kind of a lot of options, it seems, and the question is, well, are we going to choose wisdom? So one thing that the Book of Proverbs does, especially in the early chapters, is Solomon tries to help the reader see this is the true value of wisdom. This is the true blessing of wisdom. This is why you should choose to walk in God's wisdom. And so that's why I want us to consider today, we might know what wisdom is, but why would we choose it? Why would we choose it each day in each decision that we make? So to consider that question, I want us to go to Proverbs chapter 3. I'm going to read verses 13 through 35.

Proverbs 3 starting in verse 13. "Blessed is the one who finds wisdom and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels and 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 ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her. Those who hold her fast are called blessed. The Lord by wisdom founded the earth. By understanding he established the heavens. By his knowledge the deeps broke open and the clouds dropped down the dew. My son, do not lose sight of these. Keep sound wisdom and discretion, and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. Then you will walk on your way securely and your foot will not stumble. If you lie down, you will not be afraid. When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Do not be afraid of sudden terror, of the ruin of the wicked when it comes, for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught. Do not withhold good from those whom it is due when it is your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go and come again. Tomorrow I will give it." When you have it with you, do not plan evil against your neighbor who dwells trustingly beside you. Do not contend with a man for no reason when he has done you no harm. Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways. The devious person is an abomination to the Lord. But the upright are his confidence. The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the dwelling of the righteous. Toward the scorners, he is scornful. But to the humble, he gives favor. The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace.

I mentioned to you last week that throughout the book of Proverbs, wisdom is often personified as a woman, lady wisdom. Last week we read from Proverbs chapter 8 when lady wisdom gave us her resume, if you will, talking about her experience, how long she had been around before creation, there with God in creation. Here we see again at the beginning of this, wisdom personified as a woman. Now she's not speaking, but Solomon is speaking about her. And the whole point of the beginning of this section is to show you how valuable wisdom is. The first few verses, verses 13

through 18 of this passage are really, some people see it as a hymn, but it's really a section of poetry that lifts up how valuable wisdom is. Kind of in the middle of that section is verse 15, where Solomon says, "She is more precious than jewels. Nothing you desire can compare with her." In other words, there's going to be many things that you desire in this world. You often list material things like silver and gold and jewels. He says, "Nothing that you will desire, nothing that you will pursue, will actually be as valuable as wisdom." Wisdom is the main thing that you should aim for, Solomon is telling his readers. It is the most valuable thing that there is. And the reason is, is because it leads to this blessed life. You notice how the whole section of verses 13 through 18 begins. In verse 13, it says, "Blessed is the one who finds wisdom and the one who gets understanding." Then go to the end of that section in verse 18 and notice how this section ends. "She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her. Those who hold her fast are called blessed."

You see the very first word of this section, blessed, the very last word of this section, blessed. That's what scholars will call an inclusio. It's a beginning and an end, it's like an envelope to kind of reinforce what is so important. That wisdom is such a valuable thing, more valuable than silver and gold and precious jewels, because it leads to the blessed life. This word for blessed, it's the same word that begins the book of Psalms. You might remember that Psalm 1 speaks about the blessed person who delights in the law of the Lord. It's the word that means fortunate or happy. What Solomon is saying is that why wisdom is so valuable is because it leads you to have this blessed, fortunate, happy life that God has intended for you. And wisdom leads you to that because wisdom was part of God's creation. It is woven into the fabric of creation. This is again something that we saw last week in Proverbs 8 when we saw that wisdom was there before creation. And wisdom was there in creation. And notice what Solomon says here in Proverbs 3, verses 19 and 20. He says, "The Lord by wisdom founded the earth. By understanding, he established the heavens." Meaning wisdom is there embedded in God's creation. "By his knowledge, the deeps broke open and the clouds dropped down. So he's saying wisdom is so valuable because it's going to lead you to this blessed, fortunate, happy life in God. And the reason it can do that is because God has worked it into the very fabric of creation. In other words, God has designed the world to be a certain way.

And when you begin to have a right relationship with God, meaning you fear him, not that you're afraid of him, but that you have a right relationship with him, it will, just as we said last week, lead you into a right relationship with creation. You'll be able to live in this world as God designed when you are guided by God's wisdom, and this is a blessing. And really the rest of this section goes on to speak about how this is a blessing both for you and for others. So consider what he writes just after verse 20, starting in verse 21 when he starts to speak about the way that wisdom is a blessing for you. He says, "My son, do not lose sight of these. Keep sound wisdom and discretion. They will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck. See how valuable it is." Well, why? "Then you will walk on your way securely and your foot will not stumble. If you lie down, you will not be afraid. When you lie down, your sleep will be sweet." Solomon says, "Wisdom is a blessing for you because it allows you to walk in such a way that you're not going to stumble, that you know your footing is secure." He says, "Wisdom is such a blessing that you can lie down and not be afraid, and you can have sweet sleep."

Is anybody here this morning in need of some sweet sleep? Just know that my sermon should not be the time for you to get that sweet sleep. But sometimes we have trouble sleeping at night. Sometimes we have trouble as we walk. And what he's trying to say is that wisdom actually has something for this in your life. There's probably a few different things that we could bring out, but here's one blessing of wisdom for you that I would love for you to know. Wisdom is a blessing for you because it allows you to live in the assurance of your integrity. Wisdom is a blessing because you can live in the assurance of your integrity. You see, Solomon here is talking about the life that you're going to live. And he tells his readers, the kind of next generation that he's writing to, "Keep wisdom. Let it be a life for your soul. Let it be what you adorn yourselves with, because then you'll know that you can walk securely and your foot will not stumble." Now in this, Solomon might mean that wisdom will guide you as you walk into good things, into good experiences. But I don't think Solomon is meaning to say that if you live by God's wisdom, nothing will ever be hard or bad.

I think when he talks about your steps being secure and you not stumbling, it's that no matter where you're walking or what you're experiencing in life, it's that you can know that God is right there alongside of you. It's got something I think to do with maybe the external, but I think he's really speaking more to an internal peace. That as you walk in God's wisdom, you can live in the assurance that you are walking with God. Or I think that's why he even speaks about laying down and going to sleep. He says, "When you lay down, you don't have to be afraid." I don't think he means that if

you're living according to God's wisdom, nothing bad could ever happen to you at night. But I think he says your sleep will be sweet because there's this peace that you can have when you live in God's wisdom. It's that when you put your head on your pillow at night, you can have a clear conscience. You can know that wherever life is taking you, you are walking with the Lord. And the reason I speak about the assurance of your integrity is because here as he talks about walking in your foot not stumbling, in other places, he will speak about walking in integrity. And in fact, just the previous chapter in chapter 2, it's also a chapter that speaks about the value of wisdom. And listen to what Solomon says there in Proverbs 2 verses 6 and 7. He says, "The Lord gives wisdom. From his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright. He is a shield to those who walk in This is an idea that God is going to be there with the person who is walking in integrity. I think what Solomon is saying is it's not that when you walk in God's wisdom, everything is just always going to turn out right, but rather you can have a peace because you are walking in integrity with the Lord.

You say, well, what does it mean to walk in integrity? Well, always remember when someone taught me this, it's always stuck into my mind about integrity. Someone once shared with me that the root word for integrity comes from the same root word as our word integer. Now, I don't know if you can remember back to those early days of math class, but an integer is a whole number. An integer doesn't have a, you know, a decimal or a fraction. An integer is a whole number. And I think the idea of integrity is the same way. It is the idea of being whole, that you are not divided as I think when the Bible calls you to walk in integrity, it is saying to walk wholly committed to the Lord. And that when you do that, there is a peace knowing that you are walking with the Lord and that no matter where life takes you, your steps will be secure. You see, the opposite, I think, of walking in integrity is to try to live a divided life. I mean, imagine for maybe just a moment that there's a part of your life that you don't want anybody to find out about. Imagine for just a moment you've got a part of your life that you try to keep secret from everyone around you. Maybe for some of you, you don't have to imagine. Maybe for some of you, that's your reality right now, that there is something in your life that you are trying to keep hidden from everyone else. You often don't walk with peace when you're living that type of life.

I can speak from experience. I've done that before. A lot of times when you're living that type of life and you're trying to keep something from everyone else, you always kind of wonder, "Is this step going to lead people to find me out?" A lot of times when you're trying to keep a part of you from walking with the Lord, you don't sleep well because you wrestle with these thoughts of, "When's the truth going to come out?" Or, "When will people really know who I am?" You see, I think the idea of walking in integrity is walking wholly committed to the Lord. And Solomon is saying, "There's such a peace to be able to live in this life knowing that you are walking wholly devoted to Him." There's such an assurance to know that moment by moment you are walking with Him no matter where you go. And maybe some of you hear that and you would say, "Well, that sounds like it'd be great. I'd love to have that peace, but I've not always lived according to God's wisdom. How can I have that type of peace now knowing what I've done before?"

I think the Bible says that there's always this opportunity to come and walk in God's wisdom. There's always this invitation. Wisdom is always calling out in the street, calling for people to come and live in God's wisdom. But the invitation is to come and live as a whole person there, to not try to keep part of yourself off of God's wisdom. In fact, I think the Bible would often say, "What you need to do is to uncover that part of yourself." I think one biblical truth that people pointed out to me at a young age that I thought was really important was those things that we try to keep covered, God will eventually oftentimes the Proverbs speak about the crooked person will be found out. But those things that we choose to uncover, God will cover. It's another way of saying that when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. There's this invitation to come and to live into God's wisdom, but it's something you've got to do as a whole person. You've got to be able to confess whatever that part is, both to God and maybe to trusted people around you. I'm not saying to walk in God's wisdom, everybody has to know every detail about your life, but I think that there is a peace. There's an assurance of living as a whole person as you walk with God. To know that as you follow His guidance, God is near you. He is going to keep your foot from getting caught. He is going to be your shield around you. There's this blessing of living with a clear conscience in the present moment, but wisdom actually has more for you than just the present moment.

The blessing of wisdom for you is not only that you can live with the assurance of your integrity, but also as you look to the future, you can live with the assurance of your eternity. So that's the second way that I would love for you to know that wisdom can be a blessing to you. If you choose to live by God's wisdom, it can be a blessing to you in the present

moment, as you're able to walk with a clear conscience, to live as a whole person in the present, in your integrity. But I think also it gives you a promise for the future that as you live in this world, no matter what happens to you in this life, you know that your eternity is secure. He goes on to speak, Solomon does in Proverbs chapter 3 and verse 25. He says, do not be afraid of sudden terror or of the ruin of the wicked when it comes, for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught. Now, some people read that as maybe still a present day thing, as if there's a temporal time in which the wicked will be caught or they will be found. Maybe that is the case, but many scholars read this as more of a judgment that is coming from God at the end. If you think about the day of the Lord is often spoken of in Scripture. The day of the Lord is the time when Jesus will return, when people will stand before God. And for those who don't know Jesus as Lord, the day of the Lord is something to be very concerned but for those who have trusted in Jesus to know that their eternity is secure, the day of the Lord is something to long for. I think that's what Solomon is saying here is you don't have to worry about when you're going to face the Lord. You can look forward to that day because you know that you are right with him.

The blessing of walking in God's wisdom is that you can know no matter how things turn out for you in this life, you know where your eternity is. The Bible says you can know that your eternity is with God forever. In fact, just to go back to Proverbs chapter 2 again, as it speaks about the value of wisdom, listen to the way that it describes the way that the wise will get to live with God forever. So it says in verse 20 of Proverbs chapter 2, "So you walk in the way of the good and keep to the paths for the upright will inhabit the land, and those with integrity will remain in it. But the wicked will be cut off from the land, and the treacherous will be rooted out of it." Just as we were reading Proverbs 3 earlier, the ending end of Proverbs chapter 3 says a similar thing. The idea here is that those who are walking in God's wisdom, those who have a right relationship with him and are following his paths, they can know that they will dwell with him for all of eternity. When it speaks here about the wicked being cut off, it's talking about being removed from the presence of God. But for those who choose to live according to God's design, there is this assurance that you will dwell with him in his land for all of eternity. You see, I think it's really important at times to keep this big picture in mind. Because in the moment, it can be hard to choose wisdom.

As I was just saying in the introduction, a lot of times it can be tempting to choose something else besides wisdom in each moment. I find that when you're younger, you're tempted to not choose wisdom so that you can choose something that's popular or more fun. I mean, who wants to live a wise life when you're a teenager? That sounds boring, right? You want to be able to have stories to tell one day. You don't want to have to live a wise life. As you get older, maybe you choose not to follow wisdom because you're looking for a way to get ahead. Maybe as you get even farther on, you're looking for a way to make sure your future is secure. The Bible says that sin has fleeting pleasures. Sin usually brings some type of pleasure. It usually brings some type of satisfaction. It just won't last. When you come to these moments when you're choosing between God's way and the world's way, you come to these moments saying, "Am I going to follow the path of wisdom or not?" I think you really have to try to keep the big picture in mind. Sure, I could choose this fleeting pleasure, but is it worth my integrity? Sure, I could choose what seems easy in the moment, but is it worth my future? I mean, thinking about walking with God is an assurance of your eternity. You can have that type of peace as you live in this world.

I remember talking with someone recently who was baptized here at our church, and he just shared about how coming back to Christ has just given him such a peace as he thinks about his future. To know that God has a plan for him and a purpose for him as he lives in this world, but also to know that his place in eternity is secure as he has a right relationship with God. Solomon is saying, "This is what wisdom has to offer you." So I think it's important because there's a lot of times that we'll study the book of Proverbs and we'll hear about wisdom and we'll read how wisdom can set you up for success in certain ways and help you make choices that lead to good things in this life, and that is true. But I think overall the blessing of wisdom is an assurance of knowing you're wholly committed to walking with the Lord. You are able to walk in your integrity, and you can know that no matter how things go in this life, you will spend eternity with him. As we talked about last week, wisdom is not just about kind of mastering this world and figuring out how to live in this world for your own benefit. Sometimes we can approach wisdom that way. I recognize even the analogy I was using for the kids about like an instruction manual for building Legos. It's kind of like it's just kind of us following it so we can accomplish a task. But actually because wisdom is involved in creation, woven into creation, as we saw last week, it gives us a right relationship with creation. Wisdom leads us not just to have blessing for ourselves, but blessing for others.

In two specific ways that I just want to draw out here for you, that wisdom can be a blessing for those who are around you. One, wisdom is a blessing for others because wisdom will lead you to love your neighbor. Wisdom is a blessing for those who are around you because wisdom will guide you to love your neighbor as yourself. When God gave his commandments and Jesus summarized them in the New Testament, he said, "The greatest commandment is to love God with all that we have." The second greatest is like it. It's to love our neighbor as ourselves. In a lot of times in the book of Proverbs, you'll find a lot of practical wisdom about what does it look like to love your neighbor. We'll talk about these in coming weeks, but here we just see a kind of an overview of what wisdom has and instructing us to love our neighbor well. See the instructions that are given here in Proverbs chapter 3. In verses 27 and 28, Solomon says, "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go and come again. Tomorrow I will give it." When you have it with you."

You see, this is very practical guidance on how to even pointing out these subtle sins of omission. You know, sins of omission are when you don't do what you know that you should do. Solomon is saying here that the way that you love your neighbor means not just not doing harm, but doing good when you have the power to do it. That if you have the ability to help someone, you do it. That if you have the means right then, you don't say, "Well, come back tomorrow and then I'll help you." But you do it in the moment. See, Proverbs has the ability to guide you to love your neighbor rightly. What a blessing this would be to the people around us. I mean, think about being a witness in this world. Who wouldn't want to be a neighbor to somebody that is being guided by God's wisdom? Who wouldn't want to be a friend to someone who is living in this way? Who always helps when they have the ability? Who always gives when they have the chance. What a blessing, what a witness it would be to be guided by God's wisdom. You could love your neighbor.

Wisdom helps point out even these subtle, small sins. Ones that are probably really accepted in our culture. Let me think about it. We live in a pretty individualized culture. The kind of typical belief is what's mine is mine. If I'm feeling generous, I might share with somebody, but I have no obligation to do so. The book of Proverbs will actually put it right before us, just as the whole Bible does. That God has given us what we have, not just for ourselves, but for others. God blesses us that we might be a blessing to others. So wisdom has something to say about the way you treat those around you. It can lead you to love your neighbor. It will guard you from sins of omission, not doing what you should do, but it will also guard you from those larger sins of commission, doing the thing you. Listen to what he continues on to say. "Do not plan evil against your neighbor, who dwells trustingly beside you. Do not contend with a man for no reason when he has done you no harm."

See, wisdom has to teach you how to love your neighbor, not just by doing what is good, but at times not doing what is wrong. I mean, in our flesh, there's going to be times when we desire to do things we shouldn't do to those who are around us. Now you might stop and think, "Well, I don't sit around and plan for my neighbor's demise. I don't come up with schemes of evil against those people around me." But do you ever take advantage of opportunities and people at work? Do you ever speak to people or about people in ways that are going to lift you up but bring them down? See, Proverbs has a way of guiding us to be a light and a witness in this world. Proverbs has a way not just to bless us, but to bless those around us by teaching us to love our neighbors. But not just those who God places right around us. Yes, Proverbs teaches us to love our neighbor, those who we might have immediate impact with. But Proverbs will also lead us, the wisdom of God will lead us to seek justice in the world at large.

That's the second part of being a blessing to others that I just want. Yes, Proverbs, the wisdom of God will lead you to interact rightly with those who are just around you, but the wisdom of God will also lead you to seek what is right in all of creation. You know, when you look at Proverbs 3, I think most of it is mostly about just interacting with your neighbor. But I do think that even from the beginning, as we read from Proverbs chapter 1 last he said that he's seeking to give wise instruction because it guides you in things like righteousness and equity and justice. Listen to the way that he puts it in Proverbs chapter 2. Again, what we've been referencing because it has a lot to say about the Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path. Solomon says here, the paths of righteousness and justice and equity are good paths.

You know, I think if you were just to walk out into our neighborhood today and just start talking to people in San Francisco, I think that you would find that many of them value things like justice and equity. You could find that many people in our culture seem to really think that justice and equity are important. And the Bible is saying those are

important. Those are actually really good paths. I think the fact that people value them is a sign that God has made us in his image, and he has placed a conscience within us, and people do recognize in some way what is right and what is wrong. But the reality is that if you don't have a right relationship with God, I mean if you're out interacting with the world but you're totally neglecting the Creator, I think it will often lead you in a way that's unwise. I think so often what we see in our world is people maybe at times they value justice and equity, but they don't always aim for it in the right way because they're totally neglecting the one who created all things, who created the people that they care See, I think this is why we as Christians need to be concerned and involved in matters of justice and equity, because we are people who have the view of the Creator. We are people who have the wisdom of God. We of all people should therefore be interested in seeking justice and equity in our world. Again, imagine what a witness it would be if our church was devoted to. Imagine what a witness it would be to the neighbors who are around us if we were a church that was really concerned about what is good for our city. If we continued as a church for the years that God places us here, and I don't just mean the church as an institution, but each of us as individuals, God has brought you to the city for a reason. And it's not just to be a consumer of its goods or just to be a worker in its systems. God has brought you here to seek the goodness of the city. God has brought you here to be guided by His wisdom, that there might be justice and equity and good things that happen for the people of the city. We have an opportunity to live in this when we are guided by God's wisdom. This is why we as a church need to be guided by God's wisdom. We need to be wise people, not just because it's a blessing for us, but because it's a blessing for those who. Wisdom is of great value. Wisdom is a great blessing.

But as we close our time this morning, I just want to kind of give you one word of warning, if you will. One thought, just as we approach this whole book of Proverbs, again, a lot of this, I see it as setting the foundation of understanding what the book of Proverbs is all about. What wisdom is and why we should want it. But there's something that I just want for you to think about as we approach this book of Proverbs. And that is we need to be careful about making wisdom the goal, as if wisdom is the end in and of itself. Rather, I think wisdom is meant to lead us to our true treasure. So this is kind of what you'll see in your notes. And this is just the lasting thought I would love for us to consider is that we would want to be careful about making wisdom the end. That when we hear about the value of wisdom, we make it the goal of life. Rather, we need to see wisdom as the means to the end. We need to see wisdom as leading us to what is truly our treasure.

You know, you could you could study the book of Proverbs and you could receive the wisdom that's in the book and you could start to think, well, maybe I can get this all figured out. Maybe I can live in this creation in a wise way and I can always make the right decision. Well, yes, there's some goodness to that. But you have to be careful about making wisdom the idol. Because in fact, that's something Solomon actually did in his life. In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon talks about all the things that he pursued except for God. And he lists many different things. But one of the things he lists is wisdom. He says, I pursued wisdom as if it was the most important thing. And just to quote a couple of verses for you in Ecclesiastes chapter one, he says in verse 16, I said in my heart, I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me. And my heart has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge. And I applied my heart to no wisdom and to no madness and folly. I perceive that this also is but a striving after wind. For in much wisdom is much much vexation. And he who increases knowledge increases sorrow. What Solomon is saying is he found out the hard way that you can't make wisdom your God.

You can't just make the ability to see between right and wrong and choosing the right path as if that's the way to go. Because that's making wisdom an idol. And when you make wisdom an idol, it will not satisfy. Rather, wisdom is meant to lead us to our what our true treasure is. And I use that language of a true treasure because here in this passage, I think wisdom is lifted up as a treasure. Just to read from you for you what we were looking at earlier in that opening section. Says that wisdom, the gain from her in verse 14 is better than the gain from silver or her profit, better than gold. She is more precious than jewels and nothing you desire can compare with her. As we talked about last week, I think lady wisdom is meant to point us to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. That when we read this, we should see the value of wisdom, but we should not see wisdom as the true treasure, but rather leading us through the true treasure.

When I was a kid, my mom used to sing me a song. Now I sing it to my boys sometimes. I'm not going to sing it for you because I don't trust. I'm too self-conscious. Okay. But the lyrics are really simple, but it just reminds me of these verses. It says, Lord, you are more precious than silver. Lord, you are more costly than gold. Lord, you are more beautiful than diamonds. Nothing I desire compares with you. And I love that simple song to sing because it reminds us of what we see.

But it's not about wisdom being more precious than anything. It's what wisdom is leading us to. He is our true treasure. I mean, you just continue to read in this section about the way wisdom is described and see that it's not a description of our Lord and Savior. Verse 16, long life is in her right hand. In her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her. Those who hold her fast are called blessed.

Recall our Savior's words in the Sermon on the Mount when he spoke of the blessed people who come to him in faith. It says here that wisdom is a tree of life, bringing us back to God-restoring creation, God-making all things new. It is available to us in Jesus. He is our true treasure. And I point this out because I want us to go to the Book of Proverbs and I want us to learn the wisdom of God, but I don't want us to approach it as if we've got to do all these things so that we are good people and this is what makes us right with God. But rather, I want us to see all these things fulfilled in Jesus Christ and then to abide in him and walk with him and enjoy him as he leads us to wisely live in this world, to realize you don't approach wisdom as if it's something you have to do so that you get God. Rather, God has given himself to you so that you might know him and walk in his wisdom.

The way chapter three ends, just goes back to what Pastor Clark was saying at the very beginning of our service. It says, "The wise will inherit honor, but fools get disgrace." I don't know if you know anything about inheriting, but it's not something you work for, something you earn. You inherit what you inherit because of who you belong to. Bible says we get every blessing that God has for us, not by living the wisest life and making all the right decisions. We get every blessing that God has by belonging to Jesus, by grace through faith in him. This is how we receive the right relationship with God. And when we have him, when he is our true treasure, then we want to walk in his wisdom. This is how we see wisdom as a value, a path to choose. It's by valuing the one who's there guiding us. It's by seeing him as our true treasure and then we can be blessed by wisdom. They can lead us to be a blessing to others.