

HEAR O SONS A FATHER'S INSTRUCTION

I. Proverbs 4:1-5

A. Proverbs 4:1-5 (ESV) are Solomon's words addressed to sons: *1 Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, 2 for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching. 3 When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, 4 he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. 5 Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth."*

B. 3 kids bragging about their dads: First: My dad's so smart he can talk for one hour on any subject. Second: My dad's so smart he can talk for two hours on any subject. Third: My dad's so smart he can talk for 3 hours and he doesn't even need a subject!

C. Let's re-read Proverbs 4:1-5 (ESV) You see, Solomon's only named son received Sunday School pins for attendance but failed miserably with respect to obedience: *1 Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, 2 for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching. (Were Solomon's words and teachings good? Yes--they're now inspired Scripture after all!) 3 When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, 4 he taught me and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. (Did Solomon receive good teaching from his father David? Where'd David's teaching come from? It too was God-breathed and in the Canon?) 5 Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth. (So first you hear the words; then you glean the wisdom from those words; then you let God write those words on the tablets of your heart; and then you turn towards them and not away from them, i.e. you implement them by faith and practice vs abandon them. Can you forsake God's Word and not forsake Him?)*

D. We know Jesus came to do the will of His Father in heaven and accomplish His work. We likewise know that He fulfilled all righteousness, perfectly obeying all His Father's commands and instructions. We also know, implicitly and otherwise, that He grew up as a faithful Son to His earthly father, Joseph. Not only did He apprentice under Joseph in becoming a skilled carpenter, we're certain He kept the 5th Commandment to honor His father and mother (along with all the other commandments) or else He would've been a lawbreaker like the rest of us. And if He had been a lawbreaker, He would not have been the spotless Lamb of God who atoned for the sins of the world. His sacrifice, therefore, would've been null and void and we'd still be in our sins facing eternal damnation!

E. Think about these absurdities: *'God is not a God of dos and don'ts but of mercy, grace, and love--the dos and don'ts are optional!' 'Despite the fact I'm a serial killer, don't judge me lest you be judged!' 'I know there's better jobs than being a prostitute but the money's good, I'm meeting lots of new people, and God is blessing my business!' 'I know I'm not obeying the Lord right now but I really do love Him!' But here's Jesus at the Last Supper: John 14:15: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. John 14:21: "Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me." John 14:23a: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. John 14:24a: "Whoever does not love Me does not keep My words. And the word that you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me." John 15:10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." (Are the dos and don't really optional?!)*

F. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (ESV) says it best: *4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

F. So what about the words we've shared, the truths we've taught, the wisdom we've sought to impart to our children & grandchildren (even our spiritual sons & daughters)? Let's think of those words as seeds. Did we not seek the Lord for good seeds? Did we not comb the Scriptures in order to glean and gather the choicest seeds for sowing into the hearts of those we hold precious? Did we not pray over those seeds and over the soil in which those seeds were sown? Were we not hoping for a fruitful harvest? And don't we still hope for the same even now?

G. Let's grab hold of God's words in Isaiah 55:10-12 (ESV): *10 For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall My word be that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. (Spoken to God's rebellious children!) 12 For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. (I want to sing that song and hear the trees clapping! I'm still holding out hope God will call our seeds to life! In the meantime, I'm continuing to seek the Lord for good seeds to sow...)*

H. Let's ask God to call forth every good seed we've planted. Let's ask Him to cause those seeds to come alive, burst forth, take root, spout up, blossom big, bloom bright, grow tall, and bear luscious fruit that will honor and glorify our most Holy God! Will you pray with me towards those ends? I have scores of people in mind. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 3:7 (ESV) reminds us: "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth." I'm praying for the God part!

I. Galatians 6:7-10 (NIV) is a good verse to go out on today. May the Lord put power on all His words and instill them deep! 7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. 9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

*** Close with Prayer...**

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Proverbs 4:1-5 (ESV)

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Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (ESV)

4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. **5** You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **6** And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. **7** You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **8** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **9** You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Isaiah 55:10-12 (ESV)

10 For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, **11** so shall My word be that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. **12** For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Galatians 6:7-9 (NIV)

7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. **8** Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. **9** Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Film Clips & Article Links

If You're Really A Christian, You'll Obey God - Greg Laurie

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mZGB2fIH08>

God's Love is NOT Unconditional - R.C. Sproul & John MacArthur

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcOzTZUOBn0>

Bonus Stuff

John 14:15-27 (ESV)

15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. **16** And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, **17** even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. **18** I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. **19** Yet a little while and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you also will live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. **21** Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest

Myself to him.” **22** Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?” **23** Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. **24** Whoever does not love Me does not keep My words. And the word that you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me. **25** These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. **26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. **27** Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

John 15:10 (ESV)

10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

1 John 2:3-6 (ESV)

3 And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. **4** Whoever says “I know Him” but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, **5** but whoever keeps His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him: **6** whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.

1 John 3:24 (ESV)

24 Whoever keeps His commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

1 John 5:1-3 (ESV)

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him. **2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments. **3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

2 John 1:6 (ESV)

6 And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

A Father Teaches His Son About Atonement

I read about a small boy who was consistently late coming home from school. His parents warned him one day that he must be home on time that afternoon, but nevertheless he arrived later than ever. His mother met him at the door and said nothing. At dinner that night, the boy looked at his plate. There was a slice of bread and a glass of water. He looked at his father’s full plate and then at his father, but his father remained silent. The boy was crushed. The father waited for the full impact to sink in, then quietly took the boy’s plate and placed it in front of himself. He took his own plate of meat and potatoes, put it in front of the boy, and smiled at his son. When that boy grew to be a man, he said, "All my life I've known what God is like by what my father did that night." - J. Allan Peterson

Martin & Katie Luther Discuss Abraham’s Sacrifice

For family devotions, Martin Luther once read the account of Abraham offering Isaac on the altar in Genesis 22. His wife, Katie, said, "I do not believe it. God would not have treated His son like that!" "But, Katie," Luther replied, "He did."

- W. Wiersbe, *The Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching & Preachers*, p. 191.

Two Views Of The Same Day

Charles Francis Adams, the 19th century political figure and diplomat, kept a diary. One day he entered: "Went fishing with my son today--a day wasted." His son, Brook Adams, also kept a diary, which is still in existence. On that same day, Brook Adams made this entry: "Went fishing with my father--the most wonderful day of my life!" The father thought he was wasting his time while fishing with his son, but his son saw it as an investment of time. The only way to tell the difference between wasting and investing is to know one’s ultimate purpose in life and to judge accordingly.

- Silas Shotwell, in *Homemade*, September, 1987.

Quote by Former President, Bill Clinton

"The single biggest social problem in our society may be the growing absence of fathers from their children’s homes, because it contributes to so many other social problems. ...Without a father to help guide, without a father to care, without a father to teach boys to be men, and to teach girls to expect respect from men, it’s harder."