

IS ANYONE LISTENING ?

Proverbs 3:1, "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:..."

Every time I read through the Proverbs I'm reminded of the times that my daddy, Elder Marvin Loudermilk, would spend with my brothers and I when we were children. Those times are so engraved in my mind because each one was filled with so many instructions of life. My daddy would often ask, 'Are you listening son? This is important! This information will help you in the days to come'. In the verses previously cited, it's Wisdom, the knowledge that comes from the Lord that speaks to the children of God. But are we listening? Are we paying attention to these most important instructions of life? According to the Book of Proverbs, this information that cries unto us to listen (Proverbs 1:20-22) will help us throughout our entire life.

If we could, just for a few moments, consider the benefits of taking heed to the instruction and wisdom found in the third chapter of the Book of Proverbs. In this precious chapter of God's Holy Word we learn that taking heed to the Lord's wisdom and knowledge will give you:

(1) Length of days (Proverbs 3:2, 16). I know there are many saying, 'Are not our days on earth numbered and fixed so that none can add or decrease his or her life?' Dear reader, this is not true. According to scripture, we can die before our time (Ecclesiastes 7:17), and even add to our days on earth by keeping God's commandments, taking heed to Godly Wisdom. In Exodus 20:12, we read the Commandment given by God to "Honour thy father and thy mother:..." According to the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6:2, this is "the first commandment with promise;..." The promise to those who keep this Commandment of God is "that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

(2) Happiness and joy in life (Proverbs 3:13, 18). In this world there are many which search for happiness, but look for it in the wrong places. Happiness is not found in this world's goods, accomplishments, or trophies; but happiness is found walking close to the Lord. In Matthew 11:28 Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

(3) Peace for your days on earth (Proverbs 3:17, "all her ways are peace"). There is no greater peace found in this world than that which is found walking with Jesus. In Isaiah 48:18 we learn by hearkening unto God our peace can be "as a river". In this portion of scripture God is teaching us, just as the rivers flow continuously, so our peace will be uninterrupted while keeping His commandments.

(4) Stability in life (Proverbs 3:23, "thy foot shall not stumble"). In Matthew 7:24-27, we read of the time when Jesus taught His disciples about building their house on the rock, and not the sand. According to Jesus, "whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them", that person will have his or her house built on a rock. Jesus is teaching them, as well as us today, that if we want a life that can withstand the storms that shall come, it begins with hearing and doing what He says. There are many children of God in this world that build their lives on worldly opinions, emotions and carnal thinking, and by doing so, they end up like those of James 1:7 who are "unstable in all his ways." But if you want a strong foundation that can withstand the tribulations of this world, it will require you to hearken unto the Wisdom which is from above.

(5) Safety from the dangers of this world (Proverbs 3:25-26, "Be not afraid of sudden fear", the Lord "shall keep thy foot from being taken"). When you really consider all the dangers that exist in this present evil world, doesn't it make sense to take this instruction from God's Word? I'm reminded of 1

Samuel 22:23 when Abiathar escaped the hands of Doeg the Edomite, who was commanded of Saul to "fall upon the priests" (1 Sam 22:18). Ahimelech, Abiathar's father, had helped David in the previous chapter. Saul of Kish, the King of Israel at that time, was angered by anyone who would help David. So in his anger, he wanted all that would help David destroyed. But Abiathar escaped, and upon arriving at the place where David was, he heard these words from the Sweet Psalmist of Israel, "but with me thou shalt be in safeguard." In my mind I can see Abiathar saying, 'are you kidding me brother? The man that killed all the priests is after you more than all of us'. But David had come to the understanding that the God of glory was his wisdom, guide, help and protection. David knew that if he stayed close to the Lord by keeping His commandments, that "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee" (Ps 91:7).

Dear child of grace, we too, even in this day, can trust in the Lord to be our help, guide, and strength. Will we do what He says? God has spoken to us out of His great love. Will we take heed, or go through this world as a fool without understanding? The last verse of Proverbs three declares "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools." Every child of grace will be in heaven, but there is so much joy and happiness in this life that can be missed by us not hearkening to the Wisdom of God. So dear child of the King, let us always remember to seek wisdom, for "She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her" (Proverbs 3:15). Amen!

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