

Proverbs:

Wise & Joyful living in a world opposed to God

"Curating a Heart of Overflowing Trust in the Lord" Proverbs 3:5

Good morning! Thank you for being here in worship! Before we dive into the book of Proverbs, I'd like to offer this blessing and prayer to the Lord on your behalf:

Prayer:

"...Thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, (you) have become slaves of righteousness." Amen! [based on Romans 6:17-18]

Introduction:

What does it mean to trust?

What does God expect when he says, "all of your heart"?

What does it mean to lean?

Why should we avoid our own "understanding?"

Curating is the process of careful selection, it is choosing items that fit into a particular standard or purpose. Proverbs expects us to carefully select attitudes, actions and to make decisions that will lead to wise living, living that points our hearts to God and points others to want God.

It is difficult to do this if our trust is in ourselves, our life focus is on the things of this world, if we are leaning on and into our perceptions and evaluations.

So "curating a heart of overflowing trust in the Lord" is a way of seeking to obey the command and instruction of Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.

Proverbs 3:5-8 (ESV) says,

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding;

6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

There are four words or ideas that will help us curate, collect with the purpose of highlighting, displaying as evidence of a greater purpose - God's will, God's purposes as our foundation. Could it be that this very idea looks forward from Proverbs to the test of Jesus in **Mark 12:28-31** (ESV) 28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" 29 Jesus answered, "The most important is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and

with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

There are 4 things we are to learn this morning about wise living

Outline:

1. **Trust** in the Lord
2. With **all** of your **heart**
3. Do not **lean** on
4. Your own **understanding**

I. TRUST (in the Lord)

My wife and I have several wooden chairs in our home. Two of them I don’t “trust” in at all. Why not? Because they have broken legs and will not hold us up if we sit in them, they need to either be fixed or thrown into the burn pile.

The OT word for “trust” can mean “to trust, rely on, depend on.” For example

Psalms 62:7-8 (ESV)

7 On God rests my salvation and my glory;
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.
8 **Trust** in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. Selah

Isaiah 12:2 (ESV)

2 “Behold, God is my salvation;
I will **trust**, and will not be afraid;
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation.”

The Bible explains that there are somethings we are not to trust in, like “human relationships.”

Jeremiah 17:5 (ESV)

5 Thus says the LORD:
“Cursed is the man who **trusts** in man
and makes flesh his strength,
whose heart turns away from the LORD.

Proverbs 3:28 (ESV) Warns us against putting our trust in those who make unreliable promises or commitments,

“Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come again,
tomorrow I will give it”—when you have it with you.”

This world and many of the people in it are not trustworthy - they are not “worth” putting our trust in them, you can’t count on them! But that is not true about God. God is always “trustworthy.” The prophet **Jeremiah** teaches us in **17:7**,

God's Warning and Encouragement!

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.” (Jeremiah 17:7-8, ESV)

Trust infers confidence and reliability - our confidence is in the reliability of God's character and his promises. This is why we are exhorted to “Trust in the Lord”. “The essence of trust is a recognition of who God is and who we are.”

God expects whole hearted faith and trust!

II. WITH ALL YOUR HEART

“All your Heart” refers to your entire being, all that you are as a person, your entire life and your lifestyle. It implies the Mind, (the soul/heart/spirit) and the Body. Everything we are as a person!

So the entire phrase points the servant of God to whole hearted trust - trust that is “with all your heart.”

The deceptive danger is thinking that “half-hearted” faith is acceptable to Christ.

- The half-hearted lack energy for God.
- The half-hearted trust God when it's convenient.
- The half-hearted refuse to suffer for the glory of God.
- The half-hearted fail to truly trust in Christ when their faith is tested by affliction or persecution.

What God calls for is what Christ calls for in following him as his disciple -

Luke 14:27 (ESV) Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33 (ESV) So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Peter thought he had given his all to follow Jesus when he said, “See, we have left our homes and followed you.” (**Luke 18:28-30**)

But Jesus corrected, as he often does, Peter's thinking **Luke 18:29-30**, And he said to them, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life.”

III. DO NOT LEAN ON

The primary reason we are warned to not lean on our own understanding is that people so easily misunderstand things, and so easily place trust in things that are not trust worthy.

Both Israel and Judah thought they could trust in Egypt to help them from Assyria and from Babylon, but they were sadly wrong and many lives were lost because this false belief.

Isaiah 31:1 (ESV) Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, who trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or consult the LORD!

Jeremiah 46:25-26 (ESV) 25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, said: “Behold, I am bringing punishment upon Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh and Egypt and her gods and her kings, upon Pharaoh and

those who trust in him. 26 I will deliver them into the hand of those who seek their life, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his officers.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 (ESV) 23 Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, 24 but let him who boasts boast in this, **that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth.** For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.”

IV. YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING

The danger of human wisdom is the pride of first hearing! What I mean is that it is often more the case that a person misunderstands what they hear because they fail to think they could have heard something wrongly.

The writer of this proverb understands the weakness of resting on one's own understanding. That weakness is a failure to admit that human understanding may not actually produce truth, it may fail and be like a weak table to lean on - thus the entire phrase “Do not lean on your own understanding” warns the reader - you could be wrong and if you are, there is danger in leaning on what is wrongly understood.

Ray Ortland in his commentary on Proverbs tells this story about half-hearted trust in God and leaning on our own understanding:

He said, “One of my seminary professors told about his father crossing the Susquehanna River one winter's day. His dad did not know how thick the ice was. So he was crawling along on all fours, gingerly feeling his way forward, when he heard some racket and clatter coming up behind him. He looked back, and here came a wagon pulled by four horses, and the driver was whipping them along at a pretty good clip right across the frozen river. The guy was a local. He knew how thick the ice was. Too many Christians are like the man down on all fours, creeping along, way too cautious. Their trust in the Lord is halfhearted. Then along comes a wholehearted Christian, and he changes the tone for everyone around.”¹

- Do we let the Bible over rule our thinking? Are we a Bible believer or a Bible Yes-man?
Do you merely agree with the Bible or do you obey the bible?
- Do you trust the Lord entirely, and exhaustively? What does that look like that sets you apart from those who reject God?

Frank Sinatra's song “I did it my way” has millions of views on YouTube because our flesh craves self-reliance, and our world celebrates independence. Humility is only embraced if it gets approval from the world.

Look how the writer of **Proverbs 3:5-8** points to the blessings of humble reliance and trust in the Lord:

- 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.
- 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.
- 7 Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
- 8 It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones.

May we be this kind of follower of Christ!

¹ Ortland Jr., Raymond C. . Proverbs: Wisdom That Works (p. 77). (Function). Kindle Edition.
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