

The Pathway to Eternal Wisdom

[Part 2]

Proverbs 1:8 [NIV] *“Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction [4148] and do not forsake your mother’s teaching [8451].”*

The perfect combination for child training, loving discipline and wise precepts.

The strict attitude of the father combined with the loving precepts of the mother.

When one is missing, the training is unbalanced and the child suffers.

On a spiritual level, God the Father sets the standards.

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, received only by what Jesus has done for us, lovingly teaches us the principles set out by the Father.

This is accomplished through our “*mother*” the Church.

The Hebrew word translated “*listen*” is “*shâma*”, meaning to listen intently with the intention of obeying, also to perceive in such a manner as to be able to teach the principle to others.

The test of how well we have listened is the ease with which we are able to teach others what we have heard.

Our actions speak louder than our words.

This is especially true in the home.

Children learn values, morals and priorities by observing how their parents act and react every day.

If parents exhibit a deep reverence for and a dependence on God, the children will catch these attitudes.

Let them see the reverence for God, particularly in their Father.

Also a united teaching of a Biblical based way of living by both father and mother.

Reading the scriptures together and worshipping God together as a family will seal the right teaching and character in the minds of the children.

Biblical examples of this happening:-

1 Samuel 3:19-21 [NIV] *“The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his [God’s] words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognised that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD. The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he [God] revealed himself to Samuel through his word.”*

2 Timothy 1:5 [NIV] *“I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.”*

2 Timothy 3:14-17 [NIV] *“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ*

Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

The references to the mother’s influence here [and also in **Proverbs 4:3 and 6.20**] suggest that education was **not** left to professionals, but was an important part of life in the home.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 [NIV] *“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. **Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.**”*

This reinforces the importance of what was taught and shown in the home.

Ask any teacher today and they will agree that sound teaching at home will make their task easier.

The end results will be academically superior, to those children from a broken home or one where the parents have little interest in teaching the children or have no respect for or knowledge of Biblical principles.

Proverbs 1:9 [NIV] *“They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.”*

“They”, this could refer to the children becoming adults who will bring honour to their parents and grandparents.

Or it could refer to the teaching and discipline of the parents to cause the children to be honoured.

“Garland” and “chain” both refer to badges of honour or success.

Proverbs 1:10 [NIV] *“My son, if sinners [2398] entice you do **not** give in to them.”*

The next few verses are aimed at young men and women who have left home and the daily influence of wise and loving parents, and are seeking a new life in the town or city.

A place where the streets are the realm of a violent underclass, or where the young and poor are exploited by the rich and powerful.

Proverbs 1:11-14 [NIV] *“If they say, “Come along with us; let’s lie in wait for someone’s blood, let’s waylay some harmless soul; let’s swallow them alive, like the grave, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder; throw in your lot with us, and we will share a common purse”*

The problem concentrated on in these verses is peer pressure.

Sin is enticing because it offers a quick route to prosperity, and makes us feel like one of the crowd.

But when we go along with others and refuse to listen to the truth, our own appetites become our masters and we will do anything to satisfy them.

Sin even when it is attractive, is deadly.

We should always make choices **not** on the basis of fleshly appeal, or short term pleasure, but in view of the long-term effects.

Sometimes this will mean steering clear of people who want to entice us into activities we know are wrong.

We cannot be friendly with sin and expect our lives to remain unaffected, physically, mentally and spiritually.

Hijacking, looting, even murder can be financially profitable and also offer the excitement of living “*on the edge.*”

The sense of power over a victim is like the power of death which greedily and inexorably swallows up its victims.

The anxiety expressed here must strike a chord with many parents today whose adolescent children are leaving home.

Wicked people are always zealous in seducing others into their paths, for sinners always love the company of sinners.

Will the attractiveness of the home with its standards and stability be able to be a match for the peer pressure and flattering invitation to adopt the lifestyle of wealthy sinners.

Proverbs 1:15-19 [NIV] “*my son, do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths; for their feet rush into sin, they are swift to shed blood. How useless to spread a net in full view of all the birds! These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves! Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it.*”

Those who make this choice are unthinking and utterly self-centred, and have no idea of the fate which eventually awaits them when they are caught and suffer the consequences of their actions.

They are more foolish than birds, who at least avoid an obvious trap set to catch them.

Going for “ill-gotten gain” is one of Satan’s surest traps.

Satan begins by planting in our minds the suggestion that we cannot live without some possession or more money.

This desire fans its own fire until it becomes an all-consuming obsession.

How can we help young people to see that the unthinking “*gang mentality*” may bring immediate gratification, but its long-term effects can be disastrously destructive?

Perhaps the first step is to admit that it involves us too.

Don’t just shake our heads over the temptations and wrongdoing of the young.

When we look back our lives will include incidents and intimacies that had a destructive effect.

Have the courage to use such personal experiences to help the young to realise the end outcome of making the same choices.

Proverbs 1:20-21 [NIV] “*Wisdom [2451] calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares, at the head of the noisy street, she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech.*”

All this indicates that wisdom is to be used in our daily life, it is **not** just an “*intellectual*” pursuit.

The picture of wisdom calling aloud in the streets is a personification.

A literary device to make wisdom come alive for us.

Wisdom is the mind of God which is revealed to us in the lifestyle and words of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 11:1-2 [NIV] *“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. **The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD**”*

Referring directly to the coming Messiah [Jesus Christ] who will be full of the wisdom of God.

The New Testament also calls us to seek after wisdom.

James 1:5-7 [NIV] *“**If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord;**”*

God is longing to give this to us.

2 Timothy 1:7 [NIV] *“For God did **not** give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”*

Self-discipline is a mind that acts wisely, the spirit of wisdom.

Proverbs 1:22 [NIV] *“How long will you simple [6612] ones love your simple [6612] ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools [3684] hate knowledge [1847].”*

Finding ways to help and guide the young is an absolute priority for change is so much harder in later life.

Galatians 6:7-8 [NIV] *“**Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.**”*

Whatever we sow when young we will reap at the end of our short physical existence.

If we sow the spirit of wisdom, the example of Jesus Christ, we will inherit eternal life with the all-wise Creator God.