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## Proverbs

### Chapter 3 - A Most Valuable Heritage Effective Antidote (vs. 7-8)

**Proverbs 3:7-8:** “Do not be wise in your own eyes;  
Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.

It will be healing to your body  
And refreshment to your bones.”

Proverbs will tell us that the wise and a righteous man will leave an inheritance for his children. You want to leave good things to your children. You want to leave them a heritage that is going to benefit them in the future. What is that? We oftentimes think in terms of financial to monetary, but clearly there are greater things to leave them, and those things will actually bring about prosperity within their lives.

In Proverbs 3, we begin to see these treasures that we should be searching for. In Chapter 2, he talks about the fact that you and I should be searching for the things that God has for us, and these are like treasures.

(Proverbs 3:13) “How blessed is the man who finds wisdom  
And the man who gains understanding.

(Proverbs 3:14) For her profit is better than the profit of silver  
And her gain better than fine gold.”

The interesting comparative is conveying to us that there's a treasure, an inheritance that is certainly more valuable.

As we've been going through Chapter 3, what we have seen are two things in specific at this point that are part of the heritage that we should actually seek to leave our children. The first is the favor of God. The favor of God and the good repute of man.

There's an interesting example of this, if you look with me in the Book of Daniel. In Daniel 1, we have a man that did fundamentally what God told him to do. If you remember in Proverbs 3, he

tells us how we can get the favor of God. Peter will say that we should be growing in the grace or growing in the favor of God. How do we do that? Well, we do that according to Proverbs 3, by keeping His commandments. Now the key there, within the text, is with our heart. That is to say that we should really desire to do it. We can't just go through the motions, but it's something that we want to do. What's interesting about the Book of Daniel is that you can sense that his heart was stirred up to do the right thing while in captivity, while in a foreign land, while in a place where everybody else was not doing the right thing, and nobody was actually standing over him to tell him to do the right thing. But in his heart, he was stirred to do the right thing.

(Daniel 1:8) “But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king’s choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

(Daniel 1:9) Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials.”

If you go back to Proverbs 3,

(Proverbs 3:1) “My son, do not forget my teaching,  
But let your heart keep my commandments;

(Proverbs 3:2) For length of days and years of life  
And peace they will add to you.

(Proverbs 3:3) Do not let kindness and truth leave you;  
Bind them around your neck,  
Write them on the tablet of your heart.

(Proverbs 3:4) So you will find favor and good repute  
In the sight of God and man.”

You say, “Well, if I follow God, I’m not going to get everybody's favor.” No, he's not talking about everybody's favor. You don't want the favor of the evil people, but you do want the favor of good people. What he's talking about is that God will elevate you. If you humble yourself into the mighty hand of God, He will exalt you and you'll find the favor of God.

There’s an interesting passage in the Book of Acts, in which Peter and many of the disciples were proclaiming the word of God. Of course, the Pharisees were getting pretty upset over the fact that this cult, in their eyes, was growing. They turned to a wise man by the name of Gamaliel in Acts 5, and Gamaliel says, “Look, if this is not of God, it's going to go away, but if it is of God, you don't want to fight against them, you're going to lose; you're going to find yourself

fighting against God.” The very fact that you can give your children inheritance as you began to encourage them to love the things that God loves. If you look in the passage, it's kindness; it's mercy. I mean, we oftentimes think of the passage in Micah 6:8, “What does the Lord require of you?” Well, it says it right in the passage. I mean, what is good? What is right? What does He really want? Well, he says, “Do the right thing. Do justice, love kindness and mercy, and walk humbly with your God.” It's not a confusing thing, but the point of the matter is that you need to love the right things. More specifically, you need to love the things that God loves. If in fact you'll love the things that God loves with your heart, you'll pursue the things that God wants you to do, the favor of God will rest upon you. According to Romans 8, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” Could you imagine leaving an inheritance for your kids going, “I'm leaving you this one, God's on your side”? And how powerful that is. So, you can leave that heritage, and it's one of the things that he makes mention of.

The second thing that he makes mention of in Proverbs 3 is that you and I can actually leave a divine direction to our kids; more specifically, if you look with me in verse 5, if you'll trust in the Lord with all of your heart. So, you're training your kids, “Put all of your faith, all of your trust not in man, not in your thoughts, not in your own understanding, not in the way that you would perceive things or the popular vote at the moment, but trust in God, which means that you're going to be listening to Him and doing the things that He tells you to do; believing that His way is perfect. Son, if you stay on this course and you'll put all of your trust in Him, quit worrying about tomorrow.” Fret is really an act of disbelief, isn't it? Anxiety, and all those things that come with it, and oftentimes anger comes within that particular play; in which we just get upset and angry and frustrated over the way that things are happening, but stop, trust in God. Don't lean on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him. Say, “Ok, in the midst of all of this, what's really important God? You tell me. I'm going to acknowledge Your way.” And He's going to make your path straight. He's going to make your path successful. He's going to make it prosperous. You're actually giving this as a gift to your kids. You want your way to be prosperous? You want your path to go well? You want it to be pleasant? You want God to use you? You want to have a fulfilling life? Then stop leaning on your own understanding. Put all of your trust in Him. Probably one of the greatest pictures of this as you go through Scripture is Abraham. Scripture tells us he was a man of faith, right? He was a father of faith. We see that Abraham put his trust in God. Now, what's interesting as you watch the pattern of Abraham, is that as you go through his life, you realize he doesn't make perfect decisions. He makes some blunders, but somehow God keeps putting them on the right path. That's the wonderful thing because you and I are going to make mistakes. We're going to do the wrong thing, oftentimes unwittingly, but God says, “I've got you because you trusted Me.” I think we focus on the wrong thing sometimes, because our own understanding is if in fact, we'll know just exactly the perfect thing to do in any given situation, then everything will go well. Yeah, but Ecclesiastes

says, "Who can know it?" I mean, you don't know what's going to happen the next minute. How could you know the perfect thing to do? We don't always know the perfect way to respond to people because we don't even know their hearts. I mean, it's impossible for us to cover all the contingencies that are out there. So, trust in the Lord with all your heart; don't lean on your understanding. We see in the life of Abraham how God just literally, if I can put it in this vernacular, ride shotgun for him, and protects him all the way through. No matter what he does, even when he makes wrong turns, God brings him into prosperity and protection all the way through and blesses him. Scripture is telling us trust is key. Faith is key. If you'll teach your kids to put their trust in God rather than in money, rather than in maybe their career, or the things that people are telling them, if you'll teach them, "Look, let's come to God. Let's put our trust in Him." You're going to leave them a tremendous inheritance.

The third thing that we're going to look at today specifically is cures. I would say, more specifically, cures for what ails you. There are a lot of sickness and people are oftentimes focused on, well, we are physical, so, we're focused on the physical. It's hard not to be. You know, you get a little sick and it's just like it takes all of your focus on that particular thing. So, in this particular passage, what we're going to be dealing with is a gift that you leave your children. It's not an insurance plan, which is interesting because I've seen parents actually move to certain areas to get certain benefits and take certain jobs to do that. You're sending the wrong signal. The signal that should be sending them is, "Here's the cure, and the cure is faith." Now, what's interesting is the first promise that we actually see through the 10 Commandments, when we tell our kids, "You want to be taken care of? You want to have a long life? You want to live a life successful? Then obey your parents and honor them." So, Scripture is giving us all the way through things that will strengthen us in these days. The wonderful thing is that He'll strengthen us until we finish the course, if in fact we're on His course. So, we're going to be looking at the ability of God to cure.

In Psalm 34, the psalmist says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." Our thought is perhaps that the righteous shouldn't have any afflictions, but Scripture never tells you that. It says many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. That's the key. The cure is the key. It's interesting as we come to this passage, that we're actually dealing with a cure rather than the sense of total protection from any illness. When God called the Children of Israel out of Egypt and they saw all the plagues that were put on the Egyptians, one of the promises that He gave the Israelites, He says, "If you do what I tell you to do, you'll have none of these diseases." Well, of course, by the time Christ comes on the scene and comes into Jerusalem and comes into the realm of Judea and Israel, you begin to realize there are thousands of people that are sick. What is that telling you? They haven't been doing what the Lord told them to do. It's one of the interesting signs, as Christ comes on this planet; He has to heal all this sickness because His people had rejected the way. In Scripture, we begin to see

that sickness, diseases, famine, all those things are God's way of bringing us back to Him. Those multitudes that were coming to Jesus were coming to the Healer, the Great Physician, which God will do. We're also going to see that there is a thing that will protect us and that is if you look in the passage with me, the fear of the Lord. If you will teach your children to fear the Lord, there's going to be a protection and a cure for that which ails them. It's an interesting thought. Read it with me. If you look within the passage,

(Proverbs 3:7) "Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil."

Now, what Scripture is doing right at the very beginning is giving us a comparison contrast of sorts in which it's revealing that to be wise in your own eyes is not to fear the Lord; to be proud and arrogant and think, "I got this. I think I know what to do" is an arrogance that is clear. Scripture reveals this or talks about this in particular in 1 John 2, when it talks specifically about the boastful pride of life. It is the person that is feeling like he really doesn't need to listen at this juncture; that he knows what to do. Unfortunately, we oftentimes listen to the wrong sources and perceive that we know what's best. Of course, it will be repeated throughout the Book of Proverbs, "There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof is death." So, we have our philosophies, we have our thoughts, and especially when sickness comes into the realm, we have our way of taking care of that sickness. Yet, what Scripture immediately points us to is, "Stop. Don't think you know the right way. What you need to do is fear the Lord."

Now if you look at the passage, the promise is,

(Proverbs 3:8) "It will be healing to your body And refreshment to your bones."

"Healing to your body." The King James translates the word probably more accurately, in this particular text. It literally is translated, not body, but "naval." Here again, modern vernacular, "belly button" would be what it's talking about, but the emphasis is that you have the picture of literally the umbilical cord. It's a very interesting picture because it has this sense of attachment. The child attached to the mother, so to speak, and the things that are coming through the umbilical cord, are things that will give strength and nourishment, but it's based on an attachment. It kind of reminds me of John 15, where Christ says, "I'm the vine. You're the branches. Stay attached to Me, everything will be ok." The realization that by virtue of the relationship, that there's going to be strength flowing to you. By virtue of keeping this relationship close and by drawing close to Him and doing the things that He tells you to do, there will be healing that will come about. A healing that is a healing of grace; a healing that is a

healing of nourishment. It's talking about a kind of cure for what ails you. So, there will be a cure that's coming from this interesting relationship.

If you go on in the passage, it says it will be "refreshment," or moisturizing, "to your bones." Your bones are used to describe that which is strong in you. It gives you a sense of stability. Take the bones out of people and they're not going to be too stable, and they're going to run off all over the place. So, it gives you a sense of strength. Actually, the root word for "bones" is "strength." So, Scripture is telling us that it's going to strengthen you in these times. The description that it's oftentimes translated as is "marrow," that fatty stuff within your body that is kind of in the bone that begins to create blood, and actually, stirs up a kind of strength; makes you strong. So, the interesting picture within the passage is dealing with that soft fatty substance that gives strength and vitality, in the midst of difficult time. Now, the key in all of this is the phrase, "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord..." It is the fear of the Lord. The "fear of the Lord" is a confusing phrase, and I think misunderstood in so many different ways. So, I felt like it would be good for us to kind of investigate what exactly this fear the Lord is. I mean, if it is the antidote of what ails me, if it is the cure that we can pass on down to our children, we need to teach them how to fear the Lord.

So, if you go with me to a few passages, one is found in Isaiah 8. If you look with me in Isaiah 8, a description is given to us in a very simple way, what the fear of the Lord is and what it looks like. Isaiah 8, we won't go into all the details of this, but in the setting, Ahaz the king, instead of turning to God, has been turning to other resources. God says, "You don't want to do that. I'm the one you want to fear." And what's interesting, is that fear has an interesting connotation of once again, putting your trust in that which you feel is strong and powerful.

(Isaiah 8:11) "For thus the LORD spoke to me with mighty power and instructed me not to walk in the way of this people..."

Now, what is the way that people normally walk? Well, if you go on, it says,

(Isaiah 11:12) "“You are not to say, ‘It is a conspiracy!’  
In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy...”

Or even an alliance. Here again, I won't go into all the detail, but his point is that they were looking for an alliance with the ungodly rather than an alliance with God.

“... In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy,  
And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it.”

Now, the passage is conveying to us not only that we shouldn't fear man, but that we shouldn't fear the same things that man fears. I mean, all you have to do is go to the TV and go to the advertisements and you'll begin to understand what man fears because fear sells, and TV

begins to stir up in your thoughts, “Well, I need to get one of those. I need to do this. I need to do that.” The point is, they're getting you to think like they do, and they're getting you to fear the things that man fears. The passage is telling us that if in fact you're going to fear God, you don't fear what man fears. It's kind of in the negative. What does fearing God look like? Well, I mean, if fearing God is that which brings the cure to what ails you, then you better find out what it means, and you want to convey it to your kids. Here again, we live in a world that is duplicitous in the sense that what we do and the way we think is, “Ok, we'll trust in this and partly in God.” And God goes, “You can't do that.” So, the very definition within the passage is, if you look in verse 12,

“... you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it.

(Isaiah 8:13) It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy.

And He shall be your fear,

And He shall be your dread.”

Anytime you're fearing anything that man fears, you're not fearing God. So, to comprehend what fearing God is obviously, and as you go on within this particular passage, he begins to demonstrate the consequences of not fearing God, which is that which brings fear to me; if I put it that way. I mean, my fear is that I don't do what God says. Therefore, the things that I fear do come upon me.

If you look in the passage, it says in verse 21,

(Isaiah 8:21) “They will pass through the land hard-pressed and famished...”

What is one of the things you fear? I don't want to be hard pressed and oppressed and in famine, right?

(Isaiah 8:22) “Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be driven away into darkness.”

Is that where you want your kids going? The point of the passage is if in fact you're fearing man, that's where you're going. So, I want my kids fearing God. Put your trust in God. Don't fear what man fears. The world will tell you you're stupid not to be concerned about this. Why should I fear? If God is for me, who could be against me? That's a lack of faith. Be anxious for nothing. It couldn't get clearer than that. When you demonstrate that anxiety and fear over the things of the world you are not fearing. No matter how many times you say, “I am fearing God,” you are not fearing God.

I want you to go a little bit further within this, and really throughout the Book of Isaiah, you begin to see that if you don't go God's way, if you look at the end of Chapter 9, there is no

direction, no guidance, no honor, there's no prosperity, there's no peace, there's no civility. In fact, it's interesting that no man spares his brother. If you look at verse 19, they slice off their brother's arm. I mean, there's chaos that really comes. Of course, that results from turning away from God.

What is to be noted, if you look with me in Isaiah 11, is that this fear of the Lord is actually being used in this particular text to describe the Messiah. So, I think that the word "Yahweh" making reference to fear; dealing with a sense of dread and fear, our thought is, "Oh well, you shouldn't be afraid of God at all." You should be afraid, but it is that connotation of not simply fear but of that reverence. Now, how does the combination look? What does it look like? That's one of the reasons why I like Isaiah 11, because it gives us the picture of the Messiah Himself, fearing the Lord. Why would the Messiah fear? He is the Lord.

So, if you read it with me, it starts off this way,

(Isaiah 11:1) "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,  
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

(Isaiah 11:2) The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,  
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
The spirit of counsel and strength,  
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD."

This is the spirit that comes upon him; the spirit of knowledge; more specifically, of knowing who God is. The more you know who God is, the more it will bring a sense of fear in your life. Now the question is, what is this fear? That's why I like this passage so much, because it follows up in verse 3 this way,

"And He will delight in the fear of the LORD..."

See the word there, "delight"? Now, the word delight is actually where we get the word "to breathe," and to describe it in a deeper way, it's more a kind of breathing in. It is the picture of not only breathing in but smelling. The reason for the word "delight," is it has a sense of a pleasant smell; more specifically, as an aroma that would draw you. So, if you've ever been in a place where they had poisonous fumes, you kind of cover your nose; you don't want to even breathe around those kind of places. Then you catch a breath of fresh air, and then you have an aroma that comes, and it just draws you, doesn't it? That's the picture that Scripture is wanting us to see of the Messiah. More specifically, what's interesting about this is that there is a sense of fear not to breathe in that which is aromatic, that which is good. I would fear not breathing in the good but breathing in the poisonous, noxious smell of the world. The reason why this is such a marvelous picture is because it's a fear in the sense of a desire not to miss out on. If you



look, the emphasis really is that you have an aversion, a sense of repelling anything that would offend God, and that in and of itself would bring displeasure to you. Think about that. When you have a loved one and you say something and you know that you've just said something offensive, whether you meant it or didn't, there is this sorrow and fear. We would probably use the phrase, "Did I offend you? Because I didn't mean to do that." That's what he's talking about within the text. I would say this, that if you don't have a fear of offending God, then you don't fear God. If it's not the most dreaded thing, to you, to offend God, if that's not the most dreaded thing in your life, then you're not fearing Him. This should be the focus of your life. Most of the focus of our life is, "Well, we're not going to get this. We're not going to do this. We're not going to be able to go here." And God goes, "My Son, the most obnoxious thought in His mind is that He wouldn't be pleasing to God."

Actually, Ephesians 5 talks about the fact that you and I can be an aroma. In fact, we should be an aroma up to God, and you have this sense of pleasant aroma. Of course, Paul will make reference to the fact that we are an aroma of God. The desire to please Him is really the description of what we're seeing in this particular passage, and if in fact there's not a desire to please Him, then you don't really understand the fear of the Lord. Now, let me just let me just go back. Do you want your kids to be ok? You know they're going to have afflictions, but what is it you want to be the cure? Well, if it's God, they're going to be ok. I can guarantee it. If God is their cure, they're going to be OK. So, what do you need to do? You need to teach them how to fear God. You need to explain to them, "Look, you don't worry about what everybody else thinks. That's displeasing to God. The last thing you want to do on earth is to be displeasing to God."

Proverbs 8 gives us another interesting picture of this. He will actually define the fear of the Lord. Sometimes you go, "What is the fear of the Lord? What exactly is the fear of the Lord? What does that look like?" And you run across a verse such as found in Proverbs 8, and here it is,

(Proverbs 8:12) "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence..."

I like the word "prudence," don't you? The best way to describe "prudence" is the ability to avoid words or actions which could be destructive in people's lives.

"I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,  
And I find knowledge and discretion."

I look for these kind of things.

(Proverbs 8:13) "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil..."

How succinct could you get, right? If you're not hating things, more specifically, "ra'," things that are destructive; if you're not hating things that are hurtful. The psalmist will say in Psalm 139, "Test me, see if there be any hurtful way in me." The fact of the matter is that there are so many things that we do that we don't even know are harmful to people, but our goal and our desire should always be, "I don't want to be destructive, I want my life to be a blessing." We sing the song, "Make me a blessing," right? "Out of my life let Jesus shine." I don't want to go that route. I don't want to cause hurt and pain to people.

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." Watch as it as it goes on and explains this. Remember, you don't want to be wise in your own eyes? Why is "to hate evil" directly connected with pride and arrogance? They're inextricably tied, if you think about it, because pride and arrogance is that which brings about hurt, it brings about pain, it brings about suffering. It's your pride, and it's my arrogance that causes this.

"The fear of the LORD is to hate evil;  
Pride and arrogance and the evil way..."

Then it goes on and talks about the "perverted mouth." We're going to see how that kind of works through. There's clearly a lot of examples in Scripture throughout all of this, and you begin to realize that there are so many ways in which strangely enough, we're actually drawn to evil. You talk to most people, "Do you love evil?" And they'd probably say, "I guess no." But watch what they're drawn to. They're drawn to evil. Scripture says you have to hate that.

Now, to describe this in a better way, look with me in Proverbs 15. This is an interesting chapter. Of course, all the chapters are revealing some specific truth, but as you begin to realize in Chapter 15 that pride and arrogance, i.e. the evil way, is oftentimes being scoffing and critical. We're facing elections. It's pretty easy to be critical and hostile for the good side. It's really easy to do that, but when in fact you are a scoffer, you're not going to receive any correction or reproof because you're too proud. You're not going to let anybody correct you. It states that in verse 12,

(Proverbs 15:12) "A scoffer does not love one who reproves him..."

It goes on and talks about, "A wise son makes a father glad." (Proverbs 15:20)

Drop on down to verse 25,

"The LORD will tear down the house of the proud..."

Obviously, pride and arrogance are going to be a big problem within the passage.

If you drop on down to verse 30,

“Bright eyes gladden the heart;  
Good news puts fat on the bones.”

There we go with the bones again. In other words, anointing makes your bones strong, heals them. The opposite of that, of course, would be brittle bones, and he'll talk about that and use the phrase “a stiff neck.”

(Proverbs 15:31) “He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof  
Will dwell among the wise.

(Proverbs 15:32) He who neglects discipline despises himself,  
But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.

(Proverbs 15:33) The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom,  
And before honor comes humility.”

Now, he just actually told you what the fear of the Lord looked like in this particular setting. Not only is the fear of the Lord not to be arrogant and proud, listen to people, but the fear of the Lord is to listen to good instruction; more specifically, within the passage to be accepting of reproof or correction. If in fact you're not accepting of correction, you don't fear God. I mean, you want to be healed, don't you? So, listen to instruction; love correction. Don't think you know what's best. Be accepting of the correction in your life and God will begin to use these things in your life.

If you jump on down to Proverbs 16:5,

“Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD;  
Assuredly, he will not be unpunished.

(Proverbs 16:6) By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for,  
And by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.”

Which means that if somebody corrects you and says, “You've done something wrong, you've done something hurtful. You've done something you shouldn't do.” You're going, “Thank you, because you're keeping me away from evil,” right? To not be grateful for that is not to fear the Lord. What's so strange is that the Lord will bring into your life people and sources that you would never think would ever be able to have platform to correct you. I mean, Abraham was corrected by Pharaoh and Abimelech, both unrighteous kings, but they had a point. He shouldn't have tried to pass his wife off his sister, and he caused problems. You don't see Abraham going, “No. Do you know who I am? I talk to God. You don't even talk to God. He comes to you in a dream and scares the bejeebes out of you, but you don't talk to Him. I'm the one that has a relationship with Him.” There's no argument with Abraham because he knows

that God is protecting him, and God is using sources. I mean, David will have a guy by the name of Shimei throwing insults, rocks, stones and cursing him. So, David goes, "Leave him alone. God is using him in my life." I mean, is there a facsimile of truth in what they're saying? For you not to accept correction, is not to fear God because we believe that correction is coming from Him. It's God doing it.

(Proverbs 16:7) "When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Enemies can be a real illness, when you think about it; we call it pain. Stay away from evil.

If you look with me in Proverbs 24, when we're thinking about staying away from evil, and here again, "I am staying away from evil." Ok, so let me ask you this, have you ever been envious of an evil man because he had more, because he was able to do things and go places? Have you ever, ever been envious of an evil person? Then, that's not you hating evil.

(Proverbs 24:1) "Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them;

(Proverbs 24:2) For their minds devise violence, And their lips talk of trouble."

Now, it looks like they're successful at the particular moment that they're in, but you can't be envious of what they have.

If you look in verses 8-9, you can't plan to do evil. "I know, I know. Nobody plans to do evil." Oh, yeah, right.

"One who plans to do evil, Men will call a schemer.

(Proverbs 24:9) The devising of folly is sin, And the scoffer is an abomination to men."

The passage is talking about planning to evil. Once again, the thought is, "I don't plan to do evil." But have you ever planned to get even? Have you ever planned to give somebody what you feel like they deserve? Proverbs 20:22 says, "Do not say, 'I will repay evil.'" Do not say that. Here again, you probably wouldn't use the word "evil," you'd probably say, "I will get even." And God says, "You can't say that."

In fact, if you look in Proverbs 24:29, what does he say?

"Do not say, "Thus I shall do to him as he has done to me..."

That would be getting even, wouldn't it? Yeah. That's you planning evil. You want the blessings of God upon you, right? You want the healing of God upon you, right? Then according to verses 11 and 12, you can't ignore evil when it's hurting somebody else. The thought is, "Oh, it's not my job." And God goes, "That's an evil act, to not be involved." It's a selfish act, really.

(Proverbs 24:11) "Deliver those who are being taken away to death..."

You can't say, "I don't see anything." You can't say that because that's an evil act. To not help somebody in need is an act of selfishness. That's you loving evil. You can't love evil. You have to hate evil. So all the way through, he gives these interesting examples.

Of course, Proverbs 3:27 says when it's in your power to do good, do good. One of the ways that we show that we hate evil is by doing good. That's how we defeat evil, according to Romans 12.

So, you drop on down in verses 17 and 18, you want to know another evil act since we're on the politics thing? Read it with me.

(Proverbs 24:17) "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls,  
And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles."

That's an evil act. Have your kids ever seen you respond in an evil way? You're teaching them to love evil, to rejoice over it.

In Obadiah, that's the whole reason for that particular book. Your brother fell, you rejoiced. You took advantage of him. You weren't sad about it. That righteousness wins is something to rejoice over, but not that somebody falls.

It says in verse 18, if you do this, be careful, lest the Lord see it and is displeased with you, and He takes his hand off that guy. It says in verse 19, an act of evil would be for you to fret over evil doers. In other words, "Evil's winning." He goes, "That's an evil act." The fretting, the worrying is an evil act. Do not fret because of evil doers or be envious of the wicked.

"Do not fret because of evildoers  
Or be envious of the wicked;

(Proverbs 24:20) For there will be no future for the evil man..."

God is virtually saying, "I've got this."

That's why he goes on to say in verse 21,

"My son, fear the LORD and the king..."

He's actually defining with great clarity. Obviously, the fear of the Lord causes me not to associate with certain people. Within this passage, it says in verse 21,

“My son, fear the LORD and the king;  
Do not associate with those who are given to change.”

So, to associate with capricious people that are impetuous, untrustworthy, unfaithful, that would be loving evil. You don't want to associate with those kinds of people because it doesn't matter what they do for you. I know business wise, “Well, there's a real benefit with being around them.” Forget about it. Don't associate with them.

If you look in verses 23-26, you don't show partiality. All of these things are signs of evil. If you resist partiality, if you'll resist the whole flattery thing, then that's you hating evil. If you won't associate with people that are given to change, that's you hating evil. In other words, you need to hate evil, you who love the Lord.

I come to the close in Chapter 28. And obviously I'm running out of time, but in Proverbs 28, if you look with me, you need to mark this one,

(Proverbs 28:13) “He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper.”

That's pride, isn't it? “I didn't do it.” Now Scripture is not necessarily telling us that we should go on the street corner and tell everybody how horribly we've sinned and give them details of all the sins that we've done. That's not what the passage is saying. What the passage is saying is you can't conceal it from God. You can't convince yourself, “I didn't sin.” Why? Because that wouldn't be the fear of God. Does He not know it already? To say, “I'm going to hide it from God,” is just to demean Him of who He is. He's omniscient. He's the one that can see all things. He knows all things.

“He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper,  
But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.”

(Proverbs 28:14) How blessed is the man who fears always...”

So, what is the fear of the Lord? Always coming to the realization that God sees my sins, and I walk with Him in such humility that I always, throughout the day, am confessing in the sense of in the sense of “God, help me not to have this anger within my heart. God, forgive me for responding that way. Forgive me for even thinking that way.” And it's laying out those sins before the Lord as He begins to show you compassion with every moment. If you'll confess your sins, He is faithful and just. Don't say that you have no sin. You're lying, and that's not the fear of the Lord. Do you want the fear of God within you? Obviously, you need to fear always, but if you don't, what's going to happen? Read the rest of verse 14,

“...But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”

You harden your heart. Well, what's the problem with hardening your heart? Well, go to Proverbs 29:1,

“A man who hardens his neck after much reproof  
Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.”

We'll talk about this more as time goes on, but there's a lot of verses that deal with healing in the New Testament. Not only do we see the fact that healing begins with coming to Jesus, that's an obvious, but we also begin to see that God is using the sickness in our lives to bring us to a humbling. Remember how the verse starts off? “Don't be wise in your own eyes.” Now, if your immediate response is, “I'm not.” Now you are because you saying that is revealing, and God is gracious to bring sickness in our life to direct us, to humble us. When you see it, even in Paul's life with the thorn in the flesh, what was the purpose? That he would realize that he can't go in his strength. Well, Paul must have been going in his strength and he must have been thinking because he had been caught up in the third heaven, that he was now somebody. God goes, “I can't let you think that, Paul. I can't let you go around, and I can't let that be your boast.” So, he says, “Well, God put a thorn in my flesh. Now, I asked Him three times, but I realize, ‘Ok, His strength is made perfect in my weakness.’” When you see it throughout Scripture, you begin to realize that God is either using it to bring us to a humbling, which is a good thing, or He's using it in our lives to direct us.

That's one of the things we're going to see specifically in Galatians 4. The whole reason that Paul was with the Galatians, which came about because of his eyes; he was having trouble with his eyes. So, He stopped over at a place that he wouldn't normally stop over. God directs our paths. He brings us to people that He wants us to speak to. He works in our life. He's working good through the difficulties of our life, but the wonderful thing about the believer is in every case, no matter what happens to us, it's for a purpose. There is no purpose and “Vanity, vanity, all is vanity” in the life of an unbeliever, but with us, God is causing all these things to work together for good. Though we are afflicted, there is a cure, and the cure begins with the fear of the Lord.

#### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we come before You today, and it's our desire to find Your curing in our lives; the antidote to the problems that so easily beset us. Father, we realize that when the physical begins to hurt, You get our attention. I have to admit, on many occasions, I have seen so clearly just how proud and arrogant I am. You're saving me. You're curing me. You're fixing me. I realize that as I open Your word, the greatest way that I can demonstrate that I fear You is by simply doing what You tell me to do, and that is believe in Your Son; accept Him as the answer

to all my problems. This is Your beloved Son, You were pleased with Him, and I'm drawn to Him. I am.

With your heads bowed and your eyes closed, I'm asking you to reevaluate whatever your ailments are, reevaluate how you're looking at this. There is a cure. It is the fear of the Lord. Are you doing that?