

# Lean Not

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[ 0 : 00 ]     Wonderful. Please join me in Proverbs chapter number 3. I ask you, do you know the meaning of Christmas? What two truth-filled songs, how wonderful they were written and sung. I read this week, Tolkien wrote to his son around Christmas time, and he says, Well, here comes Christmas, that astonishing thing that no commercialism can in fact defile unless you let it.

What a great way for us to start off December thinking about Christmas and a Christmas musical that makes much about the gospel as it was just sung about the meaning of Christmas. I'm excited that your friends and family and you'll be here tonight to hear this Christmas musical as we definitely celebrate the meaning of Christmas.

We've read our passage for the day, Proverbs chapter number 3. For the most part, the odd number of verses give a command, the even number of verses show the benefits of that.

And so as we look at it, it seems quite straightforward. If we look at the outline of it, if you'll look at chapter number 3, it'll say, Do not forget the law. And how do you do that?

You do that by keeping His commandments and by not letting your heart forsake mercy and truth, binding it about your neck, writing it on the table of your heart. Some promises given are a length of days, a long life, peace, favor, and good understanding, the sight of God and man.

[ 1 : 18 ]     Another commandment given is trust the Lord with all your heart. How do you do that? You lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways, you acknowledge Him. And so promises will be given. If you'll do that, He'll direct your path and you'll avoid the negative consequences of a life of fear.

Then He says, Be not wise in your own eyes. Those that aren't wise in their own eyes, they fear the Lord, they depart from evil. And here's the promise. There will be health in your life as morrowed to the bones.

And it says, Honor the Lord with your substance. How would you do that? It's with the first fruits of your increase. And the promise given here is that your barns will be filled with plenty and that your presses will burst out with new wine.

Such straight, clear instruction from a dad to a son that starts off with my son. So much education and wisdom for life in just ten verses.

We could dedicate more than a Sunday. We could dedicate many days to focusing on these ten verses and what it tells for us to live out our lives. Yesterday after the parade, Tinsley was asking me, told her I was going to go back and continue studying for the day and looking at the outline.

[ 2 : 26 ]     And see, we tell the teenagers, you have what, so what, and now what, right? And so sometimes the what comes pretty easily. I just gave you the what of the passage. That's what it says.

But the challenge, those of you that teach, and you know this, and Ben Cherry as he just taught in the high school, middle school class combined, is that in teaching and preaching that you've got to help people go from the what of the passage to the so what.

You may not know that what we're doing today in this Word really has a bearing upon your life tomorrow and the decisions that you make. That when we say it as it directs your path, we're saying that you're making choices in your life and you need the Word of God.

And with everything in me, I would love to help you connect your life to this passage and it be lived out. Middle schoolers do not want anybody to know that they own a jacket.

You know that? Have any of you heard that? They just don't want anybody to know. You give them a jacket, they go to school and they hide it. They can't ever be seen in a jacket. They'd be embarrassed. All right? My kids go through so many jackets.

[ 3 : 24 ] I'll be honest with you. There's just days of like, there's no more jackets. All right? There's no more budget for jackets. You're going to have to be cold a little bit. Just leave. You've got to go. But they are not taking the wisdom that's given to them.

But later on, they say, no, there might have been some wisdom to needing a jacket. Last night in the parade, we needed a jacket or six or seven. It was quite cold there. We're the same way as adults.

So you've learned to wear a jacket. But there's a wisdom that's being offered you today from God's Word. And you're going to say, I don't need that. What you're talking about is not needed. But you're going to realize that you need it.

It's felt in our relationships. It's felt in our decision making. It's felt in all that we do. We are God's people. So we need God's wisdom. We do not live according to the principles of this world.

We cannot find the wisdom to live out our life as new creatures anywhere outside of His book that is given to us. So I want to encourage you to listen here. You cannot be the bastard of your own destiny.

[ 4 : 23 ] You cannot be your own God. Trust God and let Him direct your path. And this passage cries out for it. We want our lives to matter. Why should you listen to wisdom? You want your life to matter.

I can say that with full certainty. Verse number four, it says, So shall thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Favor and sight of God and man and understanding?

Who doesn't want that? I could probably go outside of LA Fitness with a business card and say, Hey, I'm Trent. I'm your life coach. And you know what I offer to you? I offer you favor in the sight of not only man, but also God and understanding.

If people weren't familiar with the Bible passage, they would say, Wow, I've never heard that that was being offered to you. You know, how would you give this to me? They would want what I was offering to them. Because what person does not want a life of favor with one another before God and have understanding?

Ecclesiastes chapter number three, Solomon answers a question that's given to verse number nine, which is, what is the profit of work? What's the value of all this that we do underneath the sun? Verse 11, it says, He has made everything beautiful in his time.

[ 5 : 31 ] God orchestrates and put things together in his season. He knows what he's doing. And it says, And he has also set the world in their heart so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning of the end.

God has orchestrated a wonderful life. And we are people that it's in our hearts to want to understand his way. We want to know there's got to be more to this than what I can see.

There's got to be more to life than what's just under the sun. We want supernatural wisdom. We want the God of heaven to direct our decisions and our lives.

And so we want to live what would be considered a successful life. So we pause and we say, What do we say a successful life is? Is it financial security? Mark 8, 36 says, What shall profit of man is to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

And we can name many things in here that wealth will not bring security in, that will leave us. And so it can't be found simply in collecting. Would it be in fame and popularity?

[ 6 : 30 ] So many people think that's what it is. If you ask the kindergartner today what they want to be, most of them don't say a fireman or a police officer or a doctor like they once would say. They would say they want to own a YouTube channel.

You know that, right? That's what they want to do. They want to run a YouTube channel when they grow up. And because they've seen that in their lives. And so some of them may grow up in our church and we'll show them how you can use us for the gospel.

But most of them are just thinking, If I could have some notoriety, if I could have some fame, then I would be getting the success that I want. But the Bible teaches us what in Joshua 1.8, where is success found?

It's found in obedience to the Word of God. Thou shalt have good success. All that is written therein, for thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success. So it's going to be found here in God's Word.

And so we go looking for this wisdom. I was sitting in a pastor's office in Peru. It was a great office there, many books. And people would come in and out. I was a student. And I knew, as David Gardner would let you know, I wasn't the best Spanish student that they ever had.

[ 7 : 32 ] But sometimes I could figure out what was going on. And these pastors were coming in. They were dealing with things. And this pastor was going through a hard time. And he says, you know, he's struggling. And they have financial needs.

And there's problems in the church. And he would say, well, what do you say the answer to him is? He doesn't feel like he's being a success. I said, Joshua 1.8, if he obeys the Word, then he'll be successful.

And he said, do you think that's going to be very easy to tell him that it's there? Even though it's not easy, it's true, right? But the problem is it doesn't feel right. It doesn't feel like success is there.

Because we feel like success ought to be found in someplace else. But the more we spend in God's Word, in His wisdom, the more we reckon those truths to be alive in our life.

The more that we know that it's true, even when we don't feel like it, even when other people judging us don't feel like a success, that obedience to God and what He has given to us to do is the greatest thing that we could do with our lives.

[ 8 : 26 ] And then it goes on to teach us that it's not in a quantity of days, but in a quality. Verse 2, for the length of days and a long life of peace shall they add to thee. So this obedience to God's Word is a way to have a long life, one with many days and one where peace is going to be found.

Do you know that your spiritual life can affect your physical health? I don't think you're surprised by that. But the more we look into God's Word, the more we see this. It says, And it shall be a health to thy navel and a marrow to thy bones.

Jesus said in Matthew chapter 9, an extreme example of it. He saw a man, he says, Today you're forgiven of your sins. And the man stood up and walked. Because his physical ailment was connected to the sin in his life.

And the forgiveness of sin brought physical health. The doctors would recommend, or the Bible would recommend to you, Proverbs 17, 22, A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dryeth the bones.

Have you ever seen bitterness change the countenance of a person? Have you ever seen somebody that you once saw them, they seem alive and happy, but then after years of being apart from them, their face has changed?

[ 9 : 33 ] They become dry? Because bitterness will do that to us. Proverbs 4, 20, Pastor said last week that he was preparing a message about Methuselah and how he was just known for living a long time.

Wouldn't we much rather be known as people like Enoch that walked with the Lord? We don't want our acclaim to fame to be that we just lived a long time? Because there's more to life than just living a long time.

We want those days to be full. We want them to have peace. We need God's wisdom to have these things. So first of all, it tells us we want this in life. And when we come to wisdom, when we come to the wisdom of Proverbs chapter number 3, the first thing we should remind ourselves is this has what we want.

This is the type of life that we would want. Another reason we should come to it and seek wisdom, look at how it were addressed. Verse number 1 says, My son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments.

It's implied that the law of God has been heard and understood. It's also been received as far from God and taken as a true guide in life. So it's addressed to him as a son and to his heart.

[ 10 : 56 ] There's many different mediums in which truth could be communicated to us. We know that in the Psalms, those are songs, right? Here God wants to speak to us, but he does it in having a father demonstrate his love towards his son.

And seeing that, we are reminded that our heavenly father did not leave us on earth without guidance that we need. And he addresses us. And when he speaks to us, he says, Son, look at me here.

All right? Jude, look at me here, all right? Look me in the eyes here. But Jude, I'm not just looking you in the eyes. I want to look in your heart. That's what I want to address. That the God of heaven would address our hearts in his word makes us want to hear from him.

It makes us want to apply our hearts to getting understanding. So this is the medium in which he teaches us. It's through this conversation from a dad to a son. And he says, This is more than submission to a duty, but it's about taking and teaching all the way to the heart and keeping it in front of them.

Psalms 119.11. We heard it this morning in our life group. It says, The Bible is addressing our heart because it is a speaking of a relationship with somebody that we love, which is the God of heaven.

[ 12 : 25 ] This Bible keeps me away from sin. Why? Because I have a relationship with a God that I do not want to transgress, that I want to demonstrate my love to. Ezra 7.10 reminds me, For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord and to do it in the teaching of Israel, statutes and judgments.

He addresses our heart. All that we do are about the heart. It's our motivation. John 14.23. Jesus answered and said unto them, If a man loved me, he will keep my words. We love his words.

It's addressed to us as his children, and it's addressed to our heart. So it says, Take this necklace and bind it about your neck and let it be right there in front of you, the same.

It says two things. It says, Mercy and truth. This mercy here is a word we find often in the Old Testament. It says, Faithful love and action. It says, God's loving kindness expressed in his covenant relationship with Israel.

It's the word in Hosea 2.18. When you know the story of an unfaithful wife, but a husband that still loves her, that pursues her, that's that mercy. It seeks after man with love and mercy, as it did in Genesis 3, where man falls and he's in his shame.

[ 13 : 38 ] It was that mercy, that faithful loving kindness that pursued them and that immediately made a sacrifice for them. That's what's supposed to be kept in front of us.

It's that speaking the truth in love, Ephesians 4.15 talks about. A hard and fast and tolerant spirit makes the truth like a series of legal enactments. But what's happening here is that we have this pursuing love, this mercy of God, and the truth, and it is together.

And it should characterize our lives. They should be bound together. That when people would see us, the first thing that they would notice about us, so we see Justice, he has a lapel pin on here. But if he was to have this necklace around him that was mercy and truth, and that's done by not something we would wear physically on the outside, but it's the way we would live our lives, that it would be characterized by being people that speak the truth in love.

It's people that are merciful, that a relationship, a covenant with our God is on display. And that truth would be found there. One person suggested that this ought to be considered just one word as it is called truthing.

And I like that. Truthing in love. Meaning our lives are characterized. Not just speaking, but everything that we're doing. And our actions and the way that we're living are to be filled with truth and love.

[ 14 : 57 ] It says of our God, Nexus 34.6, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious and long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth. That's what's true about our God, and that's what it says that ought to be true about us.

My son, let it be around your neck. Let it bind it right upon the table of your heart, upon the tablet of your heart. You ever consider that, that you're constantly placing something upon the table of your heart?

And it isn't like an etch sketch. How many of you know what an etch sketch is here, okay? Some of you kids say, what did you do in the backseat of the car? Like, dad, let me have your phone. I'm like, no, look out the window. Look, it's boring. What did you do?

All right? I'm like, I looked out the backseat of the car. I was bored, all right? You can be bored. But sometimes you would have an etch sketch, right? And it would be nice that you would write upon the etch sketch, and then you would shake it and be gone.

But these things that are written upon the tablets of our heart aren't shaken and taken away so easily. And so that's why it's so important that we're careful about what's getting written upon our hearts, that we submit ourselves to the words of God because what gets written doesn't get shaken away, but it stays there, right?

[ 16 : 01 ] You have those thoughts and those feelings. You just try to shake them, but they don't go away because they need to be replaced with God's word. And so look at how it's addressed. How could we not want this today? Addressed to the heart of a son.

Addressed to the heart of his children. We also want his wisdom for our lives because we live in a world full of choices. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding.

So we're left with two options, which is a choice here. Either the trust in the Lord, which is what we should do. And what we often do, though, is we lean into our own understanding. The Bible tells us in Proverbs 14, 12, that there's a way that seemeth right unto man.

There's many ways that seem right unto man. There's many ways that are presented to us that seem right unto him. Only the truth of God's word will help us trust in God.

But many people with human philosophy would get us to lean upon something that seems right unto us. Whoever's in the back, would you put that first slide that I have there? It's a quote.

[ 17 : 00 ] I have two of them. One of them is the original and the second one. I kind of have a ministry of correcting quotes on Facebook, all right? Here we go. You are the master of your own destiny. You can influence, direct, and control your own environment.

You can make your life what you want it to be. This seems good, doesn't it? This seems truthful. There's a picture of a tree in the background and some mountains, all right?

How can you not but share this message? It feels right. It seems right. I'm the master of my own destiny. I'm tired of everybody being so whiny. I am going to do what I want to do.

I'm the master of my own destiny. But I fixed it a little bit. Next slide over here. All right. This is a little bit better. You cannot be the master of your own destiny. You cannot be your own God.

Proverbs 3. See, there's one that seems right, but it's not right. It may feel right and it may be aesthetically pleasing to look at, but this is the truth of God's Word.

[ 17 : 58 ] And there's so many people that they're going down a path that seems right to them, but it's the Word of God that helps us, right? It's the Word of God that says, no, that's not true, that this boat, that I cannot be the captain of it, that I should not be standing at the front of this thing because it is more than I can ever do.

I cannot let God be my co-pilot. God must direct my life. If not, I am completely undone. I am not the master of my destiny. I am a child of God.

I am His servant. I live according to what He would have me to do, and I would live according to what He would have me the same. And so we lean not into our own understanding. Reader, we should be challenged here.

The callousness of being independent, our self-determination, freedom to make your own moral rules, and total ownership of your goods are a few of the things that are attacked in this verse to say that these are things that you're leaning towards in your life.

You know, it's not just a quote by somebody that leads you in another direction. It's that independence of yourself to say that I'm going to lead unto whose understanding. It doesn't matter who said that. It's your understanding.

[ 19 : 02 ] Because just like there's a quote here that seems to be true and it's not, I could take some of the things that I think and some of the things that you think, and I can make that into a quote and put your name on it, and it's not right.

But we lean upon those. I don't know if it's just my son, but I know this middle school is really saying, they just lean on everything, right? Just all the time because you're really tired. And being in middle school is very tiring, okay?

That's why they look tired all the time. It takes a lot of energy to be in middle school. And so they just lean against stuff all the time, all right? And I won't name which one of my sons named Thatcher yesterday when we were in the parade, the truck stopped for a second and he just leaned up against the truck.

And I'm looking in the rear view mirror and I'm thinking, this is not a good idea, all right? Like, I've already told everybody I'm not a great driver, all right? I told that to the Burke family as they got on the float.

I'm like, I'm not a great driver, okay? And they're like, really? All right? And so Thatcher's leaning upon the truck and I'm thinking, why would he lean upon a truck? We're in the middle of the city leaning that we're about to move.

[ 20 : 04 ] Why is he leaning on the truck just for a moment? Do you know his dad has leaned upon stuff that's been way more dangerous in my life than leaning on a truck in a parade?

I have thought that I was enough. I thought that my wisdom was enough, that I thought that maybe I didn't have to do what God had told me to do. I didn't have to have those disciplines in my life. Maybe I can make these shortcuts.

Maybe I could do that. It was my own understanding that I created by taking sayings from God's word and grafted with sayings maybe from Facebook and from other parts of life and kind of created my own guide to live by.

It's not a place to lean. It's not a place to live. Our human understanding is faulty. Proverbs 28, 6. He that trusts us in his own heart is a fool, but whosoever walketh wisely shall be delivered.

2 Timothy 3, 7. Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. That there's not enough education in this world that can give you the wisdom that's available through God's word.

[ 21 : 04 ] And it says these type of people that lean to their own understanding. Proverbs 1, 22. How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? And the scorers delight in their scorning and fools hate knowledge.

These simple ones who like experience, but then they stay in that. You know, it's one thing to not know something, but when life's experience that God's word's given to you and you still reject it, then the simple one becomes a scorer because they have chosen to lean on their own ways.

And there's this contrast, either the lean upon your own ways or the trust God. Be not wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord and depart from evil. Trusting will impart wisdom. Proverbs 1, 19, 99.

I have more understanding than all my teachers for thy testimonies and my meditation. I have more understanding than all my teachers because of thy testimonies and my meditation.

Truth gives understanding. Psalm 119, 104. Therefore, through thy precepts I get understanding. Therefore, I hate every false way. So we spend time in the word and we get understanding from the word.

[ 22 : 07 ] We will begin to have a healthy distrust for wisdom outside of God's word. We will begin to hate it and to say, if that's not from God, then it's not for me.

It builds faith, Romans 10, 17. So then my faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. We have choices to make in life. We can either lean into our own understanding or we can trust in God's word and say, I'm willing to do things the way God would have me to do them.

Another reason that we look for his wisdom and his word is because all of us in here have felt the negative consequences of decisions that we were made that were not wise. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy path.

In all thy ways will acknowledge him. Examples of trusting and not trusting are seen right here in this passage. Verse 9, honor the Lord with thy substance and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.

Why do we have an offering devotion on Sunday morning as Ben said in such a great way? Because this is one of those opportunities where we get to say, I'm not leaning in my own understanding that I'm going to do things the way that God would have me to do.

[ 23 : 10 ] That I can trust God. That I can look at all that he's given to me and I can say, God, this belongs to you as everything that I have belongs to you. And I can trust you. And there's so many times, and this is when written right here in the passage, the results being full barns and presses.

And we've learned that when this is not the case, that God has something far greater and far better for us. We say, you know, sometimes I do write and I don't get the benefits of these passages, right? This is what's normative.

God would say, if this is what happens and this is the result. But we know for sure if we don't do these things what are going to come. But when those things don't happen, we realize that God's doing something far greater.

Like in the life of Job, we say, well, where was his full barns and his full presses? And where was all his health? But we got to see the ultimate part of the story, right?

We got to see the super objective, as we learned today in our life group, is that Job was living for the glory of God. And so even though he was not seeing this, it doesn't mean that God was giving him something less than these promises.

[ 24 : 10 ] It means that God was giving him something far greater than these promises. And so as we live and we obey him, there's this success that even when we don't understand it, that God is being glorified from our lives as we acknowledge him with it.

We've also learned that ignoring God's way is ultimately not profitable. The second part of Proverbs 14, 12, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Leaning to our own understanding leads to death.

Leads to the death in our lives. Leads to some separation from God. Leads to some separation in relationships. We must acknowledge his presence in our everyday lives to be able to trust him with everyday decisions.

This has just struck me so strong here lately, that we must trust God and acknowledge him in our everyday lives if we're going to trust him with our everyday decisions, that there are entire industries geared towards helping you not acknowledge that God is alive.

What is one of the great things, as we tell the teenagers, about living a life where you believe that what you're doing that your parents don't know about, what you're doing by hitting a tab, puts you on a private something to see on a computer, is that you're programming your mind and your heart to say that there's moments in my life and there's places that I can go online or offline where God is not there.

[ 25 : 28 ] Do you understand the negative consequences in their lives when they live like that? Because as they begin to tell themselves that I can walk into this and acknowledge that God's here. Sunday morning, we're singing beautiful songs. Is God's presence here?

Most certainly. But now it's not convenient for me to acknowledge God. So now I can go through these series of steps and now God is not here. God's not seeing what I'm doing. I don't acknowledge him. We can't live life like that.

You cannot live like I'm hiding from you. Silas, the one you're in our house, he's the worst peekaboo player ever, all right? All my family thinks he's so great at peekaboo. He's horrible at peekaboo, all right? He had a clothes hanger the other day and he's like playing peekaboo.

I'm like, it doesn't work, all right? What's your problem, kid? You can't hide from me just because you're hiding behind a hanger there. It's not going to work. And here we are with God holding up this hanger and saying, you can't see me now.

You can see me now. I acknowledge you, but I don't acknowledge you. And we're programming our minds and heart to say, God, you're there when I want you to be and you're not when I don't want you to be. But then something happens and you get that phone call and you're sitting in your car, you're sitting at school and you say, I don't feel the presence of God.



[ 26 : 33 ] Why can't I hit the switch? Why can't I go back to feeling his presence in my life? Because you've been so busy toggling the switch back and forth all the time and saying, I want you here and I don't want you here. But the Bible says wisdom is to acknowledge him in all your ways.

I want him in everything that I'm going to. I want him in everything in my life. And so there's so much geared towards making it so we would not acknowledge him. But the word of God, as it's read in our lives, says he is here.

He is present. I acknowledge him. He's active in this world. I feel his presence in my life. And so how is it said in the passage? It says that the Israelites brought their first fruits.

They acknowledge that God was the owner of their property. Leviticus 25, 23. And the land shall be sold forever for the land, for the land shall not be sold forever. For the land is mine.

For you are strangers and sojourners with me. They were constantly being reminded, this land that you've been given and the things that grow on it, they ultimately belong to God because he is present.

[ 27 : 31 ] This is his land. I don't know, pastor's not watching today, but I borrowed his truck this weekend, all right? And I don't, we'll see if he, and as I drove that truck around, I was constantly aware, this is pastor's truck, right?

It's really smart. It has this GPS and it says, I think, I kept thinking, I bet you he will even know how fast I got this truck going, all right? Because it keeps track of everything. I was constantly aware of the fact that it did not belong to me, that it belonged to him.

I acknowledged his presence. And I'm going to tell him that David also drove it this weekend, all right? That's my plan, all right? If anything happened, because that truck will really go, all right?

And so acknowledging the owner's presence, even when they're not there with you. Israelites were having to do that all the time. This land, it's not really ours. It belongs to God. So the first harvest that comes in, we're going to give the God out of the first one, because we're saying we acknowledge your presence in our lives.

And acknowledging in our ways, recognizing his ownership leads towards letting him direct your path. This looks like mercy and truth in your life. Recognizing his ownership leads you to directing your path.

[ 28 : 40 ] But not recognizing his ownership leads towards leaning unto your own understanding. And what does that look like? It looks like anxiety and stress. You know, acknowledging his authority over our ways.

So he's directing our path. And we say that you are in charge, Lord. You have it. But another way that you can tell if you're not acknowledging his path, is there something that you were carrying that you're still carrying with you that you're supposed to drop off and give to God in your life.

Anxiety and the stress of life is a way of saying that you're not acknowledging his ownership of your life. That you are carrying something that is not meant to be carried by you. It's meant to be carried by God.

So in all of your ways, you don't sit down with him and sort it out and say, okay, these are the big things. They belong to you. But here's a handful of small things. I think that I could carry those with you.

No, they carry all of those. He carries all of those things. And so now what? We saw what it says. So what? Why would we not want this wisdom that's available to us?

[ 29 : 45 ] Now, what are we going to do? We have an opportunity this morning to acquire wisdom and to gain wisdom from God. But we cannot lean into our own understanding. If you're in here today and you say, I think that I've acquired enough wisdom.

All right? My beard is gray enough. All right? That is a sign of wisdom. Right? I have, my beard is gray enough. I have enough in life. I've had enough experiences the last many lifetimes. I've heard enough of God's word that I do not need to grow in wisdom.

I just tell you, that's not how wisdom works. Luke 2, 52. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. What would that verse teach us upon many things?

It shows that there's an experience element to it. It's more than just downloaded and something that you check off. Because the wisdom that you have for the day, you need more wisdom as you grow tomorrow. When Jesus taught there in the synagogue, he spoke as, he was a child and he spoke as one as having authority.

But he had not. He continued to grow in understanding and favor with God and man, as it says here in this passage. So that you're going to have to stop leaning upon yourself.

[ 30 : 51 ] And maybe what you're leaning upon is lifetime church attendance. Maybe what you're leaning upon is being faithful in all the things that you did.

But what you're leaning upon is not as good as trusting in his word. New every day. Saying, God, I need wisdom for this season of life. Thank you for the wisdom that you gave me in the last season.

But I'm going into a new season of life. Raising a one-year-old kid is not the same as raising a 12-year-old kid. All right? Being newlywed is not the same as being married many years.

Being and going to the field is not the same as raising support for it. You head into new seasons of life and you need the wisdom available for you. So let's evaluate. Am I living wisely?

Are you living wisely? Well, if I am, it looks like I'm wearing mercy and truth around my neck. It looks like my life would demonstrate that loving kindness, that relationship that God had with his people.

[ 31 : 51 ] That type of love would be shown upon my life. And that love would not be to neglect the truth, that they would be bound together. Because love and truth are found together.

So my life would have this distinctive mark of being somebody that's loving and caring, but is also truthful in our lives. Am I living wisely? Am I acknowledging him and him in all my ways?

How often do you stop and pray and say, God, I need your wisdom in this. We'd all do well to slow down in our lives. We'd all do well to slow down, to build margins in our lives and say, before I respond in that email, I need to talk to God.

Before I respond to that phone call, I need to talk to God. Before I answer my kids and ask them what they've asked me if they can do this weekend, I need to talk to God. I need to say, is there some principle of God's word that will determine the decision that I'm going to make?

And wisdom helps us in those areas where there's not the knowledge about knowing what's to do. It's to say, God, search my heart. I have decisions in front of me. Both of them are good. Neither one of them are sinful.

[ 32 : 56 ] But I need wisdom in which direction to go. I need you to work in my life. So what are the ways in which we would acknowledge him? And then look like a healthy distrust for our own understanding.

There's an arrogance where we believe that we have the answers all the time, that we've hoarded and kept so much understanding and teaching. We know so much that we can rely upon it, but we must rely upon the word of God.

So simply it says, how does wisdom come to us that we need to live wisely? It comes in these four words, forget not my law. Bind them around your neck.

Study the scriptures. Write them on the tablets of your heart. Memorize them. Incorporate them into your life. Every thought about what you have been, we write upon our tablets. Make sure that what is coming into our heart are things that we'd want written on the tablets of our hearts.

Firstfruits is always a good place to look at this question as well. What do we do with what God has given to us? Offering devotion financially to say, this land is not our land.

[ 34 : 01 ] This is not ours. It belongs to you. So God, acknowledge your presence. The talents and gifts that you've been given. God, I did not earn these on my own. They're given from you. So before I do anything, Lord, I want to make sure you know that they belong to you.

These children that you've given us, Lord, they're not just given to me the raise, but we are stewards of what you've given. I recognize your presence in my life. And so we trust in the Lord rather than ourselves.

You know, the next portion of scripture here is going to talk about trusting God when he corrects us in our ways. And so maybe that's what should happen right now. My son, as Solomon said, and as God would say to us, my son, what changes need to be made today in your heart so that you will not forget his law and it will direct your path?

I want to ask you today, we always give an opportunity in here if you have not put your faith and trust in Jesus, the ultimate wisdom that is found in Jesus Christ. He is wisdom. He lived the perfect life.

He died a perfect death so that you who are living an imperfect life and who will die an imperfect death could spend eternity with him. He offers his life for your life.

[ 35 : 08 ] And so we would love the opportunity to share the gospel with you, take you through the scriptures, teach you the wisdom for life and eternity that's found in here. But believers, I want to ask you, what are you leaning against today?

What are you leaning against? Is it your life's experiences alone? Is it all your education that you have? Are you trusting in the Lord? I take you back to Thatcher, leaning against that truck in the parade just for a brief moment.

He didn't stay there. He wants you to know that, okay? And, but he leaned up against that truck. Believers, I got to ask you in here, are some of you leaning up against something that's going to lead you to great failure and the great harm?

The only thing that can be trusted in this world, the world, is his word. And have you made your life dependent on trusting him? Heavenly Father, we thank you for a word that gives us guidance and understanding in this world.

We need your wisdom, Lord. We are not as unbelieving people. Christians in here, Lord, they are people that recognize that you are the creator, that you are the owner, and we acknowledge you in our lives today.

[ 36 : 13 ] And so we ask that you would direct our every path as we look to your word, and we look to you alone as our source of authority. With every head bowed, and every eye closed, and Kristen plays, could I plead with you in here today?

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your Savior, if you've never received forgiveness of sins, today is the day. The Bible teaches us that every one of us are aware of the fact that we are imperfect and sinners.

And so we live with this consciousness of awareness that we're not enough, that we cannot earn our way to heaven. But what are you going to do with that? Wisdom in God's word says the day you would find forgiveness of your sins.

If that's your story in here today, I would encourage you to come down to the altar. We'll find a counselor that would speak with you. You could just come and speak to me after the service, but I'd love to show you from God's word.

Speaking to the believers in here, would you evaluate your heart? Are you trusting in his word for the smallest of things in your lives? Or do you lean upon your own understanding? Heavenly Father, those in the room continue to pray.

[ 37 : 22 ] I pray for those who do not yet know you that today would be the day. I pray for my brothers and sisters. Lord, I pray that they would respond. I pray that they would take the weight off of their own understanding and shift it to a weight completely dependent upon you.

total abandonment to life lived to worship you and to let you lead and to guide us. With every head bowed, every eye closed. Some will pray at the altar.

Others may pray there upon their seats, but do pray. And when you're done, stand and sing with Stephen. All to Jesus I surrender.

All to him I freely give. I will ever love and trust him in his presence daily live.

I surrender all. I surrender all. I surrender all.

[ 38 : 36 ] All to thee, my blessed Savior. I surrender all.

All to Jesus I surrender. All to Jesus I surrender. Humbly at his feet I bow.

Worldly pleasures all forsaken. Take me, Jesus, take me now.

I surrender all. I surrender all. I surrender all.

All to thee, my blessed Savior. I surrender all.

[ 39 : 44 ] All right. If you will, just stay standing with me. Just a few brief announcements. Just to remind you, we sung I surrender all, not I surrender some. So let's make sure that's true in our life.

Acknowledge him in all our ways. As has been mentioned, tonight is the musical. There's tickets. Maybe you have some friends that you won't see this afternoon. So you can send them the link [visionbaptist.com](http://visionbaptist.com) forward slash musical.

Then they can reserve their seat to be with us tonight. We heard them sing this morning. Such truth-filled music, right? Sung beautifully, but just filled with truth. That's a message that we'll come to celebrate tonight in inviting people to be with us.

We could use a few young men to help set up afterwards, set up the stage for that. Be looking out in our prayer letter that pastor sends out on Monday. We have several big dates coming up.

Send-off services. Many of our missionaries are headed back to the field, and they're so excited about it. So you don't want to miss those blessing and send-off services that are for them. And then this afternoon, we won't have a teachers and workers meeting, but the choir is going to practice at 3.30.

[ 40 : 45 ] And so make sure, choir, that you're here to be part of that. Pray for pastors. He's traveling today as he preaches there in South Carolina. He'll be back with us on Thursday night.

Let's look at the big three, staff, missionaries, strategic partner, and country. There's Jen's loony. All right. Jen's got a haircut yesterday. His strong desire to look more like David Gardner and it's taking root.

All right. He looks up to David, so he's doing all that he can, look more like David. And we pray for him. Him and Regina getting married at the end of January, and we're excited for them. And then the Henry family, Patrick, and his family there in Argentina.

So let's be in prayer for them. And then the country that we are going to study and pray about is Belarus. And so you can ask your kids about the questions and the things they learned about in Children's Church.

But let's be mindful to pray for them. I pray that all of you have a great afternoon. God bless you.