

PROVERBS SERIES THREE
FIVE STREET-SAVVY SAYINGS
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Proverbs 3:1-12

Fortune cookie

•SLIDE: “Happiness is sitting right next to you.”
Richard and Bronwyn.

•SLIDE: Truth may be stretched but may never be broken.

•SLIDE: To be surprised, to wonder, is to begin to understand.

•SLIDE: Doubt is a beautiful twilight that enhances every object.
Stupid!

•SLIDE: Doubt is a beautiful twilight that enhances every object.
Faith is a beautiful twilight that enhances every object.

Not true! The difference between fortune cookies and proverbs is that the Book of Proverbs is God’s word.
The Proverbs are true—you can bank your life on them.

•SLIDE: The theme of Proverbs is Wisdom versus Foolishness.
Proverbs 1-9 pleads with us to “Get Wisdom” at any price.

•SLIDE: In Proverbs 1-9 dad gives advice to his children
The father of Proverbs 1-9 exhorts his son to pursue wisdom, promises him success in living for doing so and warns him of calamity should he fail to become wise.

Is your life working or not? The common denominator among those adults whose lives are going well is that they had a wise father.

Foolish parents do not seem to imprint their children with wisdom very well.

•SLIDE: Five Street-Savvy Sayings

•SLIDE: Proverbs 1-9 is seen from several perspectives. One approach is to read these verses and learn the Five Things You Need To Resolve Before You Reach The Age Of Eighteen.

Story of Jerry Day: “You should have fixed this when you were thirteen.... Blah, blah, blah.”

“Did you just say that I was immature?”

“Well, yes, in that area you are. We all have things we didn’t resolve as teenagers.”

•SLIDE: The other approach is from a parental perspective. Here we find the values and behaviors we want to imprint upon our children long before they reach the age of eighteen.

•SLIDE: **PROVERBS 3:1-2: My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.**

Parents early imprinting.

Notice well the blessing that follows: Hebrews words for a long, full life filled with peace.
This phrase is an attempt to convey the fullness of the Hebrew word often translated “peace”.

•**SLIDE**: 1. Saturate Your Heart With Love And Faithfulness.

•**SLIDE**: PROVERBS 3:3-4: Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

•**SLIDE**: Dad: “Work hard and love people, you will do well in this world!”

Strict observation of the words
Love and faithfulness”.

God urged the Israelites to bind the words of the Law on their hands and keep them in their hearts (Deuteronomy 6:6-9); here love and faithfulness receive equivalent status.

•**SLIDE**: Robert Redford on talk show several years ago was asked, “What makes a great lover? Everyone expected the standard mach-playboy response. To everyone’s surprise, he gave an answer that raised eyebrows all over America:

•**SLIDE**: “A great lover is someone who can satisfy one woman all her life long, and who can be satisfied by one woman all his life long. A great lover is not someone who goes from woman to woman to woman. Any dog can do that.”

Faithfulness means reliability (see Psalms 15:4; 24:4). Live with God and others consistently.

•**SLIDE**: **OVERHEAD**: Two brothers were convicted of stealing sheep, and in accordance with the brutal punishment of the day, were branded on the forehead with the letters “S T” which stood for “Sheep Thief.”

One of the brothers, unable to bear the stigma, tried to lose himself in a foreign land. But people would ask him about the letters on his forehead. He wandered from place to place, full of bitterness, died and was buried in a forgotten grave.

But, the other brother, who repented of his misdeed decided to stay at home. He said to himself, “I can’t run away from the fact that I stole sheep, so I will stay here until I regain the respect of my neighbors and myself.

As the years passed, he gained a reputation for respectability and integrity. One day a stranger in town saw the old man with the letters “S T” branded on his forehead and asked a native what they signified. After thinking for a little while, the villager said, “It all happened a long time ago, and I have forgotten the particulars; but, I think the letters are an abbreviation for the word, “Saint.”

The reward? “You will find favor” with “God and man”; that is, you will be an intimate of God and a counselor and leader of men.

Some of you have really messed up your lives. Forty years old, single father, alimony payments, struggling with your job.

Never too late to be wise: turn to love and faithfulness, you can finish well. Children and people around you can be proud of you.

•**SLIDE**: 2. Trust That The Lord Knows What Is Best For Your Life So Do It His Way.

•**SLIDE**: PROVERBS 3:5-6: Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Parents: Imprint early: Choose to live by god's lifestyle.

Leaning has the sense of putting our whole weight on something.
Lean not on your understanding of life.

OVERHEAD: This is the story of Adam and Eve, and the history of mankind since the fall. We want to go our own way and do our own thing, to lean on our own understanding. But our own understanding is likely to take us down the wrong path, in the wrong direction.

Some of you right now are in the process of heading down one path or the other. Learn wisdom before hit eighteen.

Choose the tree of life.

Stacy Smith story. Womanizer; boozier; nylon stocking at basketball practice.

Reunion: Stacy was coming. Didn't really want to see him.

"Hi, my wife and I teach 5 year-olds at N.W. Bible church." Shocked.

Talked to Stacy last Sunday. Married over 30 years. Three wonderful grown children: 22, 24, 27. Lives together. Where any one wants to end up.

Made the right choice early in life.

About a thousand years later, Jesus emphasized this same truth (Matthew 6:33).

•SLIDE: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well."

•SLIDE: Dad: "I know you are going to stick your hand in the fire to see if it is hot. But I can save you a lot of pain if you will just listen to me."

•SLIDE: OVERHEAD: Listen to and be corrected by God's Word and wise counselors. Bring your decisions to God in prayer; use the Bible as your guide; and then follow God's leading.

He will make the paths so clear that you cannot miss them.

Ken Gaub had a faith-building experience that is one of my all time favorites.

He was drained and discouraged. Exhausted in ministry and pastoring in Washington state. Took family for a get away time to think though the issues. Ready to quit. Driving in Dayton, OH when kids wanted pizza. Pulled off I-75 at place with several fast food restaurants. Told his wife to take the kids for pizza, he just wanted to stretch his legs and think. Headed over to Dairy Queen for soft serve cone.

Pay phone rang. No one answered it. 15, 20 rings. He walked over and answered it. "Hello." I have a long distance call for Ken Gaub." This can't be. Must be a mistake. "is Ken Gaub there or not?" Is this a joke? "I am Ken Gaub."

"That's him, operator," said a woman's voice on the line. "I recognize his voice."

"What can I do for you?" The woman began to weep. My name is Millie from Harrisburg, PA. I was about to kill myself. I sat down to write a suicide note when I remembered once seeing you on television. I knew if I could just talk to you everything would be all right. But it was impossible. Then some numbers came to mind and I wrote them down. I looked at the numbers and wondered if I had a miracle from God. What if this was your phone number?" So I dialed the operator and made a person to person call. Is this your office in California?"

"No. My office is in Washington. I am at a pay phone outside a Dairy Queen in Dayton, Ohio." He counseled the woman and hung up dazed. Should he stay in ministry? Seemed like he had his answer. Should he tell his wife? Who would believe this?

"Barb," he said when she climbed back in the bus, "You won't believe this. God knows where I am."

•**SLIDE: 3. Be Afraid Enough Of God That Committing A Sin Frightens You.**

•**SLIDE: PROVERBS 3:7-8: Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.**

The first two phrases are connected. We will miss the correct interpretation if we separate them. If only interpret first phrase, will conclude: “Don’t be a know it all.”

What might “Do not be wise in your own eyes” look like?
It looks like: “Fear the LORD and shun evil.”

There is a dimension of the “Fear of the Lord,” which means “To scare the pants off of someone,” or to be “filled with great dread.”

Don’t take sin lightly. It is a wicked thing which hurts and destroys.

We are talking about a lifestyle that wants to ignore the fear of the Lord. God says, “That lifestyle will cost more than you will want to pay someday.

Bronwyn’s little dog biting pit bull Doberman.

Sarah and Chester’s 28 year marriage had been a good one. Their three grown children loved them dearly.

They were blessed with enough financial security to dream about a retirement home, so they began looking for one. A widower named Sam was selling his place. They liked it a lot and returned home to make plans. Months passed.

That fall Sarah told Chester she wanted a divorce. He went numb. After all these years? Why? How could she be nursing such a scheme while they were looking for a retirement home? She hadn’t been, not for long. She had recently found another man. Who? Sarah admitted it was Sam, the widower who owned the house they were considering. She had inadvertently run into him several weeks later and they had a cup of coffee and later went out to dinner and one thing led to another and now they were in love. There was no turning back. Not even the children, who hated the idea could dissuade her.

On the day Sarah was to leave, Chester walked through the kitchen toward the garage. Realizing Sarah would be gone when he returned, he said, “Well, I guess this is the last time . . .” and his voice trailed off as he broke into sobs.

She felt awkward, so she hurriedly got her things together, backed out the drive way and never looked back.

She drove off to meet Sam. Less than two weeks after she moved in with her new lover, Sam had a massive heart attack, lingered a few hours and died the following morning.

I think God just took old Sam home. Look at the consequences of this verse.

Some of you right today are in the throes of sinful behavior: Cut corners at work. Seeing another woman—or man. Betrayed a friend. Gossip. Glutton, overeating; lazy; proud and arrogant know it all. Pushing drugs...

You are miserable. Path of foolishness.

Stop it and bring healing to your “Navel.” Peace in your bones.

4. Write God A Check For 10% Right Off The Top As Soon As You Receive Your Salary Check.

•**SLIDE: PROVERBS 3:9-10: Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.**

The firstfruits refer to the practice of giving to God's use the first and best portion of the harvest. This demonstrates that God, not possessions, has first place in our lives and that our resources belong to him. Giving to God first helps us conquer greed, helps us properly manage God's resources, and opens us up to receive God's special blessings.

Take an offering: It grips our hearts.

When we get this straight, God promises a reward? Full barns and bursting wine vats. He pledged Himself to see that there is no lack in barn for the one who owns himself His steward.

SLIDE: OVERHEAD: Four Biblical Financial Foundation Stones

1. Tithe: "first fruits"
2. Taxes: Romans 12
3. Out of Debt on Depreciating Items: "borrower is servant of the lender"
4. Saving for the future: "only a fool spends everything he makes."

We must begin teaching our children right now. If we don't teach them, no one else will. We need to teach them that God's work is important. It is a great work.

In Dallas every year they have the State Fair of Texas. Great Midway. Everything costs.

Popcorn--\$3.00

Peanuts--\$2.00

Merry-Go-Round--\$1.50

Roller Coaster--\$2.00

If you spend all Saturday evening, ride the rides, play the games, buy the food, you can easily spend \$30-\$40 on each child.

Then comes Sunday morning. Time to go to church. Parent pulls out 50 cents and gives it to the child to put in the offering plate!

That shows the child, big business is at the Midway. Little business is at the church. The child looks at the two quarters and thinks, "The bag of peanuts bought yesterday cost \$2.00. The Midway is big business—the church is peanuts!"

This ought not to be so! God's business is more important than the Midway or any worldly thing!

"Let every man lay up on the first day of the week as he has prospered."

Church offering envelopes for everyone in the church.

You need to start young. I hope your child has an envelope every Sunday. Pin it to the baby's diaper. Let everyone lay up as he has prospered.

5. Receive Discipline With Gratitude and Understanding.

•**SLIDE: PROVERBS 3:11-12: My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.**

There is a right way—and a wrong way—to respond to trials.

•**SLIDE: Hebrews 12:5-12:**

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son."

•**SLIDE: Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! 10 Our fathers disciplined us for a**

little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

When you think about it, this is how good parents raise children.

My parents were concerned with my character development. In my childhood there was a certain fear of them and what they would do if I got out of line.

They used the Bible as a guideline: and my brother and I are the better for it.

And they mixed Love with the fear. "I am only doing this because I love you. I want you to be someone special and I don't want you ever to behave like that again. I love you."

SLIDE: OVERHEAD: How to receive discipline from God.

1. Don't get bitter
2. Don't give up
3. Don't fall into sexual sin
4. Submit to the Father of our spirits and live.

•**SLIDE: PROVERBS 3:13-14: Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold.**

Let me illustrate this. Tommy Hornberg pulled into campground to rest in Yosemite.

Big RV pulled up and stopped next to a low fence beside the parking lot.

♥SLIDE #20: Tommy noticed in the window what he called an "RV DOG" sitting in the window as if he owned the world.

Door opened and dog raced out of RV and paused for a moment looking at the fence.

Then he raced toward the fence and in one leap cleared it and plunged 500 feet to his death. The owners were beside themselves. Called the park rangers: "We have a fence that looks like that at home. When we get home from a trip he races out of the RV and hops over his little fence. Toto must have thought we were home. We've got to get down there and get his body."

"Sorry, there's no way down there. 500 feet down that cliff."

"But we must. The diamond collar around his neck is worth at least \$5000."

(Tommy figured there had to be a way down and later the rangers would be scrambling to find the body of that dog.)

Set Up *BREATHE*.

CLOSING: Promo sex and sex sketch.

Walk Out: "Every Move I Make"