

## **Proverbs 3:1-12 – Loving wisdom**

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

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

*5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*

*7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. 8 This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.*

*9 Honour the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; 10 then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.*

*11 My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, 12 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.*

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The writer continues to write to his son, and to plead with him. These verses have several different pleas. Each plea comes with a promise:

- That he should hold wisdom in his heart; that the ways of love and faithfulness should always be with him (v1-4). This will lead to a long life, and a good reputation. If we want to be truly wise, it must be sincere. We must root out and destroy all deeper desires than our desire to please and honour and know God, in easy times and in hard. We must always practice the things we know, and not put them aside.
- That he should be guided in life by God, not by his own feelings or ideas, and that he should do this always (v5-6). Then many of life's difficult problems will become simple issues for us. Often God's word is different to our own ideas. The wise person is guided by what is written in the Scriptures, not his feelings.
- That he should be humble, and not proud (v7-8). This will give us strength to live. Do not rest in yourself, but always be repenting.
- That he should be careful with his giving, making sure that God's portion always came first, not out of what was spare (v9-10). Then God himself will take care of us and we will not lack. Foolish people make sure of their own security first; but they give up God's blessing.
- That he should be ready to be corrected by the Lord, and to respond well (v11-12). Then we can grow, and know that the Lord loves us. Often we are like foolish children and we need to be corrected. God corrects us because he wishes us to grow. So do not lose heart, and do not complain if he brings problems; they are his path to growth! The Bible's promises of safety and blessing are not like a business deal; we do not bargain or negotiate with God. Rather, we live his way, then trust him. He will bring hard things too – as he sees best for us.