



Proverbs 4:1 – 4
February 11, 2018

Verses Covered This Week

Proverbs 4:1 – 4

Proverbs 2:1, 3:1, 4:10, 5:1, 6:1, 6:20, 13:24, 14:26, 19:18, 22:6, 23:13 & 14, 29:15 & 16

1 Kings 1:1 – 8

Ecclesiastes 12:13 & 14

If you picked up the paper this morning, you would read that A&M beat Kentucky last night. This proves my sermon point. Thank you so much. That's what you'd read. You'd read the stats, you'd read the score, it's kind of just an academic intellectual A&M won. But if you were at the game, I mean the 12th Man was there. Every dunk was celebrated. Every steal was validated. I mean it was loud, it was crazy, and it was emotional. It was great. When you come to the Bible, I think sometimes we struggle with really understanding it's depth because we approach it like a newspaper after a basketball game. Instead of approaching it like you're in Reed Arena.

Solomon, in Proverbs, is going to say the same thing over and over and over and over and over and over particularly the first four, five, or six chapters because he's struggling, I think, with what he sees in his son. Look in chapter 2, verse 1:

¹My sin, if you will receive my words

Chapter 3, verse 1:

¹My son, do not forget my teaching,

What we look at today, "Hear, O sons," and he's going to talk about his own growing up.

Verse 10 of chapter 4:

¹⁰Hear, my son, and accept my words

Chapter 5:

¹My son, be attentive to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding;

Chapter 6:

¹My son, if you put up security for your neighbor,

Verse 20, chapter 6:

²⁰My son, keep your father's commandment, forsake not your mother's teaching; ²¹Bind them on your heart; tie them around your neck.

He sees something surfacing in his son that scares him because he's begun to realize, and remember this is a compilation, probably toward the end of his life. So he's begun to realize that his son may, in fact, not walk where he should. So in this book, he's going to give you the basis for how to make that occur. Now I want you to look at chapter 4, verse 1. Listen to what it says:

¹Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive that you may gain insight, ²for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching. ³When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, ⁴he taught me and he said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments and live;

Solomon says, "Look, when I was a kid, my dad was the king. Nothing busier than being the king. But my dad pulled me aside and he invested in my life. He taught me what it was to obey God and to follow Him. He's the one that gave me that." And Solomon says, "He taught me two things. He taught me the precepts and then he taught me that I can't just know them. I've got to hold them fast. I've got to let them pull into my life." We have a great program here for kids called Awana. If they get a Timothy Award, I can't remember how many verses of scripture, four or five hundred verses of scripture that they memorized. Which is great. But if all they do is memorize scripture, we've missed it. They have to be taught, you've got to take that scripture and pull it into your life. And so he says, "Look, son, dad taught me. My dad invested in me truth, and that I had to obey that truth." Now dads, and obviously we speak a little bit to dads today, but we're talking parenting. We've talked about this with our Faith at Home deal. We will do everything we can to come along side you, but parents, it is your responsibility to drive the truth into your children. Now he says his dad did that to him. The question may well be, "Well you know really at the end of the day, what's the benefit?" I want you to look at something. Go to chapter 14, verse 26. I want you to listen to what he says because it was his own experience. Now remember we talked about it in chapter 1. There are three fears of the Lord, right. There's a fear that He and I are not OK because of some kind of sin. You drop that out. There's a fear He can't take care of you in life. You drop that out. But there's a fear in which you're in awe of who He is and that it almost creates a deep fear. That's where you go. Here's what he says:

²⁶In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, his children will have a refuge.

Now dads when you take the scripture and you believe it and you live it out, you create a safe place for your children. You create a refuge for them. Solomon, of all people, would know this. His dad did exactly that. He protected Solomon. When David dies, Solomon was protected inside and outside. When David dies and Solomon comes to the throne. Syrians up North, they don't jack

with them. Moab, they don't jack with him in the East. The Egyptians, they don't jack with them. The Philistines in the West by The Med, they're vanquished. When he comes up, the refuge his father has left him, there's no enemy around that can hurt him. And then he left a refuge from within. When David is dying, he's decided that he will not give the throne up until he's dead. He wants to die intact on the throne. And so toward the end of his life, right before he dies, Bathsheba comes in, Solomon's mother, and she walks in and she says, "Hon, Adonijah, one of your sons, has declared himself king with Joab, your military commander. You've promised the kingdom to my son. And he's in danger of not getting it." When she finishes, Nathan the prophet, remember the one that confronted him over Bathsheba, comes strolling in and he says, "Your wife's right. You're going to have to give it up." And so David takes Solomon, he has him go to Gihon and then he has him ride into Jerusalem and sit on his throne. All of Jerusalem is going nuts. They're applauding, they're screaming, they're hollering, they're clapping, Adonijah and Joab are down here and they hear this noise. And they've already declared him king. The commander of David's army. I mean it's the perfect palace coup. You've got the military commander and you've got a son, a prince. It's the perfect calace poup, palace coup. Whatever you say. Solomon has no chance. Ruined that, didn't I. Solomon has no chance. But I love what happens. They're standing down there. They hear the noise. Can't figure it out. A guy walks in and Joab looks at him and says, "Man, you're a good man, I know you've got a good message." And the guy goes, "I got bad news, dude. Solomon's king. David just declared it." This is my favorite next verse, right. You've got the commander of David's army. You've got a prince, not the crown prince, but you've got a prince, you've got blood succession, you've got the commander of the military, so you would think their response would be, "Well let's just go up and take it." You know what the very next verse says? This is my favorite. When they heard the message, they all went home. "Well I guess this is over." They packed their bags. Because when you do it right as a dad, you leave a refuge for your children. You leave a safe protection for your children when you do it right.

So how do I do it right? Look in chapter 22. He's going to give you two things. Now listen to this. Chapter 22, verse 6. Listen:

⁶Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Now here's your job, dads/moms, here it is. You train your child, now listen to what he says, in the way that he should go. In other words, you teach your children the direction of their life. That's your job. Your job is to tell them basically when you walk through life where you're going to face. In your case, you're going to teach your children, you're going to train them, that when they walk through life they're going to face Jesus their whole life. They're not going to turn back; they're not going to turn to the side. Their life is going to be; I am going to face Jesus. That's their whole agenda. You're going to teach them that direction. Now do you have to be perfect as a dad to do that? I hope not. No. None of us is perfect. All of us fail. Who's Solomon's mother? Bathsheba. The greatest moral failure in David's life. He took Solomon's mother and basically sexually harassed her and killed her husband. And yet even though he fell that way, when Nathan confronted him, he went right back to facing Jehovah because he said, "God, it is against You and You alone that I have sinned." You're not going to be perfect as a dad. You can't be perfect. You're not going to be, but that's OK. You're going to have days you don't love them well. You're going to have days you don't discipline them well. You're going to have days when you

take every James Dobson book you've ever read and throw it out the window. You're going to have days when you are not a good parent. The question is not whether or not you're perfect. The question is, even when you're imperfect, do you get up from that and keep walking toward Jesus? That's your job. That's it. It's not perfection. I mean it's astounding that Solomon's mom is the worst moral failure in David's life, and yet even when David dies, the Bible will indicate that his whole life that he had a heart for the Father. Which is true because even in his failure, he came back to the Father. So it's not perfection, mom and dad, you are not going to be perfect and I'm telling you the enemy will beat you up. He will make you feel bad every time you fail. You tell them enemy to get lost. You treat him like you would a Longhorn grad. That's what you're going to, you tell him to hit the road. Because your God has said as long as you keep facing Him, that's the training up of your child.

Now what do you do in regard to that? Now walk with me through some verses. Go to 13:24. Go to chapter 13:24.

²⁴Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.

No reactive, but diligent. His agenda with his son, I want to discipline you even with the rod. Look at 19:18. Go over to chapter 19, verse 18.

¹⁸Discipline your son for there is hope, do not set your heart on putting him to death.

Look at chapter 23, verses 13 and 14. Look at this. Now this is humor in the Bible. But you really serious people won't pick up on this.

¹³Do not withhold discipline from a child, if you strike him with a rod, he will not die.

If you whip him, he's not going to die. He will make you believe that, but it is not true. Look at chapter 29:15 to 16.

¹⁵The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.
¹⁶When the wicked increase, transgression increases; but the righteous will look upon their downfall. ¹⁷Discipline your son, and he will give you rest; he will give delight to your heart.

Here's what you do. OK. You're on the road, you're facing Jesus and you're telling your kids this is where we're going. We're walking and we're facing Jesus. Your kids do not know where the edges of the road are. You do, but they don't. So they're going to veer back and forth on this road and there's some freedom on this road. But when they get to this place where they step over, you're responsible for bringing discipline into their life. When they're little, that may mean spanking. And I'm telling you, when you bring the rod, and when they get older obviously you're going to move away from that spanking, but understand that the rod, there were people in my second church that gave us the greatest wisdom in discipline. They said, "When you discipline your kid, it should be an event. He should come to a place where you go, 'You know, the joy of the rebellion is outweighed by the pain of this moment.'" He should, it should be an event. So you're going to bring discipline to your child when he steps here, because and the problem is,

because there's a great deal of freedom in this road. Your kid comes to you, he's 10th grade, he says, "Dad I'm going to the school dance and I'm taking Wilma." OK. Can, is that violating the road? 30 years ago it was. I wouldn't have used this illustration a while back. But can he go to a dance? He's Baptist. Yes, he can. So I'm gifted. So he goes to the dance. Can he line dance with a girl? Absolutely, not a problem. Can he hold her and dance? I can see the parents going. Yes, he can. Maybe when we need to continue this longer than I think. But when Wilma's dad calls you and says, "Your son touched my daughter where he shouldn't have while they were dancing." You now have a responsibility to bring your son in and say, "Son you can dance, you can line dance, you can hold, but you may not ever touch what is reserved for marriage." So now what you've done with that rod of discipline, is you have let him know, you've got a lot of freedom here, but here's where the edge is. So your job in disciplining your children is not just to beat the fire out of them, although it feels good at times, your job is to show them where you're facing and then through your discipline of their lives, to show them where the edges are.

Now the question obviously I'm going to get is, "If I do that, do I have the guarantee that my kids will embrace my Jesus?" Now that's the hard question. I've seen good kids come out of bad homes and I've seen bad kids come out of good homes. It is hard and it is a question. The verse we read, the first one, train up a child in the way he should go and he shall not depart from it. You need to understand a couple things about the proverbs and then let me give you the best example that I can. There are proverbs that are absolute: the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It's always true. Soft answer turns away wrath is not always true. It's generally true. There's many a woman who's lived with a husband who is vile, who no matter how soft her answer is, his reaction was anger and beating her. That's generally true, so you live it out, and so what do we do with train up a child in the way he should go he shall not depart from it? I don't have all the answers, but let me tell you a couple things I do know. Here's the first thing. You need to understand what God's given you. Now I always love people that just got married and they find out they're pregnant and they're so excited, right. I can't wait, we'll have a little baby. It's a little boy. We're so excited. We've got the bedroom, it's all blue, it's great. Like he knows. Birth comes, everybody's healthy, everybody's going nuts. Grandparents are in there going, "This is great. He's just so cute. He's got your dad's nose. We're so sorry." Everybody's pumped, everybody's excited. You take that little guy home, he's so cute, you put him in the bed, you both look at him, you go, "Isn't he wonderful?" And then this moment comes. You call your parents, and you think it's a good moment, you call your parents and go, "Mom, Johnny turned over today." That's the end of your life right there. When they become mobile is when you understand that God has given you a wicked, little sinner. He's going to pull everything down that he can. He's going to pull it on his head, and I don't think that's bad sometimes. Maybe he'll learn. But you're going to discover, you've got a wicked, little sinner. So when you bring him up and you're training him, and I'm telling you, you ask a parent that's got a 4 or 5-year-old, you ask them, "How do you feel about your child?" This is what you're going to hear, if they're honest, this is what you're going to hear. "I love my child today. Didn't yesterday and I may not tomorrow. But today I love him." Because what happens is you're walking toward Jesus, you've got this cute little kid, and he's following you, right, in the road. And you're trying to teach him where the edges are. You turn around and look and he's not only left the road, he is on a road you did not know was there. So you go over and you grab him and you pull him back and you put him back on the road and you do the discipline thing and you're walking along and you turn around and he's gone and he's on another road you had no idea was there. I remember I ran into a lady in this church one night

at the grocery store. It was about 10 o'clock. I walked by, she had a 4-year-old in the basket. I said, "How are you doing?" She didn't say, "Hello." These are the exact words out of her mouth. She looked at me and she said, "He is vile." So for those of you who are going, "We're so pregnant and so excited." OK.

Now you're going to struggle because your kid is going to fight you. But the reason you discipline him is you show him where the edges are and you show him, "Son, here are the edges and we're all going to walk toward Jesus as a family." So you do that. Now he's going to struggle because he's a sinner. The other issue you're going to face is, and this creates sometimes distance, you raise a kid, you've walked toward Jesus, he's seen that, he goes to college, this is the hard part for parents, but when he goes to college, he's going to have to make a choice. That your faith becomes his faith and he's going to have to wrestle with that. And sometimes in college, that means he's going to fall away and step away and may do some braindead things, but he's got to come to a point where your faith is not his faith, but his faith is his faith based on your faith. And so he's going to struggle there. And you're going to have to walk through that. Now so again, with those two things in mind, if I do it as best I can, right, will it win out in his life? The best answer I can give you is David, Solomon, and Solomon's son Rehoboam, that he is dying about. David, Solomon grew up watching his dad walk toward Jesus. It's with his mom that he has his worst moment, right. But even in that he turns around and faces Jesus. So that when he dies, his dad dies, and Solomon's got to look and go, "Dad, he wasn't perfect, but his direction was always Jehovah." Now that impacted Solomon's life, right. Because when Solomon comes to the throne and he's the one chosen to build the temple, and God comes to him and says, "What can I do for you?" And instead of saying, "I want this, this, this, and this, he said, God, look, I'm not smart enough to lead these people and so I need Your wisdom." And there's this gushing pronouncement from the Father about how great that is in the life of Solomon. So he starts out good, right. Now walk with me. So David spends his life looking at Jehovah, turns to the side, but comes back. So he spends his life there. Solomon begins his life looking at Jehovah and walking. But at one point, he becomes terrified because he begins to think about Syrians in the North, the Moabites (East), the Egyptians (West), some of the Philistines still there, and he begins to fear that he's not his dad. Now listen to this carefully.

¹Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, Hittite women, ²from the nations concerning which the Lord said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them,

Now here's what it says.

³...his wives turned away his heart. ⁴When Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord as God, as was the heart of David his father.

You hear that? David, his father's heart, the Bible says was wholly true. Even with the failure with Bathsheba. He was wholly true because even there he kept his face toward Jehovah.

⁵Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord

and did not wholly follow the Lord as David, his father, had done. ⁷Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and here's the worst one, for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites on the mountain East of Jerusalem. ⁸And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

The abominations in those gods, I can't tell you what they are because we have children in the room. So here's what happened. Solomon is walking toward Jehovah. David turned aside and then came back. Solomon does not do that. Solomon doesn't turn aside. He turns completely backwards and starts walking completely away from Jehovah. He embraced abominable practices that again, I can't even mention in this room. He worshiped, I mean the best description would be to me, if I come in next Sunday and say to you, "I've changed my mind about Jesus, and I think Allah is right. I think Mohammed's better than Jesus and I'm becoming a Muslim." That's exactly what Solomon does. Now so he falls, but I want you to listen to the last thing that he writes before he dies. Listen to this. This is the last thing.

¹³The end of the matter, all has been heard; fear God, keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing whether good or evil.

At the end of his life, something happened and he ended looking back. His son, Rehoboam, who watched dad turn away from Jehovah, and not just step aside and keep looking, but literally turn away, the son that he is emotionally writing to in this book, that son will not come back. As a matter of fact, the Bible will indicate his foolishness, God uses to split the kingdom, because it's under Rehoboam that the 10 nations, 10 tribes, leave and never return. And then the Bible indicates that under his reign, in Jerusalem, in Judah, at the temple, that he embraced the same gods that his dad turned towards. So this is my best answer for you. If you walk like David, you have a Bathsheba moment, but you keep focused on Jesus, I think your kids will embrace that faith. But if you turn around, and you walk toward Islam or Buddhism and you step away, even if you come back at the end, your kids will embrace your turn. I think your children will embrace where your direction and your beliefs come together.

So if you face Christ, even with a Bathsheba moment, your kid may struggle, they may today not be where they should be, but I think you can wait and let God deal with them. So at the end of the day, the only thing I want is when I go to the grave, if somebody ask my kids, "Was dad perfect?" I know that answer. No. But if they ask them, if they ask them, "Where was he always looking?" I hope that it was always Jesus.

Father, I want to end well and I think that's the heartbeat in this room. So Father I ask a couple things today. For those parents that are just tired, Father let them know they're not losing. For those parents in here, Father, who have not stepped away from facing Christ, let them know that if their kids are not where they ought to be, they're going to come back. And Father for those parents that need to fix that today, let this be a day when they do that. Thank You that You honor us in our homes and that if we allow You, You will bless them and deepen them and make them a place of deep refuge. Thank You. In Jesus name.