

followed by an empty and depressing morning—boisterous laughs that are hollow. Solomon encouraged his son to be wise and to **be on the right path, and he will find hope**. “**Heaven will surely be worth it all**”—but not just Heaven! For we find a taste of Heaven on the earth as we follow Him and His Word. There’s something wonderful about going to the doctor and knowing I have no chance of a liver eaten up from alcohol abuse or body broken by STDs. There’s something great paying my taxes and knowing I have next to no chance of an audit. And there’s something phenomenal about knowing I can go into a review at work and know that, should it go sideways, I’ll have a Christian family to support and help me.

**PV 3.1-8** ~ *My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, <sup>2</sup>for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. <sup>3</sup>Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. <sup>4</sup>So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. <sup>5</sup>Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. <sup>6</sup>In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. <sup>7</sup>Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. <sup>8</sup>It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.*

### **CONCLUSION: Be Faithful, and You Will Find Joy (23.22-28)**

**PV 23.22-25** ~ *Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. <sup>23</sup>Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding. <sup>24</sup>The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him. <sup>25</sup>Let your father and mother be glad; let her who bore you rejoice.*

In this 18<sup>th</sup> statement, Solomon summarizes the importance of **learning, being corrected, being wise, and being on the right path**. In summation, he calls for them to **be faithful**. For out of that faithfulness will come **joy**.

**PV 2.1-15** ~ *My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, <sup>2</sup>making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; <sup>3</sup>yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, <sup>4</sup>if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, <sup>5</sup>then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. <sup>6</sup>For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; <sup>7</sup>he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, <sup>8</sup>guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. <sup>9</sup>Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; <sup>10</sup>for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; <sup>11</sup>discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you, <sup>12</sup>delivering you from the way of evil, from men of perverted speech, <sup>13</sup>who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness, <sup>14</sup>who rejoice in doing evil and delight in the perverseness of evil, <sup>15</sup>men whose paths are crooked, and who are devising in their ways.*

We don’t really know what we’re doing. But we have a God who’s provided for us His Word guidance, wisdom, and direction to a people trembling with uncertainty.

**CS 3.15-17** ~ *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup>Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. <sup>17</sup>And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

### **INVITATION**

#643 [EXP-OTW]  
06/26/2025

**From a Father to His Son: Part 3** PV 23.12-23.28  
PC X Pchd **BL- 06/28/2025**

**QUESTION:** What can we learn from the 30 sayings of Solomon to his son?

### **TRN TO PV 23**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

**ILL—A Positive Pregnancy Test** (just over 15 years ago Erin came to me with our first positive; we were both overjoyed; but shortly afterwards, I was overwhelmed) What was I going to do? I was working for a wage only slightly above the minimum at the electric company. I was living in a house that was too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. I felt like all I had to offer my future child was nothing but debt and stupid geeky references to 80s culture.

But time waits for no man, and 9 months later, I was holding her in my arms (wearing a stupid **Green Lantern** t-shirt—because, of course I was). **What on earth would I have to offer for this little girl?** Thankfully, a helpful nurse was there to advise me: to guide me in how to hold her, safe in my trembling arms.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Three weeks ago, we started looking at the writings of Solomon in **PV 22-24**. Contained in these three chapters are 30 sayings from a father to his son: born out of a deep desire to help his son to grow and learn and be successful.

**PV 22.17-21** ~ *Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge, <sup>18</sup>for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, if all of them are ready on your lips. <sup>19</sup>That your trust may be in the Lord, I have made them known to you today, even to you. <sup>20</sup>Have I not written for you thirty sayings of counsel and knowledge, <sup>21</sup>to make you know what is right and true, that you may give a true answer to those who sent you?*

Like any father, Solomon simply wanted his son to succeed in life. And from these statement, we see some of his go-to advice for how to survive in a world that’s intently against you. And while we may not be as wise as he was, we can take the advise he offers, like a nurse at our side, helping to steady our arms and our steps.

#### **BD1: Be Willing to Learn, and You Will Learn (23.12)**

#### **EDUCATION/Cost/Annual Expenditure Per Student - USA**

If there’s anything we prioritize as a society, it’s education. We choose our homes based on it, our jobs so that we can afford it, and our politicians so that they can provide the appropriate support to it. It’s borne out of a shared understanding: what makes us different from the lions, the tigers, and the bears (oh, my) is our ability to understand: to take instruction—to learn!

**PV 23.12** ~ *Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge.*

**EX:** The language used by Solomon here is in the imperative tense: a command. It carries the importance and the significance of the command from the father to his son: *Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge.* (**PV 23.12**) He’s calling for his son to **be willing**—to desire—to **learn**!

**AP:** Much of our society is focused on enjoyment and entertainment. We use the internet to save the hours we’d spend previously in the library. We use virtual assistants to find sources we used to have to scribble down on index cards. This isn’t

to speak ill of technology—these can be wonderful things if they are used as tools that allow us to think deeper and learn more. But too often, they're used simply to reach “an accepted end”—to get the minimum paper length completed. To get a speech, presentation, or sermon JUST long enough to fulfill the expectation. In these moments, we show a human condition: a willingness to forgo learning. To offboard thinking to a newsperson, a commentator, or an AI.

As time goes on, if we continue to offboard our ability to think and to reason, eventually, the muscle atrophies. We begin to lose the ability to dig—to think critically. It's for that reason that Solomon urged his son **to be willing to learn**—for if you are, **you will learn!** And as important as this can be in our broader life, it's even more important when it comes to spiritual matters:

**JM 1.5** ~ *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

God encourages us to make growing in wisdom and knowledge our goal. To seek from Him understanding—to seek from Him wisdom. For we aren't mere animals—running on instinct and seeking after passing peals of pleasure—we are beings created in the very image of God: and if **we are willing to learn, we will learn!**

**BD2: Be Ready to be the Bad Guy, and Your Child Will be Saved (23.13-14)**  
**CHILDREN/Discipline/Why I Don't Discipline My Daughter**

At times, I wonder why it is that I encounter children wilder than the wildest wildebeest, and then I realize why: it's because of this mindset. Buried in the blog (which I will not read in its entirety), is a key phrase: **“You and your child are on the same team”**. Of course, that's true. But behind the ink and pixels behind that phrase, I believe, is a common trait that is at the root of much common arrested development in children: a **hesitancy to be the bad guy**. This isn't new. This isn't unique to now. In fact, from the next verses, we realize it was common enough in Solomon's time to prompt the following: *Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. (PV 23.13)*

**EX:** Pay attention to that phrasing: *Do not withhold*. That's the same kind of language that one might use for the necessities of life. To Solomon (and to God), *discipline* and *correction* are not things we do to a child or pile upon a child: they are owed to a child much the same way that they are owed food, water, or shelter. And to deny a child these hedges, guides, and yes, discipline, is as destructive to their health and development as denying food, water, or shelter.

**PV 22.6** ~ *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

**AP:** We talked just a moment ago about how important it is for us to learn—Solomon also shows that sometimes, that learning requires a hard hand. With our children, it requires that **we be ready to be the bad guy**. And as we read on, we are promised a reward: **be ready to be the bad guy, and your child will be saved!** *If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol. (PV 23. 14)*

**BD3: Be Wise Within, and You Will Make Your Father Proud (23.15-16)**

**ILL—I'm Proud of You, Son** (I am 45 years old with kids of my own; still, there are five words that will make me well up even today) Native to children is a desire to

please and to make their parents proud of them. This would have been true of Solomon's son, as well. For that reason, he tells him next what it would take to make him proud. And it wasn't expanding the kingdom or its wealth or power. *My son, if your heart is wise, my heart too will be glad. <sup>16</sup> My inmost being will exult when your lips speak what is right. (PV 23.15-16)*

**EX:** All Solomon wanted was for his son to be wise—to grow to be a good and godly man. This isn't the only time this call is found in **PV: *A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother. (PV 10.1)*** *A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish man despises his mother. (PV 15.20)* You can hear in these words his call to his son: **be wise within, and you will make your father proud**. But deep down, he knew the truth of his own son. As we discussed a couple weeks ago, his son, Rehoboam, was a fool. We moved from the wisest man who ever lived to one of the greatest fool who'd ever be. And there is no doubt to me: it broke Solomon's heart.

**EC 2.18-21** ~ *I hated all my toil in which I toil under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to the man who will come after me, <sup>19</sup> and who knows whether he will be wise or a fool? Yet he will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. <sup>20</sup> So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun, <sup>21</sup> because sometimes a person who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave everything to be enjoyed by someone who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil.*

Those words hurt even more when you realize he was likely writing about his own son—whom he'd held in his arm and bounced on his knee. It hurt more than anything imaginable to see his son fail to be wise. How deeply he had hoped for what every father hopes: **that his son would be wise within and make his father proud**. His son failed. **Will ours? Will our fathers'?**

**EH 5.15-17** ~ *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*

**BD4: Be on the Right Path, and You Will Find Hope (23.17-21)**

**ILL—I'm Not Their Parents** (being a parent is doable until your kids start having friends; sometimes their parents let them do things you don't; **“But Billy can do it; Sue's parents let her!”**) I managed to never say, **“Because I said so”** to the kids, but I've used the fire out of this phrase! But I'm not alone. Even Solomon had a tough time dealing with **“other parents' children”**. *Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue in the fear of the Lord all the day. <sup>18</sup> Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off. (PV 23.17-18)*

**EX:** Sometimes, the weight of the world can weigh upon us. We struggle day by day to resist temptation, to remain honest, to be righteous and Godly. And then, **what do we see when we step outside our doors?** People doing the exact opposite—every last thing we've been called by God to shun—and they're seemingly having the time of their lives!

**PV 23.19-21** ~ *Hear, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way. <sup>20</sup> Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat, <sup>21</sup> for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will clothe them with rags.*

**AP:** Solomon's call was to **be on the right path, and you will find hope**. We cannot speak to or know the hearts of the people around us. Many a wild night is