

Daily Devotion: Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Pastor Jeff, Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, Avon Lake

Proverbs 3:5-12

<sup>5</sup>Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. <sup>6</sup>In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. <sup>7</sup>Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. <sup>8</sup>It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body. <sup>9</sup>Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce; <sup>10</sup>then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. <sup>11</sup>My child, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, <sup>12</sup>for the Lord reproves the one he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

Full disclosure, I have read the book of Proverbs at least once (because I've read the entire Bible), but I cannot say with any certainty that I have read it more than once. I have never preached on a reading from Proverbs. I have never led a Bible study on the book of Proverbs. Therefore, if one of the other esteemed pastors who contribute to these daily devotions wants to "correct" or "re-interpret" my offering here, please allow them to do so.

I enjoy this reading, for the most part. I absolutely agree with the wisdom of trusting God above all other things in creation. I would also advise all people to fear/respect the Lord, and to turn away from evil...even though that one is a little harder for me to follow depending on the day or moment.

I'm all for giving back to the Lord the things that God has first given us. Yet, I am not positive that I adopt the same mindset that is provided in this reading. The way that I read it, we are supposed to honor the Lord with the first fruits of all we produce and earn. But, we do that because in doing so, we will receive great blessings from God. That is not what I have taught in the congregations where I have served, nor is it what I have taught my children. Instead, we honor God with the things we produce and earn because we return the love to God that God has first given us, regardless of what we receive as a result of our offerings. However, as I said earlier, I admit that I may be reading those verses incorrectly.

Finally, I find wisdom in the final verses of this text, because I believe it to be true. Discipline that exists for the purpose of providing abundant life in the future, is most definitely good for all people. As a dad, I have told my children more times than I can remember, that I correct them because I love them, not because I am trying to punish them with no future benefit. On the other hand, I cannot say that I have felt that God has disciplined me or shown me reproof. Thus, I will need to pray some more about the best way to discern that guidance, with regard to God being the One who administers the discipline.

Thank you for joining me on this little exercise of reviewing scripture. I invite everyone who reads this to offer your own comments on how you hear God speaking in this text.