

(Proverbs 16:1-2)  
“Don’t Stop”

~ INTRO ~

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE...

- Is not built by occasional moments of inspiration.
  - It’s built through regular surrender to God’s wisdom.

AS A PASTOR...

- My aim is to keep you grounded in God’s word!

IF YOUR EXCITEMENT ABOUT GOD...

- Is built on blessings rather than truth...
  - Then your motivation will dwindle over time.

IDEA #1 – DON’T STOP PREPARING YOUR HEART (16:1a)

THIS CHAPTER STARTS OFF...

- With (v.1a) Which is man’s part & (v.1b) which is God’s part.

(v.1a) Preparation = The action or process of making ready.

- (Arranging in a particular-position).

WE’RE TO MAKE OUR heart READY.

Heart = the mind / will / & understanding of man.

- Our emotions
- Our thinking
- Our moral character

LET ME GIVE AN EXAMPLE:

As you come to church AND take notes during the Bible study...

- This activity is preparing your mind / your will / & your understanding.
- It’s like going to school (your learning).
  - AND you’re either a good student OR a bad student.

WE CAN PUT ON...

- All the fancy language we WANT...
  - Trying to dumb down the point.

(Proverbs 16:1-2)

*“Don't Stop”*

- BUT the bottom-line is... you get out what you put in.

REPEATEDLY...

- Scripture calls us to *seek the Lord with all of our heart.*
  - IT'S SPEAKING OF **INTENSITY**.

RIGHT HERE...

- (v.1a) *“The preparation of the heart belongs to man...”*
  - You fall back on what you know about God.

**HERE'S THREE LESSONS:**

- 1) Growth is intentional
- 2) Wisdom requires pursuit
- 3) Spiritual maturity doesn't happen accidentally

SO...

- The **effect** of wisdom... IS that *we learn* who God is...
  - And we **submit** to Him.

ON THE SURFACE EVERYONE AGREES!

- It's NOT until you're tested that disagreements begin to surface.

IN EVERY CHURCH...

- In every family / in every marriage / & in every friendship...
  - Will all reach moments of tension.
- The question isn't whether difficulties will come.
  - The question is whether we will continue applying God's wisdom
    - When they do come.

IN OUR CONSUMER DRIVEN WORLD...

- We give up on relationships as soon as they get uncomfortable.
- We live in a culture of instant exits.
  - Where we feel entitled to leave relationships...
    - Churches & commitments...
      - Whenever they become difficult.

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YET...

- Wisdom often grows in the places where perseverance is required.

### **IDEA #2 – DON’T STOP TRUSTING GOD (16:1b)**

- We make plans... BUT God directs the outcomes.
- We prepare... BUT God provides.

(v.1b) *Answer* = This speaks very specifically of **what God does**.

- Literally... “*hearing & answering of prayers.*”<sup>1</sup>

One of the hardest lessons in the Christian life...

- Is learning that God's answers don't always match our expectations.

We prepare / we pray / we seek wisdom.

- BUT then... we’re to trust God with the outcome.

Faith isn’t just believing God can answer.

- Faith is trusting Him when He answers differently than we hoped.

### **IDEA #3 – DON’T STOP EXAMINING YOUR MOTIVES (16:2)**

TONIGHT...

- We see that the Lord judges people on the basis of **WHY they act**.
  - (v.2b) “*the LORD weighs the spirits.*”

LET ME REMIND YOU...

- That God sees what nobody else sees.
  - People evaluate actions.
    - But God evaluates motives.
- We can fool others...
  - But we can’t fool God.

### **~ IN CLOSING ~**

Learn to check your own heart...

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<sup>1</sup> Blue Letter Bible Hebrew Lexicon (Proverbs 16:1b) “*answer*”

(Proverbs 16:1-2)

*“Don't Stop”*

- Why am I doing this?
- Why am I reacting this way?
- Why am I offended?

The mature Christian is not the person who never struggles.

- The mature Christian is the person who repeatedly brings his heart...
  - Back under the authority of God's wisdom.