

“Learning to Live Under God’s Leadership” (Proverbs 16:3-33)

INTRO.

One of the biggest questions Christian’s ask...

- IS... “If God is in control... then what’s my responsibility?”
 - Should I make plans?
 - Should I wait?
 - Should I simply trust?

(Proverbs 16) answers these questions:

- God leads
- We follow
- And wisdom is learning to trust His leadership.

Solomon's theme... is that God is sovereign,

- YET... people are still responsible to walk wisely before Him.

BECAUSE... God governs every detail of our lives...

- Our greatest wisdom... is joyfully submitting to Him.

Everything—from our plans / to our words / to the outcome of our lives.

- YES... it’s all under God's sovereign hand.
 - BUT we have choices & decisions to make for our own path.

STUDY

OK... let’s make sure we understand...

- A fancy word that is throw around in church circles – sovereignty.

WHAT IS IT & WHY DO I CARE?

Sovereignty is God's absolute right, authority, power, and freedom to rule over all creation according to His perfect wisdom and will.

IN OTHER WORDS...

- Nothing happens outside of His knowledge, and nothing can frustrate His purposes.

Four Aspects of God's Sovereignty:

1. God has supreme authority.

“The LORD has made the heavens His throne; from there He rules over everything.”

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(Psalm 103:19) NLT

2. God has unlimited power.

“Our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases.” (Psalm 115:3) NKJV

3. God rules providentially.

“We can make our own plans, but the LORD determines our steps” (Proverbs 16:9) NLT

4. God accomplishes His purposes.

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.” (Genesis 50:20) NLT

SIMPLY PUT... ***Sovereignty*** means... God is never surprised, never outmatched, never uncertain, and never stopped from accomplishing His will.

CHURCH...

- God's sovereignty isn't meant to make us argue...
 - God's sovereignty is meant to help us rest.

NOW...

- Let's see how this changes the way we actually live.

I. Surrender Your Plans to God’s Leadership (vv. 3-9)

The wise person submits every plan to the Lord...

- Because they've learned that God sees the end from the beginning.

Submission is NOT because God has a better GPS...

- Rather submission is because He's God – LORD over all.
- We don't submit because He's forcing us...
 - We submit because He's a good Father who loved us first.

IN MY BIBLE...

- I like to view this chapter with three simple verses...
 - Wisdom (v.1)
 - Direction (v.9)
 - God's will (v.33)

THE TRUTH... THAT WE LEARN FROM THIS PROVERB...

- Flows from the sentence literature ... godly wisdom one line at a time.

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- Commit your works to God (v.3)
- God has purposes for everything—even judgment (v.4)
- Pride invites God's opposition (v.5)
- Mercy and truth lead to spiritual growth (v.6)
- God gives peace—even with enemies (v.7)
- Integrity is better than wealth (v.8)
- We make plans; God establishes the path (v.9)

BUT HOW DO I APPLY THESE TRUTHS?

ASK YOURSELF A FEW QUESTIONS:

- Are my goals surrendered to Christ?
- Am I asking God to bless my plans...
 - OR... am I seeking His plans?

EXAMPLES:

- Remove self-confidence (James 4:13-16) NLT
- Lean into faith (Psalm 37:5) NLT
- Trust God to guide you (Proverbs 3:5-6) NLT

II. Let God’s Wisdom Shape Your Character (vv. 10-24)

Wisdom is NOT seen in what we know... BUT seen in who we become.

- In this section Solomon emphasizes character.

Four Highlights:

Leadership

- A person under God’s leadership becomes trustworthy with influence (vv.10-15)

Humility

- What is pride?
 - Pride is living like I’m leading my own life.
 - (v.18) Pride precedes destruction.
- Better humility than worldly gain (v.19)

Teachability

- Proud people stop learning... but wise people never stop learning.
 - Trusting God produces blessing (v.20)

Speech

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ONE OF THE CLEAREST WAYS...

- People see God’s work in our lives is through our speech.
 - Think about conversations you’ve had this week.
 - Did people leave encouraged OR discouraged?

Jesus said, *“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”* (Matt. 12:34)

- Our words reveal who is leading our hearts.
- (vv.21-24) shows that wise words bring healing.

THE IDEA IS...

- Our speech demonstrates *what godly character sounds like*.

Personal Questions for Application:

- Am I growing in humility?
 - Is my speech bringing healing or harm?
 - Am I becoming more like Christ?
-

III. Trust God with the Outcome (vv. 25-33)

SIMPLY COMING TO CHURCH...

- Changes very little... unless God’s Word changes us.

Our lives aren’t usually changed by one decision...

- But they’re shaped by thousands of small ones.

AND... although God works every outcome into His sovereign purposes...

- We still have freewill to make real choices...
 - But God invites us to participate in His will.

SO...

- Solomon contrasts wisdom against folly in these final verses.

The fool:

- i. Trusts in appearances & feelings (v.25) NLT
- ii. Lives for selfish desires (v.26) NKJV
- iii. Spreads problems in four ways (vv.27-30) NLT

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The wise:

- i. Exercise patience (v.32a)
- ii. Practice self-control (v.32b)
- iii. Recognizes God’s sovereignty (v.33)

AGAIN... (v.33) Solomon concludes:

“The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.”

Even what looks to be random (rolling dice)... never surprises God.

CHURCH...

- Here’s the joyful conclusion about ...God’s care over our lives.

“The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.”
(Ps. 37:23) NLT

IN CLOSING

PERHAPS...

- Some of you are carrying the weight of decisions today.
- Some of you are waiting for answers.
- Some of you are wondering why your plans have changed.

(Proverbs 16)... REMINDS US...

- That we don't have to know every step...
 - Because our Father already knows the way.
 - And we can trust Him. AMEN!