

Sunday School Centenary - All thine heart; All thy ways (Quality: Average)

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[0 : 00] In dependence upon the Lord for his gracious help and blessing, let us turn to the words found in the third chapter of Proverbs, verses 5 and 6.

In fifth and sixth verses in Proverbs chapter 3, In these two verses there is a little word repeated which is of much more importance than we sometimes realize.

This little word of awe. Trusting in the Lord with part of our hearts is not really trusting at all.

Acknowledging him in some of our ways is certainly good as far as it goes, but it is not sufficient.

It is not in accordance with the word, and therefore not really entirely related to the gracious promise that accompanies the precept.

[1 : 34] The Lord here says, And we should not be satisfied with a lesser standard than he gives. Now the script of Proverbs does emphasize two principles very strongly, as you can see by the very occurrence of these words.

There is first wisdom and then righteousness. Inward wisdom that we so need in our hearts and minds, that we may walk outwardly in those ways that are right in the sight of God.

The book of James, really, the epistle of James, is very much on the same lines. It is about that wisdom that we need in our hearts, that we might in our walk, in our lives, do those things which are right and acceptable before God by His grace.

The first part of this subject really is about wisdom. It is our wisdom to depend entirely upon the Lord.

The second of these verses is particularly about righteousness, about the walking in those ways that are pleasing and acceptable to God.

[3 : 11] It is the sixth verse really that is especially upon my mind, as it is a word of invaluable counsel to those who are growing up into life.

No better counsel could be possibly given to you on such an occasion as this than that which God gives in His work. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

But these verses are linked together, and we must begin at the entrance to the subject, in the sixth verse.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. Now first, we so need to trust in the Lord for salvation itself.

To trust in all our hearts. The word trust is very much equivalent to the New Testament words to believe, to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[4 : 29] It means to depend entirely, to rely upon Him. Know that in the sacrifices, in the tabernacle and the temple in these days, many an animal was brought to the altar.

The worshipper would confess his sins over the head of that beast. Then he would really do something which was very significant.

He would lay his hands upon the head of that animal. And that word really implies a heavy leaning.

It really identified the worshipper with the sacrifice. It was really an expression, or should be, should have been, of his faith in putting his entire dependence and hope upon the sacrifice that God Himself that God Himself had promised to provide in due time.

And so, the John the Baptist spoke those memorable words and said, Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

[5 : 54] We'll link that with this word, Trust in the Lord with all thine heart. There is no other hope than the salvation of our needy souls but in that sacrifice that has been made in that substitute that has been once offered.

Now, is your trust there? Are you really trusting in the Lord, in the Lord Jesus Christ with all your hearts?

We so need to be brought there. It is really the end of the remainder of the subject. We so need that precious gift of faith that we may believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

And that is now, the apostle, the stove to that inquire, the Philippian jailer who so came and his felt me and said, What shall I do to be saved?

The answer was very plain and clear. Believe. That is, for all your trust. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved from thy house.

[7 : 21] And then they preached to him the word of God so that he would know exactly what was necessary to believe. So Jesus said, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.

He shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. Have you passed? from death unto life.

It can only be this way, by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ with all your heart. Now if you have trusted him for salvation, then the word applies to everything else in your life.

You know, this is a word especially addressed to the young. there is no doubt that it really applies very much towards us.

This is what we so need to do and which we find so hard to do because there is a strong tendency to lean to our own understanding.

[8 : 35] There are many things that we need in life. Hello, hello, hello, hello, hello, not provided or domestically by some chance but are given by the Lord himself.

Every good and every perfect gift is from the Father. It cometh down from the Father of lights in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

They come from him and how we do lead to depend upon him for our daily bread and for all that is necessary in this present life.

And how great also are our spiritual needs. Our need of grace, of wisdom, of life, of light, of faith, of love, of patience, of meekness, and so much more.

But briefly, we so need the spirit of Jesus Christ. We so need his life, his life. Well, whatever it is we need, this is really the way that we may obtain it.

[9 : 53] By his grace, trust in the Lord with all thine heart. for the Lord always honors that entire trust in him.

And to these words there is added this, it is so necessary that we should be delivered from leaning on our own understandings.

of course, if we do trust in the Lord with all our hearts, then we shall not be doing this, because it is inconsistent with it.

This trust is a wholehearted trust. It is that which the prophet speaks when he says, thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.

Mr. Nigel says there sometimes, who has one crop, whose entire trust is in this one Savior.

[11 : 00] But then we are so deeply affected by this spirit of self-righteousness and self-confidence. There can be no question whether we realize it or not.

every one of us has in our fallen nature a deep-rooted tendency to trust in ourselves and to think that we know or that we can do this or that.

Whether you realize that or not, it is undoubtedly a truth. The pride of our nature, the anchoring to do something of ourselves which is acceptable to God, this legal spirit is such a play.

It is not for nothing that this word is added, and lean not unto thine own understanding because we do so tend to do this.

even that great apostle Paul was brought to very low on one occasion as he says, for this purpose particular, says we were brought here, chose to despair even of life, says for this reason that we might not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the damned.

[12 : 31] well this verse is very important. The faith that is here implied, needed, is God's own.

It is his most precious gift to the soul upon those who are us. therefore, we so need to pray like that.

As we did express it in our evening, we pray to have our faith increased. How much there is in this present world which attacks that faith, which tends to undermine it all the time.

May the Lord run to us and dance thy precious faith with his people of all. Trust in him at all times and trust in him with all our hearts.

So often the difficulty is really that our trust is not complete. It is not entirely from the Lord. We still have something of this leaning to our own understanding.

[13 : 55] then in the sixth verse we have further precept and the promise connected with this trust so that this entire dependence really leads into this way of wisdom and instruction.

the book of proverbs deals with many details of our lives. Many aspects of our daily concerns of all course of our conduct.

The way we speak the things that we do. this is in the way these verses here are a kind of summary of what is later expressed in much more detail.

Now here the spirit of trusting in the Lord leads to an acknowledging for him and his gracious promise to direct their power.

In all thy ways acknowledge this is the precept to be observed. It is the kind of thing that the writer is saying in verse 3 let not mercy and truth forsake thee bind them about thy neck place them upon the table of thy heart.

[15 : 27] What a good thing it would be to hear young friends if this word is really risky. powerfully upon your hearts and all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.

May the Lord save you from this tendency to lean on your own understanding and grant you that trust and look to him for all the wisdom and counsel that you so need as we ought.

this word speaks of walking. It says before us paths and ways.

In fact there are in the first four or so verses the chapters of this book ten or eleven occasions where we find these words together.

Paths and ways. We are all walking. We are all going somewhere. And there are plainly set before us in the word of God two ways.

[16 : 43] Every one of us must be in one world. Jesus says broad is the gate wide is the way that leadeth through destruction.

Many there be that go in their acts. Straight is the gates. Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life. And few there be that find us.

There are again set before us. Many and few. Now in these chapters here we have these warnings and these exaltations with regard to these ways.

In the previous chapter there is this warning that those in verse 15 whose ways are crooked and they grow in their paths.

And then the desire in verse 20 that thou mayest walk in the way of good men and keep the paths of the righteous. Now dear young friends which way are you in at this moment?

[18 : 03] Where are you cows? Later on in the next chapter we read this word. This is the word of God under the path of thy feet and let all thy ways be established under the path of your feet.

Think about where you're going. What is your destination? Now it is very foolish if we ignore the signs.

if you were to go down this road on the way to Hastings instead of going as you once wanted to do on the road to Ashford you'd be going in absolutely the wrong direction and getting farther and farther away all the time.

And if we were to see side after side which said that you were going to Hastings and you still imagined you were convinced in your own mind that you were going to Ashford.

What a foolish thing that would be. How obstinate. Now dear friends as regards the way of life there are the signs that are set before us in the word of God.

[19 : 36] There are these sign posts which are given to indicate which way we are going. There are these truths set before us.

There are these tests concerning the life of God in the soul. Under the path of that being consider where your way would end.

the and so we have it also expressed in the following chapter in these descriptions. The writer says I have taught thee in the way of western.

I have led thee in right paths. They are here recorded. They are set before us in the word of God for us to consider. and again enter not in the path into the path of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men.

There are many who are doing this. There may be many but you know those who have been to school those who live next door.

[20 : 53] There are many around you in this life who are in this way that leads to disruption. Now what part it is if you go with them?

Listen once more to this which these are becoming. Perhaps the path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect death.

The way of the wicked is as doubtless they know not of what they stumble. Now in the word of God there are said before us these ways.

There is the way of life. The way which is so centered in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

His disciples said to him, Lord we know not whither thou goest and how can we know the way. Jesus said to them, I am the way, the truth and the life.

[22 : 03] No man cometh unto the Father but by me. He also said this, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.

If you are following the Savior you are in the right way. If you are not you are in the wrong way. Whoever people you are following may be, if you are really following the Savior, he will lead you to everlasting life.

But that is the only way. So the first thing we do so need to wonder, be concerned about as to whether we are in the right way at all.

This way of faith, of trusting in the Lord with all our hearts, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, going in the right way.

And if that is so, we still need much guidance in the way. looking at that picture that is on the front of the booklet that has been issued on this occasion, there don't seem to be any clear paths around the chapel at all then.

[23 : 34] I suppose that on a day when it had rained as it did this morning, on such a day it would be very muddy and the paths around would have been very difficult to manage a hundred years ago or even much more recently than that.

Now, there are very convenient paths for us to walk in and so we do walk in these ways. No doubt many all of you came the same way into chapel, but you didn't tread in the same places.

Each of us has our own personal walk, the way to glory is the same for all. But the footsteps are personal.

They are our own. In all thy ways, acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Now, these ways then really include all the various aspects of our life, the way the things that we don't, those things that we choose to act, the way that we choose to act, and the things, the words that we speak, all that is really included in our conduct is our war.

[25 : 06] war. Now, how may we acknowledge the Lord in all our ways?

Well, first, by praying concerning them, praying constantly with regard to them. Whenever we really pray, we are acknowledging the Lord, and acknowledging also our dependence upon Him.

Your prayer is a humbling of ourselves before God. It is taking up our right position as His dependent creatures before the infinite majesty of heaven.

And if we are to walk rightly, it must be in a way of constant prayer. If I link this word really with that exhortation in the Philippians.

Be careful or anxious about nothing but in everything. By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

[26 : 27] It would be impossible to acknowledge the Lord in our ways, without praying for His direction and help and guidance.

Otherwise, we must be linked to our own understanding. Now, you acknowledge the Lord constantly in this, by seeking His face, by asking day by day, for that grace, and that wisdom, and that direction, and that counsel, that you so need, which is so set before us in these pages.

Apostle James says, concerning this wisdom, any man lack wisdom, and that cannot really be a doubt for it, because there is no doubt whatever that we do, every one of us needs that wisdom, whether we feel it or not.

If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and that bread is not, and it shall be given him, and let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.

Then later on, James says, he had not, because he asked not. How can you expect to be wise, unless you ask, God, who is out in all wisdom, to give you that wisdom that you need.

[28 : 06] And then also, we acknowledge God, when we do give grateful thanks to him for his gifts. That is the least that we expect to do in our dealings with each other.

If someone gives you a present, however small, you do expect to say thank you, to acknowledge that that has been given, and the kindness that is behind it, of how much we do receive from God.

What a constant stream of benefits there are, which do come to us. What a great privilege it is to have his word before us, and to be able to meet together in this way of liberty, and that this should be continued for a hundred years.

What great course there is to give thanks to God for his mercies. It is an acknowledgement of his goodness. In all thy ways, acknowledge him for those three particular things which believers have every course to do always.

rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

[29 : 43] God will be to you. So the prophet says, I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, the nurses of the Lord, according to all that he has bestowed upon us.

He says, I will mention it, I will acknowledge the goodness of God in us. Now do you do that? acknowledge the good hand of God in the things which you receive in your life.

And then thirdly, we do also acknowledge God by a humble spirit, by the way that we act in office.

There is constantly brought before us in the word, the contrast between the humble soul and the proud boasting.

We read of that in the epistle of James. He says, all such boasting as this is vain. But how many are engaged in this? It is the natural tendency of our proud hearts to boast, and not to acknowledge how dependent we are from God.

[31 : 06] The word which is very humbling says, what astound that thou didst not descend? Who magest them to differ from another?

If we are, in some respects, more favoured than others, why is it? It is certainly not that we deserve anything, but it is because of God's free goodness.

we read that he resisted the proud to give his grace to the humble. The apostle Peter says, be clothed with humility that we have this outer garment always upon it.

It is a right acknowledgement of God when we walk, humbly before, when we do manifest this humble spirit, the realisation of our own unworthiness and nothingness, an acknowledgement that he is the great giver of every good and perfect gift.

Well, the word says, in all thy ways, acknowledge and then there is a touch to the precept, a very gracious promise and he will he shall thy rest, thy powers.

[32 : 43] Now this we so greatly need. And there is an emphasis here, it's not exactly expressed in the word, but it really is he himself, it is so to speak underlined, is he himself who will direct our ways.

If we always acknowledge him, then he will undertake for us. so he has promised to do, so he has so wonderfully fulfilled himself.

You may look to the person of the Savior again with regard to this. He said, if any man serve me, let him follow me.

Where I am, there shall also my servant be, any man serve me, him will my father honor. He will lead, he will guide, in that way that we take, if we do permit, all our ways unto him.

What a wonderful promise that is. Savior so promised his own nearest disciples to do this for them, to be with them always, though he himself, in a personal way, must leave them upon the earth, heaven and earth.

[34 : 18] Go ye therefore, preach the gospel to all nations, preaching and teaching them, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and now, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

He would go before them, into every place, he would lead them and guide them, continually. Often, in this life, he may seem to come to a crossroads, and with you, dear young people, so often may have such a important subtle difference in the future as to which way you go.

These important decisions that you may need to make in life as regards the work that you may do, employment that you may have, so much will follow problems, and it is not enough to lean to your own understanding.

The word says, in all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. You may be sure, dear friends, if we obey the precept, the Lord will fulfill his promise.

If you, by his grace, see his direction, and acknowledge him, then he will not fail.

[36 : 01] He will never, never fail to keep his own work. He will give that direction that is so mean. There is that word in me, Psalm 32, which is similar to this, and so, very questions, where he says, I will instruct and teach them, in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye, as the margin says, with mine eye upon you, watching over you all the time.

If we really do desire to do the Lord's will, it will be made known to us. Sooner or later, maybe after much watching and waiting there, sooner or later, that will be revealed.

The Lord will not fail to keep his own promise of that we can be absolutely certain. And so there is this precious promise adjoined to the precept.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy far. There is much cause for us to consider such a word as things.

You may say, well, what can we do about this? Well, there are some things which we certainly can do. One thing, we can commit such precious words to remember.

[37 : 42] any of us really can do that. We can write them out, repeat them, and make sure that they are written on your minds.

With such a word as that, surely that should be done. would be no bad thing, really, for us to have a suitable copy of such words as these which contain so much precious proof in them, from the walls of our homes, so that they might be constantly before us.

In any case, we do need to know what God has said. And then also, there is these words which we can read.

All of us, I suppose, almost, can read the scriptures. At least, we can read some of these words. And those in these verses are not really very long.

It is quite a simple, straightforward word, other passages here also are similar. Though we so need to read what God has said, but not to read as though it were an order book, as though this was something which we could understand by ourselves, not to see that the Lord would give us that understanding.

[39 : 19] And to come to his word with such a prayer as that. Open down our minds that I may behold wondrous things out of my heart.

And surely, dear friends, we may ask for those things which are here set before us, for this spirit of faith, which is so vitally needed, this precious saving faith.

You really ask for this thing. direction of the Lord in our ways. Now, if you choose your own way, before long you will find that you have chosen badly.

And it may be too late to remedy many things, but if the Lord directs your ways, your paths, you will never have any cause to regret that.

you may be sure that his direction is perfect. It is the very best. And so, we so need to look up to him with regard to such a word as this.

[40 : 30] Some of us here have prized this word on show for many years. We know that as the Lord does fulfill his promise, we know well enough that when we have leaned to our own understanding we have gone seven wrong, but when we have really sought the Lord to direct our power, when we have done we have to go.

I suppose it was 35 years ago the Lord so blessed that word in Psalm 32. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shall go.

I will guide thee with mine eye. And how many, many, many times over the years I've had to read that word again before me.

And I do tell you that he has never, never failed to do what he has promised to do. Often it has meant much seeking, much waiting upon him forth, that you may be sure that the Lord will fulfill his word.

He is faithful in promise. And so he says in this wonderful precious exhortation, trust in the Lord with all thy heart and lean not unto thine own understanding and all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy parts.

[42 : 10] Amen.