

Fathers Make a Permanent Mark on the Lives of Others

Proverbs 4:1-13

Unfortunately, the mark that some father’s make on their children is not very good. If we compared it to the use of permanent markers, it might just be scribbling or a bunch of heavy black lines that are more like “crossing things out,” rather than deliberately communicating a message. Your Father’s Day gift is a set of permanent markers. It’s a four-pack. Four different colors for the variety of ways that you can communicate and do good things with them. Labeling, pricing, warning, underlining, illustrating, instructing, and directing are just some of the “colorful” things that you can do with these markers. So, fathers have an opportunity to make good and lasting impressions on their children. Words, actions, even the things that we do not say or do, can make permanent marks on the mind, heart, and life of a child. Shall our lasting impressions be positive and helpful, or negative and destructive?

Solomon is famous for his wisdom. He wrote many proverbs. See I Kings 4:29-34; Proverbs 1:1-6; 10:1; 25:1; Ecclesiastes 1:1; 12:8-10. While it is said that God gave Solomon exceptional wisdom, here in Proverbs 4:1-13, Solomon shows that his father David laid a foundation in his life when he was a young child. David showed Solomon the great value of godly wisdom and understanding. It is perhaps because of this that Solomon so readily sought wisdom from the Lord, rather than power, wealth, and long life (II Chronicles 1:7-12).

Let’s look at this portion of the book of Proverbs as an extension of David’s training of his son, Solomon, and see the lasting, permanent impression of a father.

Grandpa’s Legacy – Proverbs 4:1-4

Solomon wasn’t just making this up. There is a legacy that he received and that is to be handed down to the future generations – the heritage of those that fear the Lord. See Psalm 61:1-5 cp. Deuteronomy 6:4-14; 4:9; Psalm 25:8-4; 34:7-11; 78:1-8; 90:1,12; 145:1-4; Ephesians 6:1-4.

Oh, by the way, mothers and grandmothers are involved in this too! See Proverbs 1:8; 6:20; 31:1; II Timothy 1:5; 3:14-17.

Get Wisdom and Understanding – Proverbs 4:5-7

Don't wait for wisdom and understanding to drop down and hit you on the head. Go out there and look for it! Search and dig for it! Treasure and keep it. See Proverbs 2:1-9.

- Wisdom alone can just be a head game. Understanding must go with it for practical application and profit. It would be like buying good paint, but never opening the can and putting it on the walls. See Psalm 111:10; Isaiah 48:17; John 13:17; Philippians 4:8-9.
- Wisdom is not just abstract thinking. It is becoming intimate with the heart and mind of God. See Proverbs 1:7; 9:10; 2:5-8; 8:1-36 Psalm 19:7-14; Isaiah 55:6-13.

Go Forward and Reap the Benefits – Proverbs 4:8-13

A father wants to help their child to go forward and prosper. Our heavenly Father also motivates us with practical benefits, so that we learn from Him and follow Him. See Matthew 6:25-33; 7:7-11 (cp. Luke 11:9-13); Hebrews 12:5-11. Here are benefits that are offered to those who seek God's wisdom and understanding:

- A life that has fulfillment, honor, and graciousness – Proverbs 4:8-9
See James 3:13-18.
- A lifestyle that promotes longevity – Proverbs 4:10
See Proverbs 11:17-19; 19:23.
- A lifestyle that does not need harsh correction – Proverbs 4:11-13
See Proverbs 9:9; 19:20,27-29; 13:10,13-15,18-21.

Please note, that the book of Proverbs does not always give us absolutes as promises. Rather, it often gives us principles that show a pattern. For example, Proverbs 11:17-19; 19:23 do not teach that all godly people live long lives and that all evil people die young. Rather, we are to know that wisdom and godly living promote a prosperous life and the blessing of the Lord. This does not change the fact that those who pursue godliness will suffer persecution and also suffer common problems like everyone else. See Matthew 5:10-12; II Timothy 3:12; I Corinthians 10:13; James 1:2-8.