

Proverbs 3:1-11. *Who you trust matters, really matters.* Listen up children—do not forget what you've been taught; make my commands as part of who you are, your very *raison d'être*. Why? This teaching will give you a long life, a life lived in prosperity.

How to make this work? It's simple:

1. Let love & trust never leave you; make love & trust your necklace, write them on the diary of your *raison d'être*. Then you will win favor, a good name as it were, not only with people, but with God Himself.
 2. Trust in the Lord God Yahweh, with **all** your *raison d'être*.
 3. Lean not on your understanding of things.
 4. Whatever you do, acknowledge Him,¹ know Him, for He will make your paths of life straight, He will show you the way.
 5. Don't be wise in your own eyes—reverence the Lord God Jehovah by shunning evil, for this will bring health to your body, nourishment to your very core.
 6. Honor the Lord God Yahweh with your earthly wealth, then your wealth will be more than necessary, even overflowing.
 7. Finally, despise not His teaching, nor His reprimand, for Yahweh disciplines those He loves, just as a father delights on his children.
- Q Why/when are the teachings of our youth made part of our *raison d'être* as opposed to mere enculturation and/or indoctrination?
- Q How do we make these teachings, this wisdom part of our *raison d'être*?
- Q (1) Why does love & trust as core of our *raison d'être* create appreciation by people and the Lord God?

PROVERBS 3:1-11

My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, ²for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity.

³Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man.

⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. ⁸This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones.

⁹Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

¹¹My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline and do not resent his rebuke, ¹²because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father [Hebrew & LXX read *and He punishes*] the son he delights in.

¹In the original Hebrew, "in all your ways acknowledge him" is more literally "in all your ways *know* him." This fundamental statement of how to relate to God implies more than mere reverence. Nodding in God's direction is not enough: you must know him by living closely with him, relating to him personally in every aspect of your life. (From the NIV 1996 commentary.)

- Q (2) In whom are we to trust? Why? Where? Why “all?”
- Q (3) What’s wrong with leaning on, depending on our own understanding?
- Q (4) What does it mean to “acknowledge Him,” whatever we’re doing? [Hint: even the bad stuff acknowledge?]
- Q (4) Why are straight paths important? On what path of His have you had trouble understanding, staying on? To what extent was that a “heart failure;” i.e., His ways were not part of your *raison d’être*?
- Q (5) Why are we prone to think we are wise “in our own eyes?” What wisdom has ever come from within you? [Hint: Did it actually come from without—His providence by putting people and experiences in your life?]
- Q (6) What happens when you do not honor the Lord God with your wealth of time, money, space, and conversation? Time—less. Money—so what? Space—alone. Conversation—alone.
- Q (7) From what disciplining have you learned the most from the Lord God? What was His reward? His punishment? His consistency?
- Q (7) When He rebuked you, what part did you resent? Did it seem fair He was reprimanding you?

