

## Proverbs 4:1–9

### The Beginning and End of Good Doctrine

**Monday, October 7, 2024 ▫ Read Proverbs 4:1–9**

*Questions from the Scripture text: What familiar commands do v1–2 give? What kind of doctrine/teaching is he giving them? What time of his life does he mention in v3? What happened at that time (that led to his being able to give good doctrine now, v4)? What command from his dad does he repeat four times in v5–7? What prohibition does he repeat three times? What additional command does he recall in v6b? And what in v8a? What five things does he recall that wisdom will do for those who get and love and exalt her (v6b, 8–9)?*

**Where does being an everlasting king begin?** Proverbs 4:1–9 looks forward to the sermon in the midweek prayer meeting. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **becoming everlasting royalty begins with taking God's Word to heart, even as a newborn.**

**Where good doctrine begins.** The instruction to hear and give attention to fatherly instruction (v1) is supported by the assertion that the teaching/doctrine is good (v2a). How did this particular father get to have such good doctrine? It began when he was so young and tender as to be in those early days when he was the entire focus of his parents (v3). Caring for a newborn is demanding! And the Spirit here indicates that while the parents were giving such attention to their newborn, the father was already teaching him (v4a), already addressing his heart (v4b), already urging him to obey his commands (v4c).

Let us not underestimate what even a newborn may learn—especially when what is being taught is the Word, which the Spirit attends with His power and uses to give life. And let no child think himself too young to pay attention and learn from the Bible, or too young to deal in matters of the heart. Begin early! And in this way, you too might one day be able to give good doctrine to others—even to your own children.

**What to do with good doctrine.** Get it (v5a), get it (v5a again), get it (v7b), and get it (v7c) above all other things that you get. Don't forget it (v5b), don't turn from it (v5b), don't forsake it (v6a). And what will fuel this? The condition of the heart toward wisdom: love her (v6b, cf. v8b "embrace her") and exalt her (v8a). The path to pursuing wisdom is to love her. We must seek from the Spirit a wholehearted desire for, and delight in, His wisdom. And we maintain this affection by savoring it, when we are blessed to obtain it.

**What good doctrine will do for you.** Wisdom will preserve and keep you (v6a). Wisdom will lift you up ("promote," v8a) and bring you honor (v8b). How much? Wisdom will put on your head a wreath of grace and a crown of glory (v9). From this particular king father to his prince son, this makes sense; he hopes to be a king in this life. But from our heavenly Father to any believer, this is a true and great promise: God's wisdom is training us to be His children, and kings is exactly what Christ has redeemed us to be (cf. Rev 5:10). A Christian is a king-in-training, and God's Word is His plan for bringing this about.

How do you encourage all the little ones in the church to pay attention to the Word and take it to heart? How are you doing this with the little ones at home? What efforts are you making to get good doctrine? What efforts are you making to keep it? What are your feelings about good doctrine? What place does looking forward to being new-heavens-and-new-earth royalty have in your thoughts?

*Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving us Your own fatherly instruction. Grant that we would address Your littlest ones with it. Make us and them to love Your wisdom so that we would get it and never let it go. By Your wisdom give us to come into our inheritance as kings, most of all to have You Yourself as our portion in Christ, through whom we ask it, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP1 "How Blessed he Man" or TPH173 "Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast"**

**(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))**

Proverbs chapter 4 verses 1 through 9. These are God's words. Here my children. The instruction of a father. And give attention to no understanding. For I give you good Doctrine. Do not forsake my law. When I was my father's son. Tender and the only one in the sight of my mother.

He also taught me and said to me, Let your heart retain my words. Keep my commands and live. Get wisdom. Get understanding. Do not forget nor turn away from the words of my mouth, do not forsake her. And she will preserve you love her. And she will keep you.

Wisdom is the principal thing. Therefore, Get wisdom and in all you're getting. Get understanding. Exalt her and she will promote you. She will bring you honor when you embrace her, she will place on your head an ornament of Grace. A Crown of Glory, she Will deliver to you. Hey man, this ends this reading.

Of God's word. There's a little bit of a focus on the father. Who is giving the wisdom here at the beginning of chapter four. Here my children. that's not in the singular this time. Most of the time we have my son. This time we have my children but here are my children.

The instruction of a father For I give you good Doctrine, do not forsake my law. This is very similar to things that we've heard so far in the Book of Proverbs. But now he proceeds in the next couple of verses to explain how it is, That he came to be a man of good Doctrine of the sort of instruction that they should get at all costs.

And the answer in this particular case, and With the ordinary work way, in which God has prescribed to work, among his people as by the teaching of his own father. When I was my father's, son, tender. And the only one in the sight of my mother, he also taught me and so forth.

So it is God's plan. It is God's design Among Us people that a father would teach his children. And that. His little boys little girls would grow up to become fathers and mothers then who teach their children? This is where good Doctrine ought to begin. Now, is it true that God?

Sometimes? Saves people from even unbelieving, families. And yes, it is. And is it true that God and his great Mercy? Overcomes. A bad start to parenting. In a child's life. Blessing repentance and course Corrections and Granting that by his mercy and his grace he overcomes. What has happened earlier?

Yes, that's true too. But it doesn't mean that we should say, well, it's okay to be an unbeliever. Or well, it's okay that We would have a Lackadaisical lazy approach to Parenting our children, or instructing them in the Lord, and we'll just not take spiritual things too, seriously for a few years at the beginning of their lives.

After all, they're just children, and what can they understand? And Can't really sit still very long and they can't really understand things and They really just want to play and Should we do that? Just because God can later overcome That of course we should not do that. And so here, we don't just have that this wise fathers, instructing, of his children had become begun, when he was a child of his own.

Father, we have an indication in verse 3. How early. This had begun and we have an indication in verse 4 in. What manner, it began this early. When I was my father's son. Tender and the only one. In the sight of my mother. Now, this isn't meaning necessarily that he was an only child.

What this is indicating. Is that this is a season of life. In which his mom. Was pretty much concerned with almost nothing else, but him. Tender. Fresh brand new sensitive. Easily. Harmed or troubled needing constant attention and gentle care. So, there's that and the only one in the sight of my mother.

That she was as we say preoccupied with him. What's that describing? This is describing a newborn. And so, here he is. He is his father's child and tender and the only one in the sight of his mother. That is to say he is the brand new baby. And what did his dad do?

With him as a brand new baby. He taught me and said to me, let your heart retain my words, keep my commands and live. There's a couple of things going on here, one.

I think, in many cases, we underestimate. How much our children are understanding. Right from the beginning. Especially. When it's Dad and Mom. Who are to a great extent, the newborn's world just as much as the newborn by necessity, makes himself or herself into dad and Mom's I think we greatly underestimate what a young child can understand.

And what a young child is learning and how many different ways they are learning from Dad and Mom right from the beginning. But even more than that. We must remember what we have been learning throughout the Book of Proverbs so far. That the word of God is that which God himself uses to give knowledge to him, knowledge of himself.

And a baby is created in the image of God. To know his creator. And to worship and love and Obey his creator. And so, I know of a family in which The husband. some years, not with great faithfulness, but Tried to lead family worship, and they didn't have any children and it was Awkward for the wife and then one day finally, God gives them a child.

And the child is dazzled or weeks old and dad is teaching the child. maybe even with these very words, one day, if they were in Proverbs chapter 4, Let your heart retain my words. Keep my commands and live. And, The wife, the mom. Realizes. That the point here is not so much.

Between the dad and the child, the dad belongs to the Lord, the child belongs to the Lord. And that this is how family worship was intended to be the entire time. Well, our hope for our children. Is in God who uses his word and we should be teaching our children right from the beginning.

To listen. To his words.

And not just to listen to what he is being said. But to give their heart to his words. To be affected by what God says to be. Glad that he is your God, and to actually hate your sin and to be thankful that Jesus died for you. That we should be teaching our children.

From. These things. And we should be encouraging them and helping them always helping them to grow in what they can do. Always trusting God that he is doing more than we can observe him doing. In. And if we are children, we shouldn't Let ourselves off easily by saying it's hard to listen and it's hard to pay attention.

And I'm just interested in other things. Well, of course, you're interested in other things, you're a sinner. And there are other interesting things but the reason you would be more interested in an interesting thing than in God in his word is because you're a sinner. And so if you are to grow in wisdom and stature in favor with God, and with men, it's going to be by his word.

And so, whatever attention you can give you give to him, you give your whole self, you don't make excuses, you don't find other things that you enjoy more and you say, well I enjoy them more so I'm gonna do these things. Instead of listening. No. Try to listen and when you can't listen, you ask God to help you want more.

To listen. And be able more. To listen. And so, this is where, The, this daddy's good Doctrine began. When he was a baby. And he was a newborn. His father was already addressing him with the word and addressing his heart. With the word. And so, you know, this child may not have understood it.

so much at first certainly came to understand it more later as we all are still growing and understanding, but this child would also not be able to remember When they began understanding. Because they were taught the whole time. From when they understood almost nothing. All the way through.

Over and over. Let your heart retain my words. Keep my commands and live. And so where a good Doctrine begins? Well, it begins. Early. As soon as the child, Is born. We should be teaching them. And urging them to retain the teaching. Second what to do with the good Doctrine.

Well, in one word. Get it. Which, repeated four times here in verses five through seven. And this getting it. As joined by retaining it, which we have three prohibitions against forgetting or turning away or forsaking, so don't just get it and think, oh, I've got it. That's good.

No. You, you get it and you keep it. You get it and you meditate upon it, you get it and you employ it. And so get wisdom, get understanding. Verse 5, verse 7, get wisdom verse seven, and all you're getting get understanding. And then in the middle of the sandwich there, do not forget, do not, turn away, do not forsake.

So what do we do with good Doctrine? We should be eager to get it as much as we can get of it. Now, wouldn't it be? Amazing, if people treat it. The teaching of God's word as treasure as wealth. Can you imagine what the society would do? If in little buildings all over the place they were announcing that several times a week.

There was going to be a man standing up front and he was going to be passing out treasure And and sure enough they go and there's a man up front and he's throwing silver and gold and jewels and Bearer, bonds and other highly valuable things into the pews all how they would come, they would never miss a single Wednesday night or Evening service and they would all come and they would sit in the front row and eagerly grab as much as they could get of what was being thrown?

Well, does God not tell us? And teach us truly.

Is there really no way to Just stop it. She's trying to figure that out.

Okay.

Has God not taught us. Truly, in his word. That his truth. His word is more valuable than all treasure. We should get it. Like, we're getting treasure. Take every opportunity. We can to obtain it. And then to retain it, to keep it. That we would apply our hearts to it and live by This includes not just diligence but even our affection verse 6.

Love her. Love her. And then even verse 8, Embrace her at the end of verse 8. So, we should get wisdom, we should get good Doctrine. As much as we can. And that's what we should do with good Doctrine. But what does good Doctrine do with us over?

Six says she will preserve you. Merced says she will promote you, bring you honor. Verse 9, she will place on your head an ornament of Grace, a Crown of Glory, she will deliver to you. And we may read that we can think, well, that's all good. And well, if our daddy is the king, And if we are destined to sit upon the throne, sure.

As we grow in wisdom and stature in favor with God, and with men and especially by Right. Use of and response to his word will be King one day and will be a good King. By God's wisdom. So we'll be grounded with glory and honor. But what about All of the rest of us in this world whose daddy is knocking and who are not going to sit on a throne in this life.

Well. If you're a Believer, Your Alba is King. And he is growing You by his grace, not just for all of the, honorable and Noble and dignified, and important things that you may do. In this life, things like being A husband or a wife. Or the father of a newborn or the mother of a newborn or a church member.

Who looks around and maybe has no children, maybe no spouse of your own. And yet the congregation is full of these others. Well, you have many things that you are being prepared for in this life, but If you're a Christian, you're also Royalty. You're also destined to be a king or a queen.

In the new heavens and the new Earth. This is what they praise the lamb for in Revelation, 5 10. That by his blood, he has redeemed them and made them Kings and Priests. Unto God. And we come into our royalty, we come into our kingship. We come into our Conformity, to Christ's glory in great measure in greatest measure.

By God applying his word to us. And using his word. To conform us to Christ. And so wisdom. Doesn't just preserve. But it brings us on. And it even crowns us with Glory. As is the ultimate Destiny. For any Christian. So where does good Doctrine begin? Well, it ought to begin.

Some. The beginning. The earliest days of life, there's no child too young. To be brought under teaching in the family worship and brought under teaching and preaching in the congregation and addressed and taught from babyhood. From babyhood to. Retain God's word with his heart and keep God's commands and live.

What should we do with this good teaching? That we Well, we should get it and retain it and love it, and embrace it. And what will it do for us? Well, it's the means by which God brings us all the way into the glory. That he has destined for those upon whom he has set his electing.

Adopting glorifying. Love. Let's pray.

Our Father, we pray that you would give us this Of our beginning and this Of our That this passage in Proverbs sets before us. Cause us to treasure you and your word. The way that. the way that this passage Teachers us to do. And, Make us diligent. And delighted.

To come to your word. As often as we can. We ask it in Jesus name, amen.