

Proverbs 3:1-12

A healthy heartbeat



One of the most familiar passages from the book, this focuses on how a true *heart* faith will affect every aspect of life. A different attitude of the *heart* will lead us to choose wisely between the “two ways to live”: trusting in the LORD (5), accepting *his* take on things, and not our “own understanding”.

➤ **A promise to claim?** (2)

Not so much a *promise*, that (for example) every believer will live a long and healthy life, but an indication of how living according to God's ways will tend to benefit us even in this life – and certainly in “the life to come” (1 Timothy 4:8). A “percentage play”, really.

➤ **Whose “steadfast love”?** (3)

“Steadfast love” and “faithfulness” (or “truth”) are two of the big OT words, and part of God's self-description in Exodus 34:6. But does this verse prompt us to depend on God's being, or to exhibit it in our own lives ... or maybe both?

➤ **Inner or outer?** (3)

“Neck” - the outward practicalities of everyday life? And “heart” - the deep down person inside. Again, both/and, not either/or.

➤ **Heart and head?** (5)

“Heart” and “mind” – instincts and thoughts – are not opposites in Bible thinking. The contrast here is much more that between *God's* take on matters and the typical *human* way of looking at things – grace or religion!

➤ **Who does what?** (6)

We sit back and let God sort our lives?

➤ **Who knows best?** (7)

Beware “clever” approaches that contradict God!

➤ **Discipleship: money and possessions** (9-10)

So how will this pan out in our everyday and lifelong practice?

➤ **Discipleship: *formative* discipline** (11-12)

Being honest, this is really difficult to get our heads around and *really* warm towards. James 1:2 is a seriously difficult command to obey!

We may still tend to think of difficulties as *retributive* (punishment) rather than *formative* (correction, and the development of “spiritual muscle”). So do we still not understand just how good our heavenly Father is?