

- see Proverbs 2:10-17



- “*evil man*” = the wisdom and ungodly evil of this world.
- “*strange woman*” = Satan’s policy of evil—especially in connection with apostate religion and corrupt, apostate, ungodly Christianity.

- Now, in view of this exhortation to the son, whereby the Father exhorts his son to the commitment to the effectual working of the education he’s getting from his Father—and in light of the Father confronting his son with the **nature** of the curriculum being one of impressive power, capacity, and might— in a similar way, God our Father has the apostle Paul pointedly confront us with the issues of the **power, capacity, and might** of what He has provided for our sonship lives and edification.

- And while all we can do at this time is to simply look at it and point it out, it **is** beneficial for you to be aware of this and know it ahead of time.

- Romans 8

- After bringing up the issue of sonship prayer in (:26-27); and after dealing with the information in (:28-30) that sets forth a series of things—much like the links of a chain that the Father has forged for the son—a veritable ‘chain of provision’ forged for the success of our sonship lives—beginning in (:31), God has the apostle Paul ask us a thought-provoking question ...

- (Romans 8:31a)

31 What shall we then say to these things?

- And that’s exactly what that question is—thought-provoking! It’s intentionally designed to **provoke** you to think very insightfully and perceptively about the nature of your Father’s education and the provisions He has made for you—and put into the curriculum for you in order that you will be successful in your sonship life that has just been described.

- And that you will be provoked to insightfully perceive the implications and ramifications of it (i.e., the nature of the curriculum) as you embark upon your sonship edification and living out the details of your sonship life.

- What's more—to ensure that we perceive what we ought to perceive as we thoughtfully consider “*these things*,” — our Father has Paul direct our consideration by asking us a series of questions which provoke us to clearly perceive the specific issues of the power, capacity, and might that are resident in the provision for our sonship lives.

- Hence, after asking the thought-provoking question, “*What shall we then say to these things?*” Paul goes on to direct us to consider some other things by asking the remainder of the questions

- (read Rom. 8:31b — 37)

- Now as you think hard on the questions and the information given to you here—more information that is directly related to the setting of the son's attitude and commitment toward the effectual working of what he is going to learn in the curriculum — the ‘gist’ of what the son is to perceive here is that everything our Father is giving us in this curriculum is all ‘geared for our success!’



- Our Father has wisely and prudently provided for everything that we need to be successful—including incorporating into the curriculum for our “*godly edifying which is in faith*” all of the things that are necessary for us to obtain the full objective of being conformed to the image of his Son.

- Moreover, He has provided for us to victoriously deal with and and all resistance and opposition—even to the point of ‘turning the tables’ (so to speak) on some of it so that it actually works out to advancing us on in our own sonship edification!

- (That's what's involved with being “*more than conquerors*”!)

- Now the result of all this body of information sitting in Romans 8 and especially verses 31-37 is that by the effectual working of all these things that the son is given to consider—they all go together and are designed to generate in you some very deep-set and strong convictions (being fully persuaded of these things) - (**belief/trust**) - regarding your ability to succeed in your sonship life by giving yourself whole-heartedly and firmly committed to the effectual working of what you're learning—trusting in **it** implicitly (**in your Father's words/wisdom coming out of his mouth**) to do the job it is perfectly suited to do: the *godly edifying* of your inner man by means of the sonship curriculum!

- Truth of the matter is—the issues that you get confronted with here in Romans 8:31-37 ought to generate within us the very same powerful convictions expressed by the apostle Paul when he concludes answering the question, “*What shall we then say to these things?*” by saying what he does in the remainder of the chapter (:38-39)!

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- So then by forcefully confronting His son—and impacting His son with the full power of the effectual provision that He has wisely and prudently designed for the success of our sonship lives (including the power of His curriculum for our **edification**) — our Heavenly Father has provided us with the first thing that we need in order to be able to respond with the appropriate measure of positive commitment to the effectual working of the things He teaches us.

- He has confronted us with the nature of the curriculum for our sonship education—and we therefore perceive that it is, indeed, perfectly suited to do its job!

- Because by impressing us first of all with the fact that He has ‘geared us for success,’ God our Father has made it so that we can respond to the curriculum for our sonship education with the unshakable conviction and implicit trust that it not only **can** do its job, but that it **will** do its job!

- **The 2nd Component** to the son’s Commitment to the Effectual Working of What He Learns: **The Trustworthiness of the One Who Wrote It!**

- Once the son perceives the nature of the curriculum is such that it is perfectly suited to do its job— it’s geared for his success — the next step is to take that strong conviction and confidence and produce in us the possession of a “*spirit of faith*” in the very things our Father teaches us as we **receive** our sonship education.

- In other words we need to implicitly **believe** everything that He teaches us, and operate upon those things He teaches us BY^{great} FAITH. (Thereby completely depending upon the curriculum to do its job.)

- Now this expression “*spirit of faith*” is one that is utilized by the apostle Paul over in II Corinthians and is the result of his own understanding and appreciation for sonship education, even as it was expressed back in the book of the Psalms.

- Psalm 116:1-15 (:10—the very verse Paul is going to quote)

- II Corinthians 4:7-14 (:13)

- Note the small case “s” “*spirit*” —

- “*spirit*” as used in II Timothy 1:7

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

- The “*spirit of fear*” is not some kind of a demon or unclean spirit doing this, or being described here at all.

- “*spirit*” = OED: “The active or essential principle or power of some emotion, frame of mind, etc., as operating on or in persons. - 1382 Wyclif - II Tim. 1:7”

- Hence, just as a “*spirit of fear*” isn’t some kind of demonic, unclean spirit—so too a “*spirit of faith*” isn’t some kind of supernatural, angelic host or some supernatural phenomena or sensation that mysteriously **gifts** us with faith!

- A “*spirit of faith*” is the description of what is actively and powerfully operating in our human spirit—giving us an essential frame of mind—and what is active and powerful in our human spirit is **faith**—faith in the words and the doctrines and the exhortations of our Father! (a history of faith)



- Now it should go without saying that a son is expected to know that his earthly or biological father can be trusted. (If the father is what he ought to be). And in view of all that the father has provided for the son—all that he has lovingly designed and purposed for him—along with all that the father has already done for his child, (and given him to know), from birth to “the adoption of sons” — a son should know that he can believe whatever his father says to him and that he can trust in it implicitly.

- In fact, throughout the childhood years, one of the most fundamental things that a father does is to generate and establish a “*spirit of faith*” in his child.

- He wants his child to know without a doubt that he speaks the truth and that ‘**his word is his bond.**’

- Hence, the father deliberately manifests his faithfulness and trustworthiness to his child on numerous occasions—confronting him with them so that he comes to understand and appreciate his father’s veracity (truthfulness) and dependability.

- So that by the time a child receives “*the adoption of sons*” he’s expected to already possess a strong “*spirit of faith*” in his father and in his father’s words.

- In fact, **his father is to be the most trustworthy person that he knows!**

- And in connection with this, upon receiving “*the adoption of sons*” and being established in his sonship status, **the son is expected to become the most trusting person with whom his father ever deals!**

- In other words, a father looks for his son to believe him implicitly in whatever he says to him and in whatever he teaches him—because doing this is not only perfectly consistent with having a strong “*spirit of faith*” - **but the very success of the son’s sonship education absolutely depends upon him doing this!**

- Because the effectual working of much of what the son will be taught by his father through the curriculum for his vocational education and training demands that he (the son) believe things implicitly and that he operate upon them steadfastly—even in the face of **more attractive and more seemingly-believable alternatives!!!**

- And the same thing is not only true of an earthly father—but it is also true of our Heavenly Father.

- As adopted, adult sons, we ought to have a consistently strong “*spirit of faith*” in God our Father and in His words to us—because He, too, worked to generate and establish just such a “*spirit of faith*” in us before He ever told us about our sonship status. (Rom. 1:1—8:13)

- Proverbs 2:7 corresponds (exhortation-wise) to this 2nd Component that makes up the son's measure of commitment to the effectual working of what he is taught by his Father.

7 He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

- Once again, you've got one sentence made up by 2 clauses—separated by a colon.

- And just by the terminology—and the way it's stated—in that 1st clause: "He layeth up sound wisdom..." - that idea or issue of God '**laying up**' *sound wisdom*—that expression really generates in your thinking (coming right after :6— "*For the LORD giveth wisdom...*") the idea that your Father has already been giving you sound wisdom all along the way—but now as you stand having received "*the adoption of sons*" — that as you look down the overall scope of your sonship education—and as you come to perceive something of the opposition and resistance you will face in connection with it—your Father won't **run out** (so to speak) **of sound wisdom**—(which is where **panic** sets in—panic being what happens when you run out of information) — and He won't run into situations or circumstances where He's going to get caught 'blindsided' (so to speak) or out-flanked or anything along those lines.

- No—instead *He layeth up sound wisdom*—He 'has it in store' so to speak for every detail of every situation and circumstance you'll ever face — He's 'got it in layaway' just for you—with all it's might and power and capacity to cause you to be 'more than a conqueror' - and it will all be there, ready to go, without alteration, just when you need it to effectually work!

- And *He layeth up sound wisdom* (not just any wisdom and not just any doctrine—but it's **sound**—because it's solid, firm, and free from defect—and really it's that word **sound** that makes it so that you perceive that the curriculum and education you're getting is not only perfectly suited to do the job, but that more than that, it's completely dependable — it's free from error, it's accurate, and it's free from corruption of men!

- And *He layeth up sound wisdom **for the righteous***—not just the *righteous* in the sense of being JUEL—but this is dealing with those who are putting their sanctified position into practice in righteousness.

- Or for us in this dispensation of grace in which we live—it would be “*the righteous*” in the sense of us walking after the Spirit in righteousness—or putting your position in Christ into practice in righteousness. (which is why the issue of *righteousness* gets brought up in those opening 13 verses of Romans chapter 8).

- And then, once you have paused enough to get the understanding and appreciation and benefit from the first clause, the second clause goes on to say....

“... *he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*”



- “*them that walk uprightly*” = the Father’s sons who is steadfastly adhere to their Father’s path and their Father’s way, and so forth.

- Then you have this wonderful Older English term “***buckler***” (!gEm) [magen] = a shield—however, the KJ translators had

“*shield*”

readily available to them, and in fact translated [magen] as “*shield*” on numerous occasions—therefore, there is something particular about the context in which “*buckler*” is used because of a shade of meaning it has that is more excellent to use in certain contexts than merely a “*shield*.”

- And for those who would try to standardize the terms in the Bible to make it so-called ‘better’ and ‘easier to read’ - they would have tough time with a verse like Psalm 91:4 —

“*He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy **shield and buckler.***”

(The newer ‘better’ and ‘easier to read’ modern translations leave this verse alone!)

- A ***buckler*** is, indeed, a shield—and as such, it is a means of protection and defense (as are all shields) - but as the OED makes clear, *it is a small round shield; usually carried by a handle at the back—and used not so much for a shield as for a warder to catch the blow of an adversary—and it is wrongly applied to just any kind of a shield.*

- From the French *bouclier* and the Latin *baccularius* ‘having a boss’; it was used for specific battle in which ‘close-in’ fighting was done with the enemy (adversary) - what we might call today, ‘hand-to-hand’ combat—and the *buckler* was held by a fist-grip, it was quite

- And the skilled warrior was to be an expert in not only offensive weaponry, but in defensive weaponry—and he was trained to utilize his buckler-shield for those times in which he would be engaging in the most grueling aspects of war: hand-to-hand combat.

- And he was to have confidence in it—and implicit trust in it to ward off the blows of his adversary—and therefore keep him in the fight until the very end.

- Having the buckler in hand instilled confidence as the warrior faithfully trusted it to do its job when the fighting was the thickest — ‘my trusty tool of war’.

- It therefore strengthened his resolve and determination and commitment to keep on fighting!

- Therefore as a *buckler*—our Father becomes our protector and our defender—but not in just any old way—because what is being stressed in this context is that He is our *buckler* by means of His sound wisdom—and His words and sound wisdom that we receive as His adopted son should produce the same measure of commitment to the fight—because our Father is a *buckler* to us—His wise curriculum has provided **power** and **might** and **capacity** for our ready defense from the stiff opposition and resistance we’ll inevitably face.

- To ward off the blows of the Adversary’s “*fiery darts*” - in fact, look at that passage in Ephesians 6:16 and you’ll see what kind of “*shield*” gets mentioned there—what kind is it??? (“*the shield of faith*”)!)

- But more than that, as our *buckler*, by means of His powerful capacity contained in the curriculum for our sonship education, He has provided for being our ‘puncher’ - to deliver ‘knock-out’ blows to the Adversary and his wiles and policy of evil.

- Now at the moment—that is, without the necessary, corresponding forms of doctrine that go to produce all this trust in the One who wrote the curriculum for our sonship education—without that doctrine in our epistles that are to be written on our hearts effectually working within us—all this is **just talk**—**big talk**—and most ineffectual and ineffective to do anything except get you a little excited by spirited preaching—it’s got to be the effectual working of the proper sonship doctrine that produces all this! (This is just the exhortation!)

- But in all reality, **this isn't just 'big talk'** in the sense that we, too, have had our Father producing within us a '*spirit of faith*' — in fact, in some noteworthy measure, as we have proceeded through all the doctrine of our justified position in Christ, as well as our sanctified position in Christ—at least as far as we've come.

- Our Heavenly Father has been doing this very thing in us all along (for quite some time now)—because by the effectual working of "*the gospel of Christ*" itself, we were not only confronted with the issues of God's great **love**, **mercy**, and **grace** unto us, and also with the issues of His **wisdom** and **power** in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ—but we were also pointedly confronted with His **trustworthiness**.

- And so we believed "*on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*" (Rom. 4:24-25)

- Hence, just like Paul describes about Abraham in Romans 4:16-25, we ourselves were "*not **weak** in faith,*" being fully persuaded of the truth of what God says in His "*gospel of Christ.*"

- And as with Abraham, we were fully persuaded because God is the one "*who quickeneth the dead,¹ and calleth those things which be not as though they were.*"² (Rom. 4:17)

***** SEE ROMANS 4:17—(these 2 issues) *****

- Now in connection with believing "*the gospel of Christ*" God not only justified us in His sight—saved us from the debt & penalty of our sins—and made us permanently "at-one" with Him—but having confronted us with His **trustworthiness**, He also laid the groundwork for establishing in us a consistently strong and on-going "*spirit of faith*" in Him and in His words to us!

- Moreover, having done this, later on in Romans 6:1-8:13 God built upon it and provided for developing it further through the effectual working of what He taught us in the doctrine of our sanctification "in Christ."

- And the result of all that is that by the time He tells us about our sonship status in Romans 8:14-15, we should already have a strong "*spirit of faith*" in Him and in the effectual working of His words to us.

- And so then after we receive our sonship establishment through the effectual working of Romans 8:16-39, the strength of our “*spirit of faith*” in our Father and in His words should be such that we, too, live in accordance with the truth that—(just as the writer of Hebrews said) “*faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*”

- And with this being a reality, we should be ready to respond positively and properly to **every thing** that our Father will teach us throughout the curriculum for our sonship education—implicitly believing everything He teaches us and confidently operating upon it.

- Because as His “*sons*” our Father should be to us **THE MOST TRUSTWORTHY PERSON WE KNOW** — and along with His Son Jesus Christ, we should be to Him **THE MOST TRUSTING PERSONS WITH WHOM HE EVER DEALS!**

- So as we progress through our sonship education & edification, our Father should not ever need to say to us, “*O ye of little faith. Why do ye not believe?*”

- He should never have to reprove us for being “*weak in faith*” regarding what He teaches us!

- Therefore, as we are exhorted to commit to the effectual working of what our Father teaches us in our sonship curriculum, He confronts us with His trustworthiness as the One who wisely and prudently wrote the curriculum in the first place — and we are then to respond to that by perceiving that this curriculum is completely dependable on carrying out its job!



- **The 3rd Component: THE VALUE OF ITS EFFECTUAL WORKING.**
(The value of being edified by what the son is going to learn).

- The 3rd & final main component of a son’s proper, positive response to what his Father teaches him is the issue of him placing so much **value** upon learning what he is given to learn—and achieving the attainments of his sonship curriculum, that he is willing to pursue getting them **at all cost—regardless of the cost!**

- In other words, **nothing** compares with succeeding with his sonship education & edification!

- From the very beginning of the adopted son's sonship life he undergoes a great deal of adjustments to his **attitude**—one of the most important, and one that gets continual attention and refinements is the issue of his attitude toward **the value of what his Father is teaching him and training him to do.**

- And due to the nature of the curriculum—as well as the many attainments in the curriculum—and also the nature of the opposition and resistance that the son will face — it is therefore natural, (and the expected thing), to find the Father having to address the issue of how the son **values** and **esteems** his sonship education & edification — to, on more than one occasion, have to deal with the **worth and value** of the education/edification that the son is receiving upon reaching new levels of advancement and attainment within the whole sonship curriculum.

- (To “revisit” the issue of the value & worth of the Father's wisdom and curriculum for sonship edification.)

- And this is why a son is repeatedly confronted with checking his commitment level in regard to his positive & proper response to the curriculum's value and worth.

- The “knowing” issue in **Pro. 1:2**— “*to know wisdom and instruction ...*”

- **2:4**—*If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;*”

- **3:14-15**—*For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than find gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared to her.*

- **8:10-11**—*Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.*

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

- **8:19**—*My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.*

- **10:20**—*The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

- **16:16**—*How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!*

- Truth of the matter is, the son has already been confronted with and has successfully passed some serious checkpoints dealing with the value & worth of his Father's education already.

- And when the forms of doctrine the Father teaches His son really do effectually work within him, this **worth** or **value** and **esteem** that the son gains isn't just a shallow appreciation in his heart—with no real depth to it—nor is it just a passing emotion or sentiment—but if the doctrine effectually works, these exhortation checkpoints of the son's valuing and esteeming the worth of his education & edification properly are **genuine** and **real** — in fact, the son's valuing and esteeming of the worth of his sonship education is absolutely genuine and its roots run deep (so to speak)! (it's "godly"!)

- In fact, if you haven't perceived it yet—the Father is 'up to something' here in doing all this checking on the son's commitment—and to his valuing and esteeming the worth of his education & edification—because the truth of the matter is, this is all driving at a particular issue that has to be powerfully produced and generated within the son's own heart.

- So what is it? What is it that the Father is 'up to'? — what is it that is the particular issue that He is driving at—what is that particular issue that has to be powerfully produced within the son's heart?

- And it should be perceived that since this issue is one that is what all this commitment check is driving at—that is, since all of these areas of commitment of the son to 1) **his education** [Honest Attendance; Interactive Learning; and making the education The Top Priority of his life]; and 2) **his edification**—his commitment to The Effectual Working of What he Learns [appreciating the Nature of the Curriculum being perfectly suited to do its job; and then perceiving the Trustworthiness of the One who wrote the curriculum and that the son can implicitly trust and depend upon that curriculum to do its job to properly edify him unto godliness which is in faith] — if all these components are leading somewhere—when it comes to confronting the son (at the end of these components) with the value of its effectual working and the worth of its effectual working so that the son perceives it to be more valuable and more precious than anything else in his life — what is that describing? What is that generating in him?

- **LOVE** — a genuine, godly love for his Father's education and edification! (Same **love** that his Father has for it!)

- Now, while the exhortation in Proverbs 2:8 is designed to encapsulate the issue of the Value of the Effectual Working of the Father's wisdom and instruction (curriculum) - and the following verses in the exhortation go on to deal with the results and ramifications of the Father's wisdom to "*keep the paths of judgment, and preserve the way of his saints*" (esp. Pro. 2:10-17) — you should know from some things already sitting in the Psalms (for instance) where David talks about these very issues—as well as some things confronted later on in the book of Proverbs—that what is being driven at and what is to be generated within the son's heart as he perceives the education he's getting from his Father (and the edification he gets as a result of it) **is a deep-set, godly love** for being adopted as a son of his Father **and** the education he's getting from his Father.

- Proverbs 2:8

He keepeth (רָחַן: [natsar] = guard from danger) the paths of judgment (פָּרַט; מִשְׁפָּט [mishpat] = to determine, in general, right from wrong), and preserveth the way of his saints.

9 Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

- Note that in all of the issues mentioned in Prov. 1:3—all of them are issues that have a **saving quality** in all these things!)

- Psalm 18:1-3; 21-22; 28-31 [:30]

- Proverbs 4:1-6 [:6]

- Proverbs 8:18-21 [:21]

- Simply put—at this point in the son's education and sonship life; his sonship education & edification **is to become the 'love of his life!'**



- Therefore a son who responds positively and properly to what his Father teaches him also does so because he loves pursuing and attaining the various aims and goals of his sonship life more than anything else. He absolutely **loves** sonship's aims and goals—they are the 'love of his life!'

- The son would rather learn a form of doctrine from his Father's curriculum and attain its corresponding attainment in his sonship walk, than pursue and/or possess anything this world has to offer—or that it values and esteems.

- And this is because his Father has effectually generated within him an **incomparable love** for his sonship aims, goals, and ultimate objective!

- And this is also something an earthly father accomplishes as he establishes his son in his sonship status and prepares him for receiving his sonship education.

- Because one of the very important issues that a father wants operating within his son's heart is that as he teaches his son all about the upcoming vocation that he will have in his father's business—and informing his son all about the nature of the curriculum for his vocational training—is so doing, he also naturally teaches his son about **the various glories** of his sonship life!

- In fact, learning about these '**glories**' is one of the reasons why a son cries, "*Abba, Father*" more and more!

- Because these **glories** **deliberately confront the son's own standard of values**—and they begin to 'adjust' the evaluation scale of his heart.

- And in so doing, they effectually work within him to affect '**his heart's desire**' (so to speak).

- These glories displace any importance that he has placed upon any worldly desires and pursuits—and replace them with the desires and pursuits of his sonship life.

- The truth of the matter is, **the glories of his sonship life outshine all the glitter and luster of what this world says is valuable and worth pursuing**—so that the '*eyes of the son's understanding*' begin to look upon another object of great desire—one that **exceeds** all others and is **of inestimable worth to him!**

- So then the exceedingly glorious aims, goals, and attainments of his sonship life—along with the incomparable value of its ultimate objective—all effectually work within a son to make him pursue these things as **THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE!**

- And in light of that, the son will respond positively and properly to his father's teachings—desiring to obtain these things **at all costs—even in preference to the approval and accolades of men—or even over escaping man's reproach or persecution!**

- See this in the very life of the Lord Jesus Christ:
(Matthew 26:62-64)
- And for us, the members of the church, the body of Christ in this present dispensation of grace in which we live—in all that we are taught for our sonship establishment in Romans 8:16-39—our Father also provides for ‘the love of our lives’ to become the pursuit of our sonship aims and goals.
 - The ‘*heir of God*’ issue and the ‘*joint-heir with Christ*’ issue;
 - The 8:18 issue of reckoning that the ‘*sufferings of this present time not being worthy to be compared to the **glory** which shall be revealed in us.*’
 - The issue of being confronted with our vocation in the ‘*creature.*’
 - All leading to the issue of having the things generated within the heart of the son that gets stated from (:35-39) — and that issue of “*the love of Christ*” and then viewing the same issue from the Father’s perspective— “*the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*” - all leading to the effectual working in the son’s heart having the same attitude of sonship education & edification being the love of his life, just as it is the love of Christ’s life and the love of the Father’s life!
- And in view of all this—when we look at our life in this world—what does this world have to offer that compares with receiving our vocational education and training for our heavenly, everlasting vocation that belongs to our eternal lives?
 - And where is there anywhere in this world (**Scientology not withstanding**) the happiness, satisfaction, and contentment that compares with godly happiness and godly satisfaction and godly contentment that are produced in us by the effectual working of our sonship education?
 - And what kind of relationship—or intimacy of fellowship and communion can this world offer that compares with that which we can have with God our Heavenly Father by means of our sonship education and sonship prayer?
 - And most of all—where is there an object for our heart’s desire that even comes close to the ultimate objective of our sonship lives: **being conformed to the image of God’s Son**? (Rom. 8:29)
 - David’s words to his son Solomon are true: “*wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.*”

- So therefore, along with:

1) Having strong convictions and confidence regarding the **capacities** (the strength, power, and might) of our Father's curriculum to do its job—which comes from being confronted with The Nature of the Curriculum;

2) Having implicit faith (a "*spirit of faith*") in whatever our Father teaches us—which comes from being confronted with the Trustworthiness of God our Father who Wrote the Curriculum;

— our positive and proper response to what our Father teaches us should also include—

3) Desiring above all else to obtain the sonship glories—and being willing to obtain them at all cost—in fact, that **desire** should become the very '**love of our life**' because we now view the sonship curriculum and the glories it hold out for us as more precious and valuable than anything else in life—which comes from being confronted with the Value of the Effectual Working of our Father's sonship curriculum.

- Now the upshot of all this is—that when you take the doctrine about **our sonship status** as found in Romans 8:14-15—and then when you then take the issue of our Commitment to Learning the curriculum, (our commitment to the **education side** of our sonship lives) and the 3 measures of commitment found there—and then you add to that the other side of the coin, which is our Commitment to the Effectual Working of what you learn—(i.e., our commitment to the **edification side** of our sonship lives) and the 3 measures of commitment found there — in other words, by the effectual working of Phase 1 of Level I of sonship education & edification, (as per the Table of Contents; and as per the corresponding doctrine in Romans 8:16-39; and as per the corresponding pre and post doctrinal exhortations) — what you wind up with in the final analysis—and what the ultimate objective of it all is—is that you wind up with an adopted son who has been properly ESTABLISHED in his sonship life! (With a properly developed **godly attitude** toward the education and toward getting it!)

- And this is the required prerequisite for all that is involved in our SONSHIP ESTABLISHMENT before going on to receiving our sonship education in earnest—(or Phase 2 of Level I)!



- Read Proverbs 1:1-6 again.

LEVEL I—Phase 2

- Table of Contents: Proverbs 1:3

“To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;”

- At this point in the son’s education, he’s now beyond the point of coming to know the value and worth of all that it means for him to have been adopted by his father—(to no longer be treated as a child, with all of the restrictions that childhood has—and now being treated as an adult son with all of the glorious liberty that adult sonship has—and the grand prospect of one day entering into doing business with his father) - and more than that, the needed **adjustments** to the son’s **attitude** has now been properly fulfilled (sufficient enough) so that the son’s desire to be educated **matches** his father’s desire to educate him.

- The son has now come to understand and appreciate in some measure how this whole education is going to be personally useful to him; he now has a measure of his father’s likes and dislikes operating on the evaluation scale of his heart—and he matches those likes and dislikes in his own heart.

- He sees the benefit and profit that this education is supposed to be to him—and by the effectual working of the information his father gives him to **establish** him as his son—the son now values and esteems the education he’s about to receive properly and positively.

- To him at this point, the education he’s getting from his father is now the ‘**love of his life.**’

- And in view of all that, the son should be genuinely and seriously and passionately crying, *“Abba, Father!”* — I want this—now let’s get it!

- And now with that basic similarity of attitude that he needs to have, the son can now sit down with his father and look at his father as his main teacher now—and the one from whom he now wants to receive all this information.

- And once you’ve gone through Phase 1—and once you’ve properly come *“To know...”* and *“to perceive...”* — now you begin to “**receive**”.

- We now encounter our 3rd *“**To**-Infinitive”* - and you should perceive that this is just a little bit different than those first 2 infinitives.

- And it really is different—because when you dealing with a context of ‘an education’ - and within the context of these 6 verses—and within the way it gets presented to you—you kind of have in those first 2 infinitives what is kind of like showing up for class, but those first couple of lessons really only deal with orientation (or **establishment**) - or introduction to the whole education laying out in front of you.

- And even though “*to know*” and “*to perceive*” does have you ‘getting’ something—(because all of the infinitives are telling you what these Proverbs are going to do) - and when you come *to know wisdom and instruction*—and you come *to perceive the words of understanding*—you are getting something—but you’re really not getting it in quite the same way as when you **receive** *the instruction of wisdom, justice,*



- In fact—what I’m driving at is that within the context and the **way** you’re presented with this Table of Contents—even though in those first 2 infinitives that made up your basic sonship establishment—it’s more or less like all you’ve done so far is just listen and think.

- That is, (and to put it in the framework of going to school), up to this point you really haven’t opened any books yet—you really haven’t taken any notes yet — you really haven’t begun any of the courses in the ‘core curriculum’ as of yet.

- Not to say that what you’ve been doing isn’t important—because it is—vitaly important and critical to insure that the rest of the education will effectually work and be successful.

- And I’m not minimizing Phase 1 of Level I—because it’s got to be accomplished before any of the rest of the education can have any chance to do its job!

- But all I’m saying is that you haven’t really begun getting the meat (or even the ‘appetizer’) of the curriculum—until you begin ‘receiving’ it in (:3).

- And before going into the details of (:3) and what makes up Phase 2 of Level I—you need to appreciate that fact—that what begins to happen when you “*receive instruction*” is getting the education underway **in earnest**—you’re getting down to business (so to speak) - getting down to **the serious business of receiving your education!**

- And this is actually the first time in the education as sons you've graduated to 'receiving the instruction' - and this is the first time your sonship life gets put on display—where, for the first time you begin to practice your sonship life and position.

- And just to underscore what I just said—it's not until you are **ready** and **willing** and **zealous** about getting the education—(all the things that Phase 1 accomplished (:2) to adjust your attitude so that you see this education exactly the same way your Father sees it)—until that is done, **you're NOT ready** to 'receive the instruction' in all the rest of the curriculum from your Father!

- But now (by the effectual working of [:2] or Phase 1) you should be 'dying to get it' (so to speak) - you should be 'chomping at the bit' or **greatly desiring** to get it!

- So in (:3) we have, "**To receive the instruction** ..." - and even though we've already encountered the word "*instruction*" before—we now need to really understand and appreciate what that means beyond just getting the education.

- "**instruction**" = when you basically think of *instruction* or *instructions* you most often think of a set of directions (like the directions on how to build a model—or directions on how to put a bicycle together—or something like that).

- Or directions or teaching on how to do something.

- An instruction book; an instruction manual.

- OED Definition: *the imparting of knowledge or skill; making known to a person what he is required to do.*

- And really that's one side of the coin (so to speak) - but there's another aspect to *instruction* that's vital to coming to a real understanding and appreciation of it—especially in the context of this sonship education you're now getting from your Father.

- Because this other side of the coin is what *instruction* implies or a shade of meaning of what *instruction* is driving at.

- And it's this other implied meaning that is significant to the word *instruction* that really makes the impact on (or sets the stage for) just what you're to expect in this next Phase.

- And it's important that you appreciate that *instruction* isn't merely teaching—because teaching can be an informing of the understanding about things you may already know, but just how to use it differently.

- Also, teaching is the more proper word to use when dealing with strict academics (science/art)—not to mention the fact that you don't even need a person at all to be taught—for example, history can teach you things.

- But *instruction* is personal—in fact it is the most excellent and proper word to use when referring to a child to be taught by his parent/parents—a son is properly *instructed* by his father!

- The critical issue that *instruction* is driving at (a shade of meaning, if you will) - is that when you dealing with *instruction*, you're dealing with a body of information **that you do NOT innately possess** and you're going to be getting knowledge that you do NOT just automatically know—and you're going to be taught, therefore, things that do not necessarily or naturally fit in your thinking—and so adjustments are going to have to be made—and that concept that we run into there in Romans 12:1-2 comes into play—the mind is going to start being renewed.

- And really the critical thing about *receiving instruction* is that you are now going to get information that up to this time you are **ignorant of!**

- And we need to put both concepts together in order to really get the appreciation of what it means for us to *receive instruction* in all 4 of those following areas mentioned in (:3) - *wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity*.

- So when you're talking about *instruction*—and *receiving instruction* in this context of our sonship education - it's:

1) The receiving of directions or a body of information on how to do something that you don't know how to do; with the ability to do something that you don't naturally have the ability to do; and,

2) This body of information (or instruction that I'm receiving) on how to do something— is information that prior to me receiving it, **I was totally ignorant of!**

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- And as your mind begins the process of being *renewed*—old information that now has no value whatsoever—and information that gets acquired from the world and the wisdom of this world is going to have to be recognized for the **worthlessness** that it is—and that it's all going to have to be replaced—and in view of all that being the critical and necessary thing that it is (even the natural thing to do that it is) - in view of that, when you see in the Table of Contents that this next level of sonship education is “*To receive the instruction*” of some things—it is to be expected that things are going to get more intricate and more complex.

 - Because you're new getting beyond just acquiring some basic concepts in the mind and the orientation of the mind—or better yet, the **awaking** of the mind.

 - By the time you get to Phase 2 of Level I—the mind is now awakened to the son's status and establishment—and now that the mind is awake, the human spirit of the son is now in a position where a whole bunch of additional features are going to come along and be added to his awakened mind and spirit—and he's going to begin going somewhere with it all.

 - And by the time you hit (:3) you get confronted with 4 terms that (even though the 1st one has been encountered before, the other 3 have not) - and just by being familiar with how your Father presents things to you—you know that you're now ‘out of the stands, and on the field’ (so to speak) - you're now going from the general to the particular—or as we often like to say, “This is where the rubber starts meeting the road”!

 - And when it comes to the first thing you are supposed to perceive here—“*To receive the instruction . . .*” — you need to realize that the information your Father is going to give you is information that you are ignorant of, and it's going to provide you with the ability to do some things. (And without that information, you won't properly do the things you're supposed to do—[you won't be able to put all the parts together—in the right order] and so forth).

 - And depending upon the nature of the information—it could be helpful, or it could be absolutely essential—(and you realize that you need to follow the instructions if you want to get the thing put together right—with no parts left over!) — and if you have some idea of what it looks like (if you've seen it), the instructions may just be helpful—but in other instances, (if you haven't seen it) the instructions are **absolutely essential**.

- And you can bet (if you're a betting man) that in the vast majority of the cases—almost no one in modern-day Christianity has ever seen a properly educated and properly edified adult, adopted son of God!

- Couple that with the fact that the *instruction* (and instruction manual) you're getting is given to you from God your Heavenly Father **to provide for you to begin emulating Him!**

- (To provide for you putting your sonship life into practice for the very first time!)

- And that makes that information contained in the "*instructions*" not merely 'helpful' (as most Christians—and some non-Christians view it) - this is **ESSENTIAL** information/*instruction* that has to be precisely followed—followed in the right order—and not one part of it taken lightly or set aside just because YOU don't see how it works, or YOU see/imagine a better way to do it (translation: a short-cut)!!!



- Now, at this point I just want to take what we've been talking about and dealing with in just this initial phrase of (:3) - "To receive the instruction" and by taking what we've now come to understand and appreciate about 'receiving instruction' and take it one step further—and state it so that you see, crystal clear, what that means to you—and the **huge impact** that just that phrase (with the 4 things looming out there in the rest of the verse) - but really just that one phrase—to see the impact that is supposed to now make on your human spirit.

- Because when you're told now by your Father that you are going to 'receive instruction' in some things—some of the very things that make up the way He, Himself thinks and how His own heart works and functions—and you're kind of like that kid who couldn't draw a stick-man or sculpt anything other than an ashtray or candle holder, but when he goes out and gets a model of a '56 Ford F-100 and he opens up the box and sees a couple hundred tiny plastic parts—he grabs hold of the instructions, and with a little glue and paying close attention to those instructions—those instructions actually transform that sorry artist into a master craftsman when he finally puts that last piece of the model on and he looks at a finished product that is an exact replica of the original!

- Well, you know that he's been given *instructions*—and those *instructions* gave him information that he was innately or naturally ignorant of—but it did **more** than that—what else did those instructions do?

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- That kid who's never ever put a model together in his life opens up that box—and he realizes he's got a big problem—he's never done this before—but laying there on top are those instructions!
 - (A:) — **he's going to be able to do something that he's never done before!**
 - And that is a **huge issue** now for you as a son!
 - And that's why you need *instruction*—why it's **essential**—because you're going to now have to put some things together so that you can be able to do some things that you've never done before in your life!
 - And the first thing that the son is going to do now in Phase 2 of Level I of his sonship education is to get some information—to *receive* some *instruction* for doing some things he's never done before!
 - (At least he's never done them like his Father's done them.)
 - And that's the gist of what it means “*To receive the instruction of*” (whatever) - the son is going to have some information given to him that is going to teach him how to do some things that, without this instruction, he's **not** going to be able to do them—at least not to the emulation of his Father.
 - And now we need to see what those thing are.
 - And remember that they have been chosen and arranged by the ‘model-maker’ - by the Father who knows all about the entire program and curriculum—who functions in just this same way Himself—who has proven, Himself, that it works—He's been successful at it—and now He's going to perfectly instruct you, His son to do just what He does in His own business.
 - And so you've got 4 components to what you are *to receive the instruction of*: “**wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;**”
 - And before going in to the details of what each of the 4 things mean in the context they're given here—when you just look at them ‘on the surface’ (so to speak) - or just look at the overall scope of them—what is it that they are giving you the ability to do? that you've never done before? — (and I know that my big mouth has probably already biased your thinking on this!)

- Because while all 4 terms are not the same—while they **do** have valid and essential differences—at the same time they are all **closely related**—they all have something in common as far as them all being spoken about within the context of this one objective to Phase 2 of Level I of sonship edification.

- And you have to think of them having a commonness to them that in each one of them (and all of them together) are going to have a particular capacity that's given to the son when he *receives the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity*—and what the son gets out of all of it is a capacity or an ability to do something that he's never done before—and that he doesn't have the natural, innate ability to do.

- These 4 things have in common (at least in the context and objective of verse 3) they do have a common capacity that an individual acquires when he becomes a possessor of them.

- And what I'm after is—what is that capacity? - what is that ability that he's going to receive that has these 4 components to it?

- (A:) — by *receiving the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity*—**the son is given the capacity of godly decision-making; the acquiring of decision-making skills.**

- You're going to receive instruction for making either *wise* decisions; or *just* decisions; or *judgmental* decisions; or *equitable* decisions.

- And when you kind of boil it all down—you're going to see, and you're going to come to acknowledge and appreciate that really, those 4 areas: *wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity*—if you were to take all of the areas of decisions you will ever make as a son—you might not find that every one of them is a *wise* or *just* or *judgmental* or *equitable* decision—because there may be decisions that you make that don't hit any one of these areas, but are decisions that actually have developed out of these 4—but what you will find is that the vast majority or bulk of the decisions you will ever have to make **will** be either a *wise*, a *just*, a *judgmental*, or an *equitable* decision.

- Now, I'm sure that some of you already were tipped off to this because, as I said, I just couldn't keep my mouth shut about it.

- Now don't let that keep you from appreciating the **hugeness** of all this—and the **profound impact** that is supposed to make upon your heart—because the truth of the matter is, this is a huge issue—and this decision-making skill is one that the world in general is desperately trying to conquer—and it is one that the Christian world has been (in parallel with the world) struggling to grasp hold of for a really long time.

- In fact, the Christian world is just as frustrated and discontented and unhappy and disappointed and disillusioned with their ability to make godly, proper decisions as anyone else in the religious world and in the world in general! (They're all just as lost as they can be in this area!)

- And the 'rub' of it is that most Christians who do read the best-sellers of the Christian 'stable of stars' winds up making decisions that they imagine are good and godly, but in reality wind up being anything but that!

- And while I have 'spilled the beans' on this decision-making issue of these 4 components of (:3) - **I didn't tell you everything**—because there is another fantastic and wonderful aspect to our *receiving the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* that I didn't tell you about.



- The other thing we're going to see about these 4 things—and that also contribute greatly to our appreciation of all 4 of them having in common the acquiring of decision-making skills—the other thing we're going to see is that *wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity* aren't just the decision-making skills that are expected in a son's life (although they most certainly are that, for sure) - but more than that, receiving the instruction of *wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* **produces the abilities of a KING or a PRINCE or a GOVERNOR or someone in governmental ruler-ship and authority to do his job!**

- If he's going to be good and skillful at what he does, a governor or ruler has got to have *wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity* operating in him—and he has to be instructed in each and every one of these things so as to produce the corresponding decision-making skill!

- And what's remarkable about that is that your Heavenly Father, knowing that He's going to be placing you in a position of governing-type responsibility/authority in the creature—He starts you off with immediately learning the skills you are going to need when you function out there!—(vocational training)

(Like VanderCook starting you off conducting!)

- And it's fascinating that, in the Bible, when you find the issue of *justice* and *judgment*—you often find them together—and usually they are being used as descriptive of either God in His judging as King, or talking about someone like Solomon in his judging as king or David in judging as king.

- And remember that what you're looking at here in the book of Proverbs is David instructing his son Solomon in all 4 of these decision-making skills (all of which have practical and very critical and essential and vital uses for a son in his sonship life) - but more than that, Solomon (and David, too) aren't just your 'run-of-the-mill sons' (so to speak) - but both David and Solomon are going to be utilized by God as the illustrative examples of fully educated sons in Israel's program—and both of them are **KINGS**—they are rulers in authority—and more than that, they are rulers in authority doing the very **business** of their Heavenly Father as King of Israel!

- And Solomon understood that in all these things he's now going to *receive the instruction of* from his father, David, that he's never been in the position or authority of a king—and now my father is instructing me in *wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* so that I can now make the necessary decisions I'm going to be faced with as the king!

- And even if all you were appreciating here are the things pertaining to Israel's program—and when you look at the remnant of Israel out during the time of the fulfillment of God's program with them—their hope during that time is to have a measure of participation with their Messiah (The Lord Jesus Christ) and the 12 apostles in that kingdom! (**Governmental authority in the Kingdom.**)

- And that's why you will find sitting in the gospel accounts (as well as over in the book of the Revelation) information that talks about holding out to the members of the remnant of Israel (and by their being faithful to the end—fidelity through that day of wrath) the issue or hope of them reigning with the Messiah—the ability to have a position of governmental authority.

- (I realize how butchered up this gets by those who don't *rightly divide* the word—and they screw it all up as being some kind of conditional teaching on salvation from the debt & penalty of your sins—or justification unto eternal life).

- And that remnant is going to be able to see, by the effectual working of especially the books of Hebrews—Jude that they are going to be given *instruction* as sons so that they can make *wise, just, judgmental, and equitable* decisions which are the kind of decisions they are to make if they are ever to have a position of governmental authority.

- But then **you**—as an adopted, adult son - as a member of the church the body of Christ—as an adopted son of God your Father—what’s your hope? — that you’re going to have this heavenly vocation; this governmental authority and reigning in powerful positions in the *creature*—that you are going to function as the ‘brains’ (so to speak) of that *creature*—making *wise, just, judgmental, and equitable* decisions. — And this should be incredibly exciting to you!

- Because when, for instance, we see what the instruction in wisdom is all about—and when we go over to our epistles—to Romans, and get the several components that make up our instruction in wisdom—and then that gets written on your heart and effectually works in your inner man—then you are going to view all that with the ‘eyes of understanding’ in such a way **that none of it is insignificant to you!**

- You’ll see that in every instance and every component of it, is the information and instruction you’re going to need and to make use of.

- You’re going to realize that, although this may seem insignificant—you’re going to realize that I’m going to take this *wisdom* that I’ve just been *instructed* in—and in the opportunities in my life, make a wise decision that manifests to my Father and to the angelic realm—skillfulness in one aspect of the kind of decisions I’m going to have to make when I’m a joint-heir with Christ.

- And when I make **just** decisions—as much as they seem so personal and silly and nobody even knows I made the decision that it wouldn’t be the right thing; it wouldn’t be the just thing to do—I’m going to make this decision because I’ve received the instruction of justice—and as much as that seems personal and insignificant, and seems to have nothing to do with laboring with my Father in His business—but if the business of your Father is ultimately for you is to be a joint-heir with His Son and govern the heavenly places (or some portion of it)— then when you make those just decisions, you’re manifesting to Him & to the *creature*, who, the manifestation of you as a son of God is their very hope, that, indeed, what seems like that little, insignificant decision that you made because you received the *instruction of justice*, indeed just manifested **the skill necessary to govern their realm!**

- And when you come to understand and appreciate this—when you recognize that you’re now going to receive, one of, if not the most valuable commodity that nearly every person on the planet desires as their ‘Holy Grail’ (so to speak) - - the acquiring of all this decision-making skill that isn’t “*like*” God’s, but it **IS the actual decision-making skill of God, Himself**—but on top of all that, this should make it so that you now view some of the things that we are told about and instructed about in the letters of the apostle Paul far different than ever before!

- And this should really **elevate** many things that Paul teaches us—that are often times just usually glanced over as either just basic operating principles; simple truisms; and in some cases just a matter of Paul’s opinion on this or that thing.

- But in light of all this, you should now recognize that each and every thing Paul teaches us, has all this kind of sonship objective and sonship goals in mind—that what he’s teaching has to do with either sonship *wisdom*, or *justice*, or *judgment*, or *equity*—so that every time I make a decision along 1 of those 4 lines—that when I do that I am actually manifesting the very skill that I need to have if I’m ever going to labor with my Father in His business of governing the heavenly realm!

- (And later on, you’ll see how that the sonship decisions you are going to make—most of them don’t fall neatly into 1 of these 4—but the *wise man*, and the *man of understanding* is able to make many sonship decisions that are **combinations** of these 4!)



- So these 4 descriptive terms that form the *instruction* we are to *receive* in Phase 2 of Level I of our sonship education—they are all descriptive of the choices and decisions you will have to make in your life right here and right now—but at the exact same time, they are also descriptive of the actions of a governmental ruler!

- And I realize that you’re no governmental ruler right now—and your Father knows that—and He knows that with rare exception, you never will be on this earth—but He also knows what you are to be in the heavenly realm (*creature*) — and that you are going to have to be prepared and skilled and trained and practiced and tested and apprenticed, (a journeyman, if you will), and experienced —sufficient enough so as to be placed as a son in those heavenly positions of governmental operations in His business!

- And the bulk of the decisions you're going to have to make as a son of your Heavenly Father—right here and right now on this earth—are going to be either wise or foolish decisions; are going to be just vs. unrighteous decisions; judgmental vs. decisions that lack properly evaluating the facts and coming to the right choice; or equitable decisions vs. self-centered, selfish decisions because you don't care more about the other person than you do yourself.

- But in the long run, becoming skilled in these 4 areas of decision-making, while they all are necessary for being a fully educated & edified son of God your Father—they all are equally necessary for being in a position of a governmental ruler!

- Therefore, what may seem like all these little, trivial decisions that I'm going to be confronted with—(especially as you go through our curriculum in Romans 12-15) - you should appreciate that it's not merely an issue of being good (i.e., not sinning), or even being righteous (though it is all that) — or even an issue of, well, I'm an adult son with all this freedom and liberty to make whatever choice I want—but now you're going to appreciate that, ok, I've got all this liberty, but when faced with this particular decision: what would be the wise thing to do; or what would be the just thing; or the proper judgmental thing to do; what would be the equitable thing to do — — because each time I make a decision according to these things, I'm actually engaging in laboring with God my Father in His business!

- And this should 'flip your lid' so to speak—because as much as it seems like you're making a simple, personal, (and in many cases an unseen, unheard, unnoticed decisions) - when I do make decisions with this kind of acquired skill, I'm actually putting on display the excellency of the power of God in the sense of, here I was once ignorant of this before I *received the instruction*, but now having *received the instruction* of my Father, I took it to heart, I then applied it to the details of my life, and I manifested that upon *receiving the instruction* from my Father, **I made the exact same decision He would**, even if it is a little thing—and those angelic powers are **amazed** and **greatly impacted** by that because they know what you're doing—they know you're getting the power and capacity and ability and might and skills to one day rule and function in the *creature* as it was supposed to function before sin ever entered into the picture!

- And there is a real impact—a glory, and a grandeur and a magnificence that is seen and felt in the heavenly places!

- And that's fascinating—and should be incredibly **exciting**—and that really elevates everything in the details of our lives whereby all that we ever do can be a manifestation of and an emulation of our Heavenly Father!

- And you are to ever make that connection that **the curriculum is never divorced from the vocational training** for my operations with my Father in the *creature* out in those heavenly places.

- Now if we see that these 4 things we're supposed to *receive the instruction of*—are all related; they have some very important things in common with each other—and that the issue of them being all decision-making skills, as well as being the abilities or capacities necessary for a governmental ruler to do his job—let's now look at each one of these 4 and gain some appreciation of what each one of them means in connection with the context of us being educated as sons of our Father.

- 3 *To receive the instruction of wisdom, ... - “wisdom”*

- And I just want to stress that we're not just merely looking for a dictionary-type definition (even from the Hebrew [**lk;f**; *sakal* = to wisely understand] here, not [**hmk.x**; *chokmah* = wisdom]) - but a defining of the term within the context of our sonship education and curriculum—in other words, what is it that this Table of Contents is telling us to expect to find as the next body of information that we're going to be *receiving the instruction of* in Phase 2 of Level I?

- “**wisdom**” = when we dealt with it before (in :2) we said that *wisdom* is basically information put to use in your life—or knowledge put to use properly. (put to its **proper** use)

- To have any *wisdom*, you have to have knowledge and you have to be putting it to its proper use—and it involves making **choices**—or **skill in choosing**.

- OED = “*Capacity of judging rightly in matter relating to life and conduct—soundness of judgment in the choice of means and ends.*”

- *Wisdom* is going to involve the making of choices of what's going to be the right thing to do—in light of the knowledge you have, what will be the best way to accomplish something; what will be the proper way to handle something;

- So *wisdom* involves first of all having some knowledge; using it properly; and then implementing it to make choices.

- (And that's the way we want to see this—especially in this context of (:3) and the sonship Table of Contents).

- And as we've noted before—*wisdom* (at least as God uses in His word—as it's used in the Bible) is not to be thought of as always describing a mature believer—or as the pinnacle or highest level of 'knowledge' (i.e., the old, gnosis, epignosis, and sophia concept we used to teach)!

- In fact, if you pay attention to how God uses the word (not how Bible teachers use it) - *wisdom* can be very broad and general and even very basic—and it can be used in an intermediary sense—and it can be used in a very advanced sense—it all depends on the **context** you are using it in.

- And in a general, very basic-level way you can talk about a person having *wisdom* in the sense that the knowledge they do have (even if it is very little) is being used properly and the choices they make as a result of that proper use of the knowledge they have, are the right choices.

- Like a 1st grader with the knowledge of the numbers 1-10 can take two of those numbers and add them together and choose the right answer: $2 + 2 = ?$ (4)



- *Wisdom* can be very limited and specific—or it can be vast and expansive and extensive and finely tuned (so to speak) for numerous matters and numerous undertakings.

- Because the critical thing about *wisdom* is that all it demands is that you do have some information (some knowledge) and that you are using it properly.

- And in this context—we can see that *wisdom* is going to come up again in the Table of Contents—we know that later on in Level III we're going to talk about “*A wise man*” who is going to “*hear, and will increase learning*” — but we know that here in Level I, we're dealing with *wisdom in a more limited way*—it's not going to be extended and comprehensive knowledge here—but *wisdom* doesn't demand that—*wisdom* is a very versatile word!

- And really it's in the area of **making choices** where *wisdom* is actually manifested—at least to the largest extent of *wisdom*—(granted, there may be other ways to show that you've got *wisdom*) - but by in large, *wisdom* is clearly seen when you make a choice.

- And anybody can have knowledge—but it's when you have to **exercise** that knowledge (or put that knowledge to use) - and make determinations and choices about directions to take; or actions to take; or thoughts to think; or responses to have— that's when you manifest that you truly do have *wisdom*, you don't just have knowledge.

- And it's absolutely critical to understand and appreciate that when you are dealing with all these 4 terms: *wisdom, justice, judgment, equity*—that none of them are being utilized right now in their generic sense—but they're being utilized right now **as acquired skills!**

- That's why we spent some time on the verbal infinitive phrase—that's why that verb "*To **receive** the instruction of ...*" is so important—because it's going to **govern** the way in which all the nouns that follow it are to be viewed (at least all the 4 nouns at the back end of the predicate [*instruction* being at the front end]).

- And that kind of structure makes it so that you come along and view all 4 of these terms as products of all this body of information called "*instruction*" — and so you really can't just view these terms as stand-alone nouns—but now they're looked upon as acquired skills.

- (Acquired decision-making skills—that's what you're dealing with now!)

- And since you can clearly see that *wisdom* occurs in (:2) and later on in (:5) and (:6) - you know by now that *wisdom* **is** the proper word to be utilized, because each one of those verses actually deals with an advanced body of information—and each time you get more information or more knowledge, a reciprocal matter of wisely using and utilizing that knowledge has to take place. (i.e., "*wisdom*"!)

- And this is teaching you that *wisdom* isn't to be looked upon as some sort of Nirvana to the categorical doctrine of 'knowledge' - but that *wisdom* **has** to occur within each body of information you receive!

- So the first component we are going to *receive* in the curriculum for our sonship education & edification is *the instruction of wisdom*.

- And the context of (:3) demands that that is to be understood as **godly wise decisions**.

- And if you were to take the time to check out the corresponding exhortation to our *receiving the instruction of wisdom*—(which sets in Proverbs 3:1-20) - you would find, for instance those very familiar passages: “*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*” (Pro. 3:5-6) — and David exhorts Solomon a lot about these *ways* of the LORD and these *paths* of the LORD— and, based upon the body of information he will receive in the curriculum for his sonship education, to wisely choose, not his own way or path, not the way or path of the *evil man* or the *strange woman*—but to display some godly, wise decision-making skill, and choose the ways and paths of the LORD!

- And the son encounters information that now is going to deal directly with matters of his initial thinking and conduct and behavior—which is going to be allured and seduced into going down another *path* or *way* (of the *evil man* or the *strange woman*) - and he is to perceive the **utter stupidity** of ever doing that—and instead make the **wise choice** to follow his Father’s *ways & paths* in connection with the initial makeup of putting his sonship life into practice—(now thinking in some measure of the way his Father thinks, and then a measure of living the way his Father lives).

- And the son is now going to manifest that he is a son of God, and not a son of Adam!

- **Summary Statement for:** *receiving the instruction of wisdom* — To receive the instruction of wisdom involves being instructed in what is **consistent** and **reasonable** in our conduct and behavior, in view of the knowledge of who we are as adopted sons in God’s plan and purpose as members of the new creature, the church, the body of Christ. It involves receiving the instruction in what is **honest** and **true** in view of the knowledge of the fundamental manifestation and fundamental impact God expects us to make as His sons. And it involves the receiving instructions in regard to the fundamental **outlook** and **prospect** we are to have and operate upon as God’s sons in this dispensation of His grace.

- (That’s the issue of initially putting our sonship life into practice! — of where the ‘rubber now meets the road’!)

- And we're now starting to conduct ourselves according to what we **truly are**—we are not sons of Adam any longer—we are not sons of this world any longer—God has justified us, sanctified us, made us members of the new creature, the church the body of Christ.

- And on top of that, He's adopted us as His sons. — And the very first thing He wants us to be able to do (by means of some wise decision-making skills) - and the very first component of us putting sonship edification into reality/practice involves us receiving information from Him that's going to teach us **how to begin to immediately act like a son ought to act** (to act like a member of the new creature of the church the body of Christ ought to act) in this world that we no longer are a part of!

- And we get to put on display and put into practice that we're no longer following the path charted out for this world by the Adversary—but now we're following the path charted out for a son by God his Father!

- And going back to where we left off in our study in Romans 6:1-8:13 — our *receiving the instruction of wisdom* is where we actually begin putting our identity in Christ into practice in a visible, living, walking, talking, reality!

- And all that is exactly what Romans 12:1-2 starts you off with! (There's your 2 paths: *the world* and *the will of God*)

- And even though those 3 terms: *good, and acceptable, and perfect* are pretty generic terms, they occur within the context of us being the members of the new creature of the church, the body of Christ (and son's of God our Father).

- So all of the information that God's going to give us that allows us to wisely choose the *good, acceptable, and perfect* path of His *will* is information that's consistent with and reasonable with us being members of the new creature, and not of this old world.

- And that is all consistent with how David instructs Solomon in his sonship life over in the corresponding exhortations and corresponding doctrine to the exhortations in the book of Proverbs! (for the remnant of Israel, too—i.e., a justified child of Abraham.)

- *Receiving the instruction of wisdom* provides for you to have the kind of keen and insightful decision-making skills to be able to immediately **detect** the paths that's consistent with the children of Adam from the paths that are consistent with being members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ as sons of God.

- And that's why immediately in Romans 12:3, one of the first things you instructed in is that you are members of the church the body of Christ—you're "*members one of another*" (:5)!

- And you're taught to look upon other members of the church the body of Christ in a particular way — and you receive instruction in selfless thinking—and in charitable thinking—because the path the world always follows is based upon selfish, uncharitable thinking (based upon *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life* [1Jn.2:16]).



Recap: The issue involved in *receiving the instruction of wisdom* (1st decision-making skill) has to do with that basic issue of starting to manifest the reality of who we are as sons of God in this dispensation of grace—in contrast to who we used to be (and in contrast to what the world still is) - in other words, it's the initial instruction to begin to walk a path that is distinctly opposite to the course of this world that the Adversary has charted.

And the basic decision-making that needs to go on first and foremost when it comes to charting that new path is the information regarding who we are in God's plan & purpose (who we are in Christ) - and that we are not who or what we used to be—and the information we're going to be given is information consistent with that—and the information is going to tell us that a new and different path is the consistent & reasonable thing for us to do.

Because now we are *like* our Father—and in view of being like our Father, and unlike the Adversary, our thinking and our conduct and our behavior ought to reflect that to be true and honest to who we now are as *sons*.

And the *instruction of wisdom* is the **proper use of the knowledge** of who we now are as sons of God when it come to putting on display the reality of our sonship life and being consistent with that instead of and in contrast to this world and its paths and ways and all that it is about.

- Any questions?

- 3 To receive the instruction of ...justice, ... — “justice”

- “*justice*” (**qd,c**, = justice, righteousness) — I’m going to resist doing a simple word study from the Hebrew because that’s not really going to tell us how to properly understand and appreciate this term within this context of (:3).

- *Justice* is a basic quality of being just or right—it has the concept of dealing with what is either right or wrong based upon a set of norms and standards that are vested in either some one or some body that has the **authority** of determining and setting forth the norm and standard of what is right or wrong.

- *Justice* is what is right and lawful in the eyes of someone or some thing that has the authority to declare what is right and what is wrong.

- The idea being that when you’re dealing with an issue of *justice*, someone has to have the authority to declare it—whether it’s a system of laws that men have put together (like a constitution or something along those lines, or a bill of rights, or a compact or by-laws, etc.) or whether it’s God, Himself. (It can’t be just arbitrary!)

- And most often when you’re talking about *justice*, and you’re talking about it in the sense of it being a lawful issue of **determining** what is right and what is wrong (“determining” meaning a **choice** has to be made or rendered—hence it is a decision-making skill—and it is especially critical in ruling or administrating in government) — but *justice* is usually an issue that is supposed to be **void of emotion**—it is not to be subjective, but objective in its use. (hence, ‘blind-justice’ or the Supreme Court Justices at the State of the Union Address)

- *Justice* will have the fundamental concept of conforming with what is right as set down by some authority—either in the way you deal with others, or in the way you respond to institutions and the like.

- 3 To receive the instruction of ...judgment, ... — “judgment”

- “*Judgment*” (**jP;v.mi**)

- This clearly is dealing with the capacity to distinguish (which even *justice* has) - it’s easy to see that this is going to deal with the issue of decision-making—like in “Crossing the street at rush-hour is going to

- And hopefully you're seeing the kind of progressive nature all 4 of these terms have—because when you get here to *judgment*, you now are dealing with your own ability or capacity to distinguish between certain things—and its going beyond just clear-cut right and wrong, but now it's going to deal with situations and circumstances where you're going to be 'on your own' (so to speak) to put your decision-making skills into practice in not just a basic, practical way, (though it may involve that), but to distinguish and make *judgmental decisions* when confronted with a more fluid situation or circumstance that's going to be more advanced than issues concerning *justice*.

- And really when you're talking about *judgment*—it relies heavily upon that capacity or ability to **distinguish on your part** and not on the part of an existing absolute authority—at least an objective, existing absolute authority that you can make an appeal to —**you're** the authority in making this decision.

- Here you're going to have to deal with **options** laid out before you—and you're going to have to weigh those options and determine which one is right, correct, and proper!

- And in fact, what makes the discriminating difference between *justice* and *judgment* (because they are both very similar words) is that, the significant discriminating difference is that *judgment* is the weighing of options and alternatives when there **IS NO** absolute authority to appeal to. (as there is with *justice*)

- That's what distinguishes it so that you don't confuse it with *justice*. (don't confuse *judgment* with *justice*)

- There isn't an objective standard to make an appeal to as to what is right or wrong in a given situation.

- That's why you have in baseball, for instance (especially in the calling of balls and strikes, safes or outs), we would say, **"That's a judgment call."**

- It's not black & white—it's not objective, it's **subjective**.

- *Judgment* is the determination of the right, correct, and/or proper course of action to take in the absence of a final authority or objective standard to make an appeal to.

- 3 To receive instruction of ... equity; — “equity”



- “Equity” (*rv;yme* [meyshar] = evenness, level, smoothness)

- *Equity* is a little tougher to fit into one simple statement—and that alone should tell you something about the progress that’s being made in these 4 components.

- Because if you saw that in *judgment* you are now going to have to make determinations concerning several options available to you and then determine the right, correct, or proper course of action—*equity* seems to have an even greater amount of options— or you might say possibilities— whereby the determining factor isn’t going to be clear-cut right and wrong, but you might say the determining factor is going to be more along the lines of what is right and right!

- Because what you’re really going to be dealing with here are ‘**matters of the heart**’ (so to speak) rather than a cold set of laws or a codex that you’re operating upon.

- OED = The quality of being equal or fair; fairness; impartiality; evenhanded dealing.

- *Equity* isn’t a word that we often use—only sometimes we have it come up when we’re talking about money or the *equity* in our home (home *equity* loan) - which is the value of your home in the sense of dollars.

- But we have to understand it as a skill that can be imparted when you *receive the instruction of it*.

- And one of the things that *equity* carries with it is the idea of reasonableness and moderation in the exercise of one’s rights; and the disposition to avoid insisting on them too rigorously.

- Meaning, we take the fair, evenhanded dealing, and it’s kind of like we add ... **GRACE** to that—where not only are you fair, but you’re disposed to not really insisting on your own rights in this situation—in other words, you’re not only insisting what’s right and fair in dealing with another person, but along with that, you have **good will** toward that person—

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- You're wanting something more than what's *legally* right or acceptable—and that's how this term greatly differs from the word *justice*, for instance.
 - More than any of the other 3 words, *equity* deals primarily with **your relationship with others**—in dealing equally, or fairly, or evenhanded—we could say without prejudice—but one of the main features of *equity* is that whatever the situation is, at the core of it, you've got a **heart of good will** for this person.
 - And in this sense, it's really an aspect of godly love & charity.
 - That although you could potentially insist on your rights and be within your rights and what you are justly due—but instead you opt for what's best for the **other** person.
 - And if anything, your issue of fairness in the situation actually tilts more for the other person that it does for you.
 - And the really interesting thing about *equity* is this issue where you're not disposed to insisting on your own rights, but you really do want what's best for another.
 - It's really more than what's legally right—but it's prompted by good will for the other person.
 - And if you're not careful with the word *equity*, what you often wind up doing is actually talking about the **fruits** of *equity* instead of really coming down to a defining of the term.
 - Because *equity* is a hard term to not talk about the fruits of it, or examples of it, or illustrations of it.
 - *Equity* is what is fair, right, equal, and unprejudiced in interpersonal relationships & dealings with others, prompted by or coming from a heart of good will.
 - And a person who exercises *equitable* decision-making is going to do what they do primarily because they've got the best interest of the person or persons they're dealing with at their heart—they have a **value** for the person their dealing with them that eclipses their own personal matters—and in that sense, an *equitable* decision is **self-less** rather than **selfish**.

- In other words, you may have a legal situation where you could just come along and be well within your rights to just sue the pants off of someone—for instance—but you may opt to utilize *equity* in how you deal with that person, because you see a value to this relationship you have with them that makes it so that you are more interested in their welfare or best interest rather than getting your ‘pound of flesh’ or merely just what **you** can get out of this. (Gives you insight to I Cor. 6!)

- And *equity* or *equitable* decision-making is really a further development out of **self-less thinking**—or what we’ll be dealing with in the context of the curriculum for our sonship education, it is a development out of godly love & charity.

- You’re dealing with matters of the **heart** more than a cold codex or set of laws and regulations.



- At this point I think the next thing to do is to just confirm what we said about these 4 components that make up our *instruction* in Phase 2 of Level I of our sonship education—that they not only are all 4 dealing with **acquiring keen decision-making skills**, but that they are also **the very components a person has to have in order to govern properly**—to be a King or Prince or ruler or governor—and that you are going to be instructed not only in keen decision-making skills, but that they are the very skills necessary for you to have in order to reign in the realm of the heavenly places.

- So let’s run some verses and see that these very decision-making skills are dealt with in passages that concern ruling, reigning and governing.

- I Kings 10:1-9 (:9)—(Solomon)

- These are all necessary skill in order for good and proper rulership to take place!

- Psalm 89—(The Lord Jesus Christ) - here, this is found in a

“*Maschil*” psalm of *Ethan the Ezrahite*—[a psalm of ***instruction*** of some things] - and it has to do with calling on God to remember the Davidic Covenant in the midst of the situation Israel is in as they face their 5th CoP and the Lord puts His Jehovahness into effect—especially in accordance with being their Avenger [Book III].

- :1-4, :13-14—these are the very proper and right decisions the Lord will make when He reigns and rules as King of Israel—He will be the just and perfect ruler!

- Psalm 98—(Book IV) - A “new song” psalm.
- :1-9 (:9)



- Psalm 99:1-4
- Here you have *equity, judgment and justice* (“*executest righteousness in Jacob*” = is the *justice* issue)

- Do you see how that if you pay attention, you would know that when you’re confronted with the 4 decision-making skills in Proverbs 1:3 that you going to be *receiving the instruction of*—as the very first part, really, of your sonship education in earnest—how that you would know that they are also these necessary things I have to have in order to rule and reign as some kind of a governmental ruler, and do it properly—even as God Himself would do it!
- Isaiah 9:6-7 (a very familiar passage) - fulfillment the Dav. Cov.
- Isaiah 11—a passage that sets forth the nature of the ruling and reigning of the Lord Jesus Christ—kind of set in contrast to the way the vain, religious leaders were ruling.

- :1-4 (:4) — And the issue of *equity* comes up here because as we noted before, it’s not just wanting what is fair and just, but it’s also got this idea of wanting what is best for them in this situation—which was a characteristic or skill totally lacking in the governing and rulership of Israel!

- Israel’s leaders despised the meek and abused the meek, but the Lord is going to reprove them with *equity*—He’s going to look out for their best interest, which is what the leaders of Israel were supposed to be doing—the leaders of Israel were supposed to be caring for the interest of the meek more than their own, but they weren’t—and this is a trait of how the Lord will reign and how He’ll judge.
- Isaiah 59—This approaches the issue of these decision-making skills from a different angle—because you’re now dealing with an indictment against the leaders of Israel for their vain apostate condition and how that they put on display the total lack of any of these skills being put to their proper use! (They’re in their 4th CoP, and meriting the 5th).

- So the leadership of Israel is now being indicted for their corruption—and really what gets brought out is their failure and lack in governing properly by means of the very decision-making skills we now know are to be the things a son is instructed in so that he can govern in a particular realm.

- And this is a fascinating chapter—and one that we've looked at back in Romans 3 in the doctrine of the gospel of Christ—and Paul will quote from (:20) in Romans 11:26!

- (This is also a passage where the “*viper*” terminology gets utilized to describe the VRS of Israel!)

- (:9-14) (:14) - this is describing what has been going on in their government! (they lack *justice, judgment, & equity*)!

- Jeremiah 23:5

- Micah 3:1-9 (:9)



- So by now it should be very clear to you that when we get to Phase 2 of Level I of our sonship education—that we're going to be *receiving the instruction of* some things that we're not innately aware of or that we do not know naturally, and that we are now going to be able to do some things that we've never done before.

- And then we see that we're going to *receive the instruction of* 4 things—and we should be able to clearly see that *wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* are really dealing with 2 major issues:

1) We recognize that the skill that we are acquiring and that we should expect to gain is that of the ability to make keen decisions that are godly and are the very decision-making skill of God Himself—and therefore they are pleasing to Him—moreover, they comprise the **bulk** of the decisions we will ever make as sons of our Heavenly Father.

2) We recognize that these 4 skills of *wise* decisions, *just* decisions, *judgmental* decision, and *equitable* decision are not just giving us skill in making decisions in the details of our life—but anybody who can make these decisions are actually putting on display that they are **fit** to be involved (on some level, at least, not that you're fit to take over the greatest positions of ruling and governing at this point), but on some level you are manifesting that to some degree you **do** have the capacity to govern.

- Now at this time, I think the next best thing to do is that, now that we have a working and simple definition of each of the 4 terms/components that make up Phase 2 of Level I of our sonship education—the 4 acquired, keen skills that will make up the bulk of all of the decision-making we will ever do from now on—the next thing I want to do is to return to what I did back with our *receiving the instruction of wisdom*—where we defined the term and then launched directly into a kind of scope or sweeping summary statement of what that means within the curriculum for a son being educated by his father, and then what it means for our sonship education/edification in this particular dispensation of grace in which we live.

- In other words, what the next section in the book of Romans is going to deal with and **why** it sets forth the information that it does.

- And if you're going to benefit from going over this Table of Contents properly, you're going to have to be able to understand and appreciate what each of these 4 things are, in the context of being educated as a son—but beyond that, you're going to have to appreciate that there's a body of information that is dedicated to each one of these 4 things in order for us to *receive the instruction of* them that is located in the letters of the apostle Paul as God has written through him the curriculum for our sonship education as it particularly pertains to this dispensation of grace and God's plan, purpose, and design for us as members of the new creature of the church, the body of Christ.

- So, the work we did on just defining the terms is sufficient for the 1st thing: for getting an appreciation for what these terms mean within the context of The Table of Contents for sonship edification; and then these kind of Summary Statements are going to address the 2nd thing: the issue of what *wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity* decision-making skills are going to mean for us, **personally** as we *receive the instruction of* each one—and as it particularly relates to God's plan, purpose, and design for us to function as sons in this dispensation of grace as the new creature of the church the body of Christ.

- So let's get some measure of an appreciation of the scope, or a sweeping **summary statement** of what *receiving the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* means within the curriculum for a son being educated by his father, and then what it means for our sonship education/edification, personally, in this particular dispensation of grace in which we live.

- And I think it would be best—even though we've covered it before), to just quickly go back & start off with *wisdom*, and then go on.

- WISDOM (or godly wise decision-making skills).

- **Definition:** Information or knowledge that is put to its proper use.

- **Summary Statement:** *to receive the instruction of wisdom* involves being instructed in what is **consistent** and **reasonable** in our conduct and behavior in view of the knowledge of who we are as adopted sons in God's plan and purpose as members of the new creature of the church, the body of Christ.

It involves receiving the instruction of what is **honest** and **true** in view of the knowledge of the fundamental manifestation and fundamental impact God expects us to make as His sons.

And it involves the receiving instructions in regard to the fundamental **outlook** and **prospect** we are to have and operate upon as God's sons in this dispensation of His grace.

- What it means to a son who is *receiving the instruction of wisdom* by his father really boils down to the son receiving information or knowledge from his father, and then making the **choice (choosing)** to take that information **and use it properly in his life.**

- And it's important to recognize and appreciate that the information that makes up the son's *instruction of wisdom* for a member of the remnant of Israel and for a member of the church, the body of Christ is going to be materially different.

- And that's because the **business** that God will be involved in immediately after this dispensation of grace has ended is going to be far different than the **business** He's involved in today with us, the new creature.

- And I only bring this out because while both in God's program with Israel, and His program with us, the church the body of Christ, a son is going to first off receive a body of information that he is to put to its proper use—and since the son is first and foremost made aware of his new-found adopted sonship status—and since he's gone through a body of information that is designed to adjust his attitude toward getting this education so that he's now established as a son—the only right and logical thing to do is to address what's now uppermost in the son's mind—and that is, "What am I supposed to be doing now as my Father's son? What does a son of my Father look like, think like, talk like, and act like?" (Initially, or fundamentally, how does that get manifested or put on display?)

- So the Father's instructing His son in *wisdom* is going to involve information that instructs the son in what is **consistent** and **reasonable conduct and behavior**—and more than that, it involves what is **honest** and **true** in light of being a son with specific regard to the program that I'm involved in as a son.

- It has to incorporate into that information specific knowledge of what a son in this dispensation of grace is to look like, think like and act like.

- And *receiving the instruction of wisdom* for us as sons who are the members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ means that we get information that, upon receiving it, we are to make wise decisions concerning details in our lives that form our initial conduct and behavior—and that allows for us to see and to choose, “This would be the consistent thing to do in light of who I am in Christ as an adopted son of my Heavenly Father—and this would be the reasonable thing to do — and this other thing or other path would be consistent with the way or path of this world and **not** consistent with being a son in this dispensation of grace.”

- We can detect and then clearly see the choice before us: “This would be consistent with the world and with being a son of Adam—but I'm a son of God, so this path would be consistent with this particular opportunity, so I'm going to do this instead.”

- And we're going to gain **keen insight** that will allow us to be able to **detect**, when given opportunities, what would be the proper application or course to take given that I'm now a son of God in the dispensation of grace who's now the hope of the creature—and what is consistent with that status, over against what would be consistent with being a child of Adam.

- Because nothing could be more **foolish** than to get to the point where you're made aware of your sonship status, and then you're established as a son of God—and then go right out and operate like any old child of Adam!

- And just as foolish would be to operate as the remnant sons of God for the program God has for them in His business when He establishes His business (His kingdom) on this earth!

- And we need to have the *wisdom* to detect the foolish path of the children of Adam vs. the wise path of a son of God so that we can **walk differently than the children of Adam.**

- And I'm going over all this—not just as mere repetition or trying to beat a dead horse (so to speak) — but I'm doing this so that you can see that, even though *wisdom* is an expression and term that we are all very familiar with—and it (especially) is used by either the men of this world or by men of religion (even Christianity) all the time—you have to recognize and appreciate that because you have to **receive the instruction of wisdom** from your Heavenly Father—that means that His kind of *wisdom* and His kind of *instruction* and His kind of components that make up that *wisdom* (form of doctrine) — that's **NOT** something you know naturally, instinctively, intuitively—and you've not seen it before—so you have to be **told** it—you have to be **instructed** all about it.

- Because every other kind of wisdom of men, of this world, of even the majority of the Christian world—are all forms of wisdom that are competing with the Father's *wisdom*, and are brands of wisdom that are nothing like your Father's *wisdom* at all!

- **Simply put:** *to receive the instruction of wisdom* provides you with the fundamental ability to perceive the foolish vs. the wise thing in light of who I am—and then to choose accordingly.



- JUSTICE (or godly just decision-making skills).

- **Definition:** What is right or lawful in the eyes of someone or some thing that has the authority to declare what is right and what is wrong.

- Now in *receiving the instruction of justice*—since we know from our definition that we're dealing with what is right and what is wrong in the eyes of some kind of **authority** (in our case, God's word—and especially that portion of God's word that deals with us as members of the new creation of the church the body of Christ [Paul's letters]); since we know that much—you know that we're dealing with our norms and standards that reside in our inner man—specifically in our conscience.

- Hence, any situation that *justice* need to be applied—there's a moral certainty concerning that decision to be made—because *justice* demands that there's an authority that has the right (if you will) to declare what's right & wrong; lawful, unlawful.

- And hopefully you'll see how this is different from making decisions based upon the knowledge of who you are "in Christ" vs. what would be foolish therefore—because that's not me anymore—(i.e., *wise* decision-making skills).

- This is where there's this existing authority that has a set, and already determined right and wrong—or lawful and unlawful—and you can actually appeal to that authority.

- And once you've got that right or wrong, lawful or unlawful understood and appreciated, that becomes, in your inner man, or in your conscience, your norms and your standards.

- And even though you have some kind of understanding of what is right and wrong in your conscience by nature—generally speaking, if left to our own conscience, it is woefully lacking in determining right and wrong on its own.

- It's not that there's nothing operating there—because the Bible tells us that there is—but its very limited and shallow in its development, and natural conscience can't be relied upon much past the knowledge of the basic reality of God; that recognizes that you'll face Him in judgment; that you're worthy to receive His wrath; that you do sin and are a sinner; but that's about the extent of what's operational in the natural conscience—the rest of it has to be learned/acquired.

- And you certainly recognize that the world—even the greatest legal systems ever developed (Israel, Greek [Solon], Roman, British, United States, many other lesser-knowns) — don't give you the kind of norms and standards of God your Father—especially in regard to how you're to function as His son in this dispensation of grace with the view to reigning/laboring with Him in His business in the heavenly places!

- Therefore you **need** your Father to **instruct** you so that your conscience is fortified with what is right in His eyes and what is wrong; what He says is lawful/unlawful, and so forth.

- And I believe that we have enough appreciation of that word *justice*, so that you know, generally, what it's going to deal with—it's going to deal with others, with family (marriage/children), community, society, government, police, military, — even the very structure of the local church is going to have issues of justice.

- **Summary Statement:** *to receive the instruction of justice* means receiving instruction for making sound godly & sonship decisions regarding what is the right or wrong; or what is the necessary and/or needful; or what is the responsible and/or amenable thing for us to do — especially as it pertains to responding to the activities or actions of others in our dealings with them.

- We're going to be given information that establishes norms within our conscience and standards within our conscience — and a father imparts those things to his son: and on the basis of these things his son now understands are “norms” (or normal conduct & behavior on his part) - and “standards” (for standard conduct & behavior on his part) - the son is now going to have the capacity to make responsible decisions as a son regarding issues that are right or wrong—but many decisions aren't going to deal, necessarily, with what is right or wrong—but might come down to what is needful or what is necessary to be done—or certain situations or circumstances he may find himself in would more demand what is the responsible thing for him to do; or what's the amenable thing for him to do.

- “*Amenable*” = a cow that can be driven with the appropriate call or shout — being led or guided — a legal term which means liable to some thing or person which has an inherent power to bind or compel; as laws, rules, authority, a parent, a governor. It sometimes further bears the sense of a willingness to recognize such power, and then becomes descriptive of one's moral conduct or character, as when one is amenable to discipline, advice, or reason. To be amenable is to be accountable so far as one is bound by laws and regulations. (*Smith's Synonyms Discriminated*)



- And when dealing with these kinds of decision-making, they often are going to deal with the course you're going to pursue as being one that, as a result of it; or at the end of it all—it's really going to provide for PEACE in a situation—and not ‘fuel the fire’ or produce bitterness or animosity or things along those lines.

- But just in the general nature of the word justice—you've got built into that the norms and standards that go beyond just an individual as a person—but are also issues that get dealt with as a society and what it operates on; or what a nation operates on; or that various institutions within a particular society operate on—the peaceable living within all these various governmental structures/organizations.

- *Receiving the instruction of justice* involves the making of sound sonship decision about what are the conscientious or upright things to be done in connection with institutions and customs of nations, societies, and organizations within a society.

- Meaning, this *receiving instruction of justice* involves receiving instruction by which you're going to make wise decisions in regard to the government in which you live and operate—the rules & regulations that that government puts into effect in which you have to follow and conform to in connection with, for instance, business in which you have to operate in; or institutions you have to operate in, like marriage and family and even the customs of a society and things along those lines.

- As well as certain establishments within a nation, such as the military establishment—or the criminal-justice or law-enforcement establishment. (police, SBI, FBI, ATF, etc.)

- The word *justice* comes into play in all those areas as well.

- And you can appreciate that in the sense of any old father instructing any old son—but much more than that, it has a major bearing on our godly sonship edification from God our Father as it pertains particularly to us in this dispensation of grace in which we live.

- Because we are going to have to be instructed about making *just* decisions as members of the church the body of Christ that isn't know about by natural men or even by Christians who haven't received the sonship education they're supposed to have received.

- Because God our Father has instituted certain *just* issues for nations in connection with having established the nations in the first place, and how they are to operate— and certain things He's ordained for civil society within a nation—and He's instituted marriage, and He has things to say about it and about the family—and He has some things to say about how a husband and a wife operate; and children and their parents operate—and in this dispensation, He's instituted the local church; and there's organization to it; and He's established the office of a bishop and the office of deacons — and therefore there's things He's said in connection with all these institutions that have right and wrong to them; and that He has authoritatively declared.

- And *receiving the instruction of justice* for us as members of the new creature has to take all those things into account as well.

- Because we have to start thinking about all these issues of *justice* as God's sons in this dispensation of grace—and we need to recognize the we've got a portion of our educational curriculum that addresses those very things!

- So when it comes therefore to us in this dispensation of grace and our education by God our Father as His sons (in our curriculum for sonship education) — when we *receive the instruction of justice*, my understanding is that our instruction in justice involves us receiving instruction for making sound sonship and godly decisions regarding what is the right or wrong thing for us to do; or what is the necessary and/or needful thing for us to do; or what is the responsible and/or the amenable thing for us to do—especially as it pertains to us responding to the activities of others in our dealings with them—— — and it also involves us receiving instructions for making sound, sonship and godly decisions about what are the conscientious and upright things for us to do in connection with what God has ordained for the nation in which we live (as a nation); for our civil society; for marriage; for families; for the local church; for the local customs we will encounter; for businesses we will deal with (employer-employee relations [union or non-union?]; should you work or not work? how should you treat work?) and the like.

- Those are the kind of things you are going to encounter when you *receive the instruction of justice* (in the body of information that is formed for justices' sake) - it provides for those kind of norms and standards for our inner man to operate upon as we interact and have relationships with others—and that includes when we witness to them as unsaved people; when we deal with even members of the church the body of Christ if we deal with them on a financial level, or where the laws of the land could have something to say about it as well; and our decisions about the government under which we exist and how it may encroach upon us or not or its actions in connection with our daily living [taxes, regulations, the draft, etc.] (and we're going to be able to make sound, godly, sonship decisions along those lines as we respond to that), as well as the divine institutions we become a part of (marriage, family, the local church).

- And when you think about it, that involves an awful lot of things!

(And this is going to take some real keen insight and skill in order to make the proper decisions you're supposed to make as a son of God your Father!)

- And this instruction is really important to us, particularly now that we are “sons of God” - and we should recognize that we really **do** need this instruction of *justice*—and we need to ask ourselves, “Now that I’m a son of God, what **is** my responsibility in regards to government and the divine institutions?”

- Because this is a hot-button topic among most Christians (whether they understand sonship or not) - especially at this election time in our nation—but there’s always this debate concerning a Christian being involved in politics or government, or in law-enforcement, or in the military—or should Christians vote? or should there be a death penalty? or should a Christian picket at an abortion clinic?

- And if you look at it, you’ll see that there’s really a huge amount of **ungodly decisions** being made along the lines of what we now know as godly, sonship *just* decision-making because the vast majority of the body of Christ has **never** received the instruction of justice from their Heavenly Father!

- But when we *receive the instruction of justice*, we’re going to learn from our Father the right and the wrong; or the necessary and/or needful; or the responsible and/or amenable thing for us to do in regard to our relationship with each other!

- Well, *receiving the instruction of justice* will provide for us to make sound, sonship, godly decisions in relationship to all these things!



- JUDGMENT (or godly judgmental decision-making skills.)

- **Definition:** the determination of the right, correct, and/or proper course of action to take absent an objective standard or authority in which to make an appeal.

- And when it comes now to you **as a son** *receiving the instruction of judgment* from your Father—that discriminating difference that we’ve noted that keeps us from confusing the two issues of *justice* and *judgment*—that issue (in *judgment*) of not having an objective standard or authority in which to make an appeal—that therefore means that you’re going to be instructed in a body of information that is designed to impart the skills of how to make decisions all on your own—and to make decisions when there is no clear right or wrong!

- **Summary Statement**: To *receive the instruction of judgment* involves receiving instruction so as to have the fundamental capacity for making evaluations and judgments on issues about which the proper path to walk is not immediately clear.

- And we know that this is the proper context or way to view *judgment*—and narrow it down to just this issue—because we know that the word that was used just previous to it (*justice*) has already taken into account decision-making when you have an objective standard to appeal to, that tells you: this is right, this is wrong in this type of situation.

- *Justice* is as if a judge is presented with a particular case where there is no doubt whatsoever about what has occurred—and it's an obvious breach of the law—and the judge can just come along and say, “There's no reason to even adjourn, I don't have to deliberate on this at all” and he just opens up the book of statutes and laws—the law is already on the books (so to speak) - and the judge renders an immediate, clear-cut verdict without further debate.

- *Justice* is as if there's no debate or deliberation needed; because the law's already on the books, and all you have to do is appeal to the written code.

- And when you get *justice* and *judgment* utilized in the same context—*justice* has an objective standard to it, and *judgment* does not.

- And *judgment* is the issue of that judge making his decision based upon the best evaluation, and most consistent evaluation he can make based upon precedence, the special facts or circumstances of the case, intent, and things along those lines.

- Hopefully at this point you're thinking about how things are given to you, not only in the book of Romans, but even on throughout Paul's epistles—because Paul will not only give us the basic *instruction of judgment* (as well as all 4 of these things) - but he will bring them back up later on in order to give advanced instruction on each of them; to 'flesh out' our appreciation and **skillful use** of each of them; and to confront problems that arise because of either misuse or abuse or misunderstanding concerning each one of them. (ex., I Cor. 8:9; 10:23-33)

- And really, this is the very point at which most Christians either get into **legalism**—or else they just get **frustrated** in their Christian lives — because in the vast majority of cases, they have no information given to them to do the normal thing a son is supposed to do.



- Or else they think that what they're supposed to achieve in their spiritual maturity is really the level of *justice*—that everything's going to be a white or black issue—or a clear-cut right and wrong issue—and the frustration is that when you actually go out and live your life, (or by the time you drive off the parking lot), you realize that life just isn't like that—and in fact, the majority of issues you're going to be dealing with aren't issue of *justice*, but are issues of *judgment!*

- And that stands to reason, because the majority of your life isn't lived as a child—most of your life is lived as an adult.

- And a child always wants a *just* decision—that's why they always appeal to mommy and daddy—because they want Mom and Dad to make their decisions for them!

- (By the way, it's right here at "*judgment*" where sonship really begins to **shine!**) (these last 2: *judgment* and *equity*)

- *Judgmental* decisions means that there are **options**—in fact it could be there are multiple options that could be decided for.

- And it's right here that that keen and skillful ability or capacity to make godly sonship decisions really gets some muscle—because this is where you as a son are going to have several options available to you—and of the many decisions you could make, you're going to have to have the skill from being *instructed* in making *judgmental* decisions to choose the **one thing** to do out of many possible things that will be the one that your Heavenly Father will be most pleased with.

- And this really is where most Christians get bogged down and discouraged and desperate—because this is where I often would get asked such questions as, “Who should I date? Who should I marry? Which job should I take? What crowd should I hang around with? What should I drink? What should I eat? What should I wear? What music should I listen to...” — all those questions are asked because that sonship decision-making skill of *judgment* is **NOT** properly developed (if at all).

- And the truth of the matter is, that as soon as sonship is really comprehended by a Christian as it ought to be comprehended—the **last thing** he wants is for someone to take his own decision-making skills away from him and make decisions for him!

- This issue of sonship *judgmental* decision-making is really what's at the core of the issue that standing behind Paul's rebuke to the Corinthians over there in I Cor. 6—because the fact that they wanted unbelievers to judge them is so contrary, not only to sonship edification—but it's contrary to the very attitude that a son's supposed have about making decisions at all — truth of the matter is, they should have been coming along and saying, “Hey—you're not going to rob me of the privilege of making decisions as a son!”

- And a child would shy away from that—they would rather someone else make the decision for them! (childish/foolish)!

- So now let's describe more fully (from our summary statement of receiving the instruction of *judgment*) what this means specifically for us, the members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace—or when it comes to us applying it as sons in this dispensation of grace:

- *Receiving the instruction of judgment* involves receiving the instruction so as for us to have the fundamental capacity for making sound, sonship and godly evaluations and judgments on issues about which the proper path for us to walk is not immediately clear on issues upon which we must ponder, weigh the various options and evaluating them in godliness. This involves the capacity to evaluate and judge between various options confronting us; various opportunities given to us; various reactions we could give; and/or various courses of action we can take in any given situation—and to thereby determine what is good, or what is better, or what is best, and/or determine what is honorable or valuable or virtuous or what is excellent.



- Now that's really a scope of the entire sonship curriculum that deals with this issue of godly *judgmental* decision-making — because it really takes into account more than just what Romans will give you as the fundamental issue of sonship *judgmental* decision-making, and it goes on to look at all that will be developed in this skill throughout the sonship curriculum contained in all of Paul's epistles.

- In other words, that statement takes you from the milk of the capacity that Romans gives, to the meat of the capacity that II Thessalonians gives.

- But when you think about it—those terms that I used there: good, better, best — honorable, valuable, virtuous, excellent — really, those are Paul's terms right from Romans through II Thessalonians.

- And they describe a **progress** to the *judgmental* decision-making skills of a son as he is edified by the curriculum—and you go from honorable to valuable to the virtuous to what is excellent!

- see for example: **Philippians 1:6-11 (:9-10)**

- And when you get the body of doctrine in Philippians that further instructs you in *judgment*—it's now instructing you in the *judgment* of what is excellent — you know the good and the better by then—and now you're dealing with the best and the excellent!

- So the overriding issue with making *judgmental* decisions has to do with there being the capacity for making evaluations and judgments on issues about which the proper path to walk or the proper thing to do is not immediately or abundantly clear.

- And so obviously when you've got several options set before you, and none of them seem to be a definite or absolute right or wrong choice — in fact, this is where you really begin to get skill and keen insight into making decisions when faced with what might be called a right vs. a right path or option or choice—and therefore we obviously **need** our Father's instruction in this decision-making skill of *judgment*!

- If I'm going to make these kind of decisions to the emulation of and to the pleasure of my Father—there's no way I'm going to do that by "chance" — or by "guessing" at it! (Or by just being 'lucky')!

- And usually, these types of decisions are all but ignored and are most often overlooked by Christians as being real opportunities to please and honor God—even among many believers who **do** have some understanding of sonship.

- The Corinthians being a classic example—until Paul corrected them.

- But most of us—even if we’re not as bad as the Corinthians who all-out abuse our liberty—we usually don’t appreciate that, when you’re not faced with a right or wrong decision—and you’re not faced with a wise or foolish decision—but you’re faced with various options and opportunities, and you’re going to have to make a decision about what would be good, better, or best or what would be honorable or valuable or virtuous or excellent— all of that, more often than not, is usually discussed as just sonship liberties that I have open to me, **as if God really doesn’t care what the decision is that I make.**

- Like, well, God gives you the responsibility now as an adult son to make your own decisions, so just go right at it, and whatever decision you make is ok.

- And in the past this is about how it’s been handled by those who attempted to do something more with being adopted as God’s son than just recognizing that you’re now God’s heir via regeneration.

- And at the time, even the idea that you are this adopted son of God with this adult status of liberty and freedom— to be able to make decisions on your own — (which is a marked departure from the way most Christians are ever taught about this pre-determined, pre-set will that you are supposed to struggle and grope and cry and strain and wrestle to try to find) — and I recognize that even that much was revolutionary compared to that struggle most saints go through to find and hunt and go through some sort of sadistic type **spiritual safari** to find the will of God in so many areas of their life!



- And again, this is where there is so much discouragement and frustration in the Christian world—because when this issue of “God’s will” comes up—most Christians don’t know they’re sons—adopted, adult sons of God—and they have never been taught properly about the curriculum for their sonship life—and therefore they are always butting heads with God, doing all sorts of things, and taking all sorts of **desperate measures** to try to **divine** His will—or at least to get Him to tell them plainly what His will is in a given situation—(such as fasting, tithing, long, all-night prayers, pleading, crying, deprivation of all sorts, . . . etc.) — and all the while God’s sitting up there saying, “Look, I’ve already made this as plain as day in my word—and if you’d just pay attention to what I say, you’d never be in this position!”

- So you've either got a vast majority of the body of Christ (believers, Christians) who are completely ignorant of the significance of what it means to be a son of God—and they are doing all these desperate things, (sincere as they may be), attempting to find the will of God for various issues in their life, — all the while not knowing that their sincere, desperate measures are NOT impressing God, and could never move God to do what they really want Him to do {i.e., to audibly tell them, or give them a sign, or by some kind of spiritual telepathy beam in the answer, or at least give them some sort of inner feeling [usually passed off as 'I just got peace about it']} — or — you've got Christians who have some understanding at least that they are adopted, adult sons of God, but when it comes to these 'fuzzy' areas where *judgmental* decisions are called for, they just act as if they're trivial decisions because they're not right or wrong, or wisdom vs. foolish decisions.

- But we're to understand and appreciate that instead of attempting to move God by desperate measures in order to get Him to indicate to us in some audio/visual, or multimedia-type way what His will **is** in any given situation—we're to understand that all these types of issues of determining what the will of God is, are really almost all dealt with by these sonship decision-making skills—especially the keen skills of sonship *judgmental* decision-making, and sonship *equitable* decision-making.

- And also, far from being trivial or unimportant—these *judgmental* decisions you make—even in very minor areas—aren't ever to be viewed as small or minimal or unimportant—because with each *judgmental* decision you make, and as you gain skill to be able to **clearly (not 'give it your best guess')** but to clearly know which choice is good, better and best, or honorable, virtuous, and excellent; these are all opportunities given to us as sons to be able to **prove** our qualifications to be rewarded with positions of governmental/ruling authority — that they are opportunities for us to emulate and please our Father—to do the very thing Paul said of the Philippians: to "approve things that are excellent"!

- And when you see that—when you see the **progression** from what we're given as we first of all *receive the instruction of judgment* in Romans, and then see that that gets **added to** throughout the curriculum for sonship education to hone that skill to a very fine edge (so to speak) - you should never look at decisions where there's really no right or wrong decision as if God doesn't care which one you make—or that to God, it really doesn't matter which one you make—because that is flat-out wrong! that's not true—that a **false** understanding of *judgment*!!!

- If there's no clear right or wrong—and there's no clear wise path or foolish path we aren't to say, “Well, it really doesn't matter, either decision is fine.”

- **Because that's really not so**—God lists *receiving the instruction of judgment* right up there with *receiving the instruction of wisdom and justice*, and we're supposed to make even these **judgment calls** in our lives to the pleasure and to the emulation of our Father, and put on display our aptitude to be used by Him to govern in the heavenly places.

- And even in these *judgment calls* in my life, I can still make them **without guessing**, and make them **exactly** like my Father would make them Himself because He has *instructed* me in that very thing!

- EQUITY (or godly equitable decision-making skills).

- **Definition:** What is fair, right, equal, and unprejudiced in interpersonal relationships and dealings; prompted by a heart of good will.



- As we've seen (or at least as I hope you've come to perceive), all 4 of these sonship decision-making skills have **progress** to them—they all build upon each one—or they all naturally develop out of each one—and therefore each successive one really takes more and more skill involved in order to properly utilize them or put them to their fullest/proper use.

- And as we saw in sonship *judgmental* decision-making—that last issue we discussed had to do with having the capacity or skill to determine what is honorable, or valuable, or virtuous, or excellent—and that's all borderline to what we're going to be looking at in making *equitable* decisions.

- And when you're dealing with what is honorable, valuable, virtuous, or excellent, you're actually now beginning to deal with **MORAL** issues—and especially when you understand and appreciate that these are all issues that involve some kind of an interpersonal relationship—whether you're talking about yourself, or other individuals who are members of the church the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace.

- Therefore just as the issues of godly sonship *judgmental* decision-making ended, it more or less **leads** into this issue—(or picks up on those *judgmental* issues) — and now focuses upon those **moral aspects** with honor in view or value in view or virtue in view or what is excellent in view.

- So this 4th and final issue picks up on the 3rd issue and deals with things along the lines of that moral variety—and when you talk about dealing with moral issues and you talk about those issues in connection with dealing with interpersonal relationships (either in our case, with members of the church the body of Christ, or in Israel's program, with members of the remnant of Israel), and the decisions and choices you're going to make in relation to them—there comes out of that this final decision-making skill that is going to be put to use largely in the area of how you now are going to inter-relate to those you're closely aligned with in God's program.

- And you now view these folks as special and distinct from others.

- And my understanding is that when you're going to be making these *equitable* decisions, you're going to primarily be doing that in direct connection with determinations and decisions as you inter-relate and have these interpersonal relationships with other members of the church the body of Christ — it's not exclusive to that, because you may have to have equitable dealings with someone else — but the focus is primarily upon these interpersonal relationships we have more often with other members of the church the body of Christ than with anybody else.

- (Just like the members of the remnant of Israel are more likely to have interpersonal relationships with other members of the remnant of Israel, simply because of the close quarters that they will have with them, and because that's who they're mostly relating to.)

- But really, for us, since we are this **body of Christ**, and *members one of another*, my understanding is that this is even a greater issue for us! (Because not only are we *members one of another*, but we have all these specified times for Bible class where it's more likely that we see more of each other than any other people in our lives.)

- For example, we have those passages where Paul describes the closeness we have as members of this body of Christ:

- Eph. 4:16
- Col. 2:2; 19

- And actually, this decision-making skill of *equity* in these interpersonal dealings with one another—it's those *equitable* decisions that ends up producing that issue of being "*knit together*."

- And those expressions "*fitly joined together and compacted*" and "*being knit together*" - that's fascinating terminology!

- When you ***compact*** something, you end up moving the elements of what ever you're talking about closer and closer together—and therefore you end up removing excess space and distance that might exist between them.

- And when we're talking about a *body*—either in a physical body, or ourselves being members of the body of Christ—through the effectual working of God's word as described in Ephesians 4, as the ***compacting*** takes place, distance and space between our dealings with one another, and lack of closeness between one another ends up being **reduced**.

- And as we become ***compacted*** and we are tightened up in our relationships to one another and the closeness occurs, that's when the ***knitting together*** is able to occur.

- And when things are ***knit*** together they get **stronger**—(ex., when a bone is broken and the healing of it takes place, the fibers of the bone are *knit* back together—the distance of the break is reduced and as the bone becomes one unit once again, it's strength and capacity becomes strong enough to once again start **bearing weight and doing it's job**).

- And that kind of illustrates how that when *equitable* decision-making is going on in the local assembly—in the members of the church, the body of Christ— it, of necessity, deals with our relationships with one another, and it will provide for the ***compacting*** and ***knitting*** together of the body (of the local assembly, especially) - because the space and distance between us gets reduced, and the result is a **bonding** or a strength of capacity of becoming a **unit** that can bear the weight of doing the job we're supposed to be doing!



- And any **lack** of being *compacted* and *knit* together makes the local assembly **vulnerable**—and the Adversary does have specialized methods of attack to go right after those weak and vulnerable areas in that local assembly.

- This is also a necessary aspect of being mutually edified as members one of another—and the value of the local assembly—and why God instituted it for us throughout this dispensation of grace.

- I might also mention that these areas of great responsibility saints take on to form a local assembly (and who have the courage and dedication and commitment and aggressive positive volition to do so) - to support a pastor and his family; to see to it (by various means: money, talent, time, administration, etc.) - to see to it that the doors of communication (*the door of utterance*) remains wide open — that the saints that form a local assembly (no matter how small they may be), they should be commended for it, because there's a lot of folks out there who really could either form a local assembly, or become a part of a local assembly, but just don't want the added responsibility and take the easy way out and try to take up the slack by hopping around the country to as many 'conferences' as they can—and conferences are no substitute for a properly functioning local assembly!

... but I digress ...

- All I'm after here is just to illustrate the issue of *equitable* decision-making when it comes to us as sons in this dispensation of grace - and to narrow down the scope and set the framework in which this area of sonship decision-making falls—and the kind of decisions it involves.

- And having this kind of appreciation for *equitable* decisions will be profitable for you when it comes to recognizing the bodies of information that is given to you in our epistles and you being able to identify them for being the *instruction of equity* as you encounter it in our curriculum for sonship education. (& hopefully some things are 'popping' already)

- But even as we looked briefly at the issue of being *compacted* and *knit* together—and that really is a result of this decision-making skill of *equity* being used properly within the assembly—it's fascinating that, just as we noted in our basic definition of *equity* (that is, that *equity is an issue of the heart*—it has the best interest of the other person in view—and is really an aspect of godly love and charity that is self-less rather than selfish) - it's fascinating that when the issue of being *knit* together gets brought up as it's further developed, love is at the very core of it all — “*That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, ...*” (*Colossians 2:2*) !

- And all that's supposed to abound even more—just as Col. 1:19 brings out—“*increaseth with the increase of God*” - **and that gets done by this very thing of equitable decision-making!**

- Those Ephesian and Colossian saints were going beyond making *judgmental* decisions; that went beyond determining what was good, better, or best—but now they were making *equitable* decisions that even went beyond dealing with one another with honor, or making value type decisions or virtuous decisions in their dealing with each other—but they took it to that next step of *equitable* decisions that were the most excellent decisions of all. (see **I Thess. 3:12—4:1**)

- So you see that the issue of having godly love & charity for one another is **progressive**—and the fundamental thing where that all gets established is in the *instruction of judgment* and especially **equity** as God’s son in the curriculum for us in this dispensation of grace.

- (it’s *equitable* decision-making that deals especially with our interpersonal relationships with each other!)

- And you’re perfectly willing (not grudgingly or anything along those lines) - but willing to give up of yourself for the best and for the benefit and for the profit of that other member of the church the body of Christ.

- And even though the things we’ve looked at are really issues where Level II of our sonship education kicks in—it’s important to realize that it’s this advanced decision-making skill of *equity* that gets talked about there in I Thess. 4 as being how we “*ought to walk and to please God*” — well, it’s just as important to appreciate that all that gets underway in Level I, Phase 2, where you’re first introduced to it, and where certain, preliminary adjustments have to be made in our thinking (both about ourselves and about others, and being members of one another) that works with our fundamental understanding of godly love and charity that produces a heart of good will in us towards one another—and that’s exactly what gets addressed in Romans where we, for the first time, encounter this issue of **receiving the instruction of equity**.

- And when these kind of decisions are made—when the members of the body of Christ are concerned with, and have the same care, one for another—that’s when the decisions you make go beyond being *just* decisions or *judgmental* decisions, but they go to the point of being a productive, beneficial decision—even when the one making the decisions may not personally be benefited themselves!

- ... and that’s the component of *equitable* decision-making!

- **Summary Statement:** to receive the instruction of *equity* involves receiving the instruction for having the capacity for making sound, sonship and godly decisions, not only with respect to what is fair and impartial in our dealings with others, but especially for what is good and profitable and beneficial for them. This also involves having the capacity to make decisions regarding what is good, profitable, beneficial, and productive, in view of the things that God wants to accomplish in His program with us, and in view of the ultimate aim of our sonship edification, which is to be 'Like Father, like son.'

- Again, that first major area in which *equitable* decision-making is going to apply is going to be in our interpersonal relationships with each other—with each other member of the new creature of the church the body of Christ.

- But that's just where it **starts**—the 'end' of it all that is in view is of course what God ultimately wants to accomplish with us—and He's creating this new creature now for a future roll when, at the conclusion of this dispensation of grace, He's going to deliver the creature of the heavenly places from the *bondage of corruption*—and He's going to put us, the *new creature* in its place—which is when it's deliverance takes place.



- And so *equitable* decision-making also recognizes the issue of what is good, profitable, beneficial, and productive in view of the **future** roll that we have as members of that new creature—and all of that especially comes out when you're in Level II of sonship edification.

- Because when you're in Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, and when you look at our conduct and behavior there, Paul will talk about it especially in view of the issue of the **IMPACT** and the **INFLUENCE** it's to have right now upon those *principalities, mights, and dominions in the heavenly places*.

- And there's something they are supposed to see and witness right now — which is the issue of us qualifying ourselves by means of God's grace provision of our sonship edification—and these members of the church the body of Christ gaining the skills and expertise necessary in order to function out there—to be going through the training to be able to occupy and function in those positions.

- And *equitable* decision-making recognizes that as well (eventually).

- Again, you need to recognize that all 4 of these decision-making skills advance in both the awareness of how they are to be put to use, and in the level of expertise that each one of them will have.

- And you will put them to use in some general ways in your everyday, work-a-day life—and you will use them in your dealings with other members of the church the body of Christ, (especially with your dealings and interpersonal relationships you have within our local assembly) — and you will also put them to use when you're finally placed as a son in one of those positions of rulership in the creature out in the heavenly places.

- And again, it's not that the area of *equitable* decision-making is limited only to one single area—because you will find that *equitable* decisions can be made in **every** area of your life—but the way we're specifically taught about *equitable* decisions in our curriculum for sonship education is that, by in large, our major area of where *equitable* decisions are going to be made is with **each other** as members of not only the body of Christ, but as those who are a part of this local assembly of Triangle Bible Church.

- And we're taught to look at ourselves as something very special—and we're taught to think about ourselves in a very special way as fellow members *one of another* who all have something important to contribute to the whole body—and that our dealings and our relationship with one another is to be different that anyone else, who, for instance we work for (or who works for us), or who we do some kind of business dealings with, or with our neighbors, or even an unbeliever, for example.

- And you will find that many *equitable* sonship decisions that take place within the local assembly (with each other) may mean that you decide to do things or not to do certain things that you normally would not choose to do in any other area of your life—because you perceive the value of the members of the body of Christ differently than any other relationship you have—or you perceive how things may impact upon another differently than in any other relationship you have in life—and you may wind up doing things for each other that you normally wouldn't do because you've **received the instruction of equity** from your Heavenly Father—and so you make this decision because that action is going to materially impact & benefit you (even more than me)!

- Therefore, in a given situation, I'm going to take into account what would be in **your** best interest, not just in my best interest—and if we can't come to something that's mutually beneficial, then I'm going to make the decision (to the emulation of my Father), I'm going to make the decision that benefits you to the exclusion of me.

- And that makes an *equitable* decision different from a *wise* decision, and different from a *just* decision, and even different from a *judgmental* decision—because this is the fruit of *receiving the instruction of equity.*

- All 4 are different; but that all makes it so that I now have the very same decision-making skill and capacity (or you could even say, **power** or **might**) that my Father has.

- They emulate Him, they **please** Him—and they all put on display that this aspect of my education as been written on my heart; that I have been not only educated but **edified**; that these are now permanent and sensitive issues in my own heart and I'm operating on the basis of what my Father taught me and not on what I either knew naturally or was taught by the course of men or of this world's wisdom—I recognize that I've been **instructed** on how to do something I didn't know how to do before!

- And, just to once more point it out—this issue of godly, sonship decision-making skills (really, all 4 of them, especially *judgment & equity*) - or rather the **lack** of them is what lies at the core of that passage we've looked at many times in our studies: I Cor. 6.

- But instead of going there, I want to end this by just briefly looking at another passage.



- Philemon 1-25

- END OF LEVEL I SONSHIP EDUCATION/EDIFICATION.

- Any questions?



- Any comments?

- Anything unsettled before going on?

- Remember that as you go through the sonship curriculum, there are other things that are going to be **just as vital and just as important** as the forms of doctrine that are to be written on your heart.

- This is one of the great failings of any other kind of competing system for edification— or for the edifying of your soul—or what we used to call the “edification complex of the soul.”

- And the great failing of all the other competing systems of either education or edification of the believer’s inner man (or soul) - whether you’re talking about the over-simplistic idea of just going to church and getting some kind of a topical sermon from week to week (even if it happens to be a ‘series’ of sermons on a particular topic) — or whether you’re talking about the categorical/systematic approach as the pastor-teacher teaches through books of the Bible he has chosen at random — or this popular quasi-counseling spiritual-fun spewed out by so many mega churches — the great failing isn’t just in the ignoring of the forms of doctrine God our Father has set in His word to be taught in the order He set them — but even more than that is the failure to pay attention to how God Himself instructs the Bible teacher how to teach properly so that godly edification indeed does take place!

- And what I’m driving at is God’s own method for teaching His word (which is totally ignored by every Bible Institute, Bible college, and Theological Seminary in the world today) — spelled out in a nutshell over in I Timothy.

- I Tim. 4:13

- This isn’t just a suggestion from a rouge apostle—this isn’t just advice that you can just ‘take it or leave it’ — it’s not an over-simplistic view of Bible study (as if, well, as any **serious** student of God’s word knows, you have to have multiple computer softwares written by scholars for Bible study; and you have to have hundreds of Bible commentaries, Greek & Hebrew dictionaries, lexicons, word studies, grammars, concordances, interlinears, etc., etc....) [All of which have ?what? in common: \$\$\$\$\$!]

- No. This is the apostle with the greatest understanding of God’s word, ever—giving the exact method for a Bible teacher to study and teach—from the very mind of God who designed both the content of what is to be taught as well as the soul and human spirit that is to receive what is taught!

- So I think He knows what He is talking about here!

- And all the rest are actually just variations on a theme: and the theme is found in II Timothy 3:5— *“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”*



- And what I’m talking about—and what I want to very seriously draw your attention to are all these EXHORTATIONS that accompany the doctrine that you are going to be taught as a son of your Father.

- And as I have come to understand the sonship curriculum over the past 5 years or so—I have come to realize that you can’t overstate or over emphasize the importance of all the corresponding exhortations that go with the components of doctrine that make up godly edifying!

- And while I realize that these exhortations are going to actually be more important to the one doing the teaching—it still is something that you should be aware of, and should be looking at as you settle these matters in your own thinking.

- These exhortations are so vital because they actually come along and do something that is critical for the doctrine to get written on the heart. (And my understanding is that if those exhortations aren’t given by the Pastor or Bible teacher—it’s **impossible** for the doctrine to get written on the heart—and it’s **impossible** for proper godly edification to ever take place!) — that’s just how important they are!!!

- The exhortations actually act to **initialize** the human spirit or **format** the human spirit, or **prime** it properly in order to receive the doctrine in such a way that it really does end up getting written on the heart!

- Summary Statement of the Exhortations:

The various exhortations prepares the son’s spirit/mind for the effectual working of their corresponding doctrines. In other words, they enliven it in an initial sense that prepares the spirit/mind for the writing of the living words of the living God on it’s fleshy tables so that they can live in the son as they live in the Father—and thereby becoming what the son thinks with, walks by, and invests his time and talents in accordance with.

- EXAMPLES OF HOW THE EXHORTATIONS WORK:

- Level I—Phase 2 Exhortation for *receiving the instruction of judgment*.

- As you look at these exhortations, you'll see that there seems to be a repetition of words and/or phrases in many of them—but that's not a repetition for repetition's sake—but that's the nature of how the exhortations are stated and how they are to be viewed.

- For instance, as you go from Level I to Level II—and even as you go through the various components and phases of each level, you will see that phrases like *the evil man*, *the strange woman*, *attend to my words/wisdom*, *incline thine ear*, *paths*, *ways*, etc., occur several times.

- And that's because of the nature of an exhortation—whereby within each successive form of doctrine the son will encounter, while the son advances in the forms of doctrine, he will also have to be exhorted by sometimes same terminology or phrases—but now those terms and phrases have a meaning that has also **advanced** with the curriculum.

- And the reason for sometimes the same terms being used is because those exhortation issues (like *the evil man* and *the strange woman* and *the right paths* and so forth) — they all have corresponding advances to them as well. And so you can't just exhort the son to them at one time or at one stage and just let it go at that—but you have to come along and, with the advancement he's going to make in the doctrine of the curriculum, the Father is going to have to give (and the son is going to have to receive in the exhortation), information that also advances his understanding and appreciation of how the opposition is going to ramp up it's attacks, as well as how the issues concerning this stage of his education is going to have advanced issues to it as well.

- For instance, once you finish Level I, there's now a solid path the son is on—education is already in existence—and the son now knows some things, but he also knows that there is an awful lot more things to learn — (that's what *edification* does—it builds upon each previously thing learned).

- And when you look at these exhortations—it's kind of like (as you get further on in Level I and especially in Level II) - it's like they have a **past, present, and future** aspect to them.

- In fact, David will come right out and tell Solomon what he **has** taught him, what he **is** dealing with at present, and what he **will have** to deal with in the future next level of his education!

- **Proverbs 4:10-5:6**—This is the exhortation that corresponds with “*receiving the instruction of judgment*” — (Rom. 13:8-14 in our curriculum).



- (4:10-11) - notice that this is all **past**—granted, you’re in Level I, Phase 2 of sonship edification—but there’s been a lot covered already in Phase 2 of Level I—Solomon’s already received the forms of doctrine that make up his *instruction of wisdom*, and *justice*.

- And David exhorts Solomon as to what he has just covered previous to this— “*I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; [instruction of wisdom] — I have led thee in right paths [instruction of justice] - and that’s all been covered by now.*

- (:12-13) — Solomon now knows by what David says here that more instruction is coming—but based upon Solomon already receiving the benefits of *the instruction of wisdom* and *the instruction of justice*—based upon the past experience with that, David comes along and says “Now we’re going to get more instruction that is advancing beyond *the instruction of wisdom & justice*—we’re going to deal with **judgment** and **equity**—and they’re going to have advancement and progress to them, too.”

- But my point here is to alert you to the fact that as far as the exhortation goes here, the Father (David, in this case) exhorts the son (Solomon) to call upon the benefits of the doctrine that has already been received and already been perceived and is already being put into practice — and especially where *the instruction of justice* is concerned David tells Solomon, “*I have led thee in right paths*” - that is, Solomon now has his senses exercised now to readily discern right from wrong.

- And from that, that’s going to now parlay over into this 3rd component of sonship decision-making: **judgment**—and it’s going to have the additional aspect to it of NOT having a clear path to follow—and now you’re going to have to take some additional information that will allow for you to be able to determine what is the **best** or most **excellent** path to follow.

- Which is why you’ve got (:12— “*When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.*”)

- The issue now is that the son has the ability to initially begin to walk in *right paths*—he has the ability to see a clearly right from wrong path to follow—but eventually the road he’s on is going to begin to become narrowed (that’s the ***straitening*** concept in :12) — and as he’s walking and that road starts to narrow—or when that road he’s walking on comes to a fork—or branches into many other roads (more than just 2 ways to go) - the son is exhorted to utilize this upcoming information that allows for his steps to not be *straitened* (or narrowed or limited in his range of motion or restricted in his action into a hardship because of other circumstances—to be *straitened* is to become restricted, and as any son knows, one of the biggest dangers to his sonship life is the loss of his liberty as a son!)

- And then you’ve also got that expression— “... *and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.*” — there are going to be circumstances that require the son to “run” and make **quick decisions** so as to not “stumble” — and this is what the next category of doctrine is going to provide for!

- And what you’ve now got is the father (David) exhorting the son that he’s gotten some things in the past down pat and is using them well—and then you’ve got David exhorting Solomon as to his present usage and experience of the first 2 categories of sonship decision-making — and so David takes the past, and on the basis of the past, David exhorts for the present; and on the basis of Solomon realizing what the present value of the doctrine is; David now comes along and tells Solomon in (:13),

- 13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

- And the *instruction* he’s talking about here is the instruction that’s still remaining (future) in Level I edification—which is *receiving the instruction of judgment and equity*.

- And as David goes on in (:15 ff) - he’s going to talk about paths that Solomon doesn’t have immediate light on, or immediate clearness of—and that’s where the receiving of judgment comes in—where you’re going to have to think, to ponder & weigh what path you’re going to take.

- So then you get (:14-15 [read]) — and Solomon already has got some familiarity with that, but when you go on down to ...

- (:18) — there's this "*path of the just*" now that has done the job of "*the shining light*" so as to illuminate or provide for the ability to make the decision as to exactly where you're going to go.

- And this falls into line perfectly with the doctrine the son's going to receive in the 3rd category of decision-making:
judgment—*judgment* will build upon the shining way of the ***just*** that you just learned about!

- And what I'm after is that you see that the way gets paved (so to speak) by one form of doctrine [and the exhortations for that doctrine], to then be able to be in a proper position to receive the next form of doctrine—and there's going to be some added terminology and some added features to it that will provide for that doctrine to now properly function in the son.

- And the exhortation to that **future** [soon-coming] form of doctrine gets underway at (:20)

- (:20) — notice that here (:10 & :20) - the terminology has shifted to David's "sayings" — David has talked about his *law* and his *commandments*, but now he talks about his *sayings*—and a *saying* is a particular encapsulation of information—and David ends up packaging some information in the form of *sayings*—and the *sayings* are going to contain **principles** that are going to be utilized to be able to make these judgment-type decisions.

- (:21-23) — these "*issues of life*" are the issues of his functional life in Level I, Phase 2 that are going to put on display his ability to think on his own—and to not have a simple 'yes or no' 'right or wrong' commandment to operate upon.

- And Solomon's going to take these *sayings* (especially), and he's going to put them *in the midst of his heart*—and they will be *functional life to him*, and *health to all his flesh*—and he's to *keep his heart diligently* in just these *sayings*.

- (:24-27) — (:26) "**Ponder**" - that's the idea that you don't have any definite path already marked out for you like you did in *justice*— and so you've got to think—to ponder what path to take.

- And when you *ponder* something you take all of the information you have available to you, and you glean out of it what's pertinent to the situation that is facing you, and you weigh the benefits of walking either this way or that way, or following this path or that path based upon that information.

- And the way all this terminology matches up with the form of doctrine the son is now going to encounter is really fascinating!! (It's a perfect fit!)

- Hopefully you can begin to see the value and the importance of these exhortations.

- And the **future** aspects to *receiving the instruction of judgment* go on in the opening 6 verses of chapter 5 because there are some things that Solomon is going to have to realize and be warned about in the exhortation concerning how the Policy of Evil is going to respond in kind (tit-for-tat, so to speak) to his *instruction of judgment*.

- And this **strange woman** now comes back up—because the son needs to realize that just because he wasn't victimized by her at the first, she's changed her tactics also—and she's going to be out there waiting for him when all these multiple paths start appearing before him—and as he starts making godly *judgments* and *equitable* decisions and gaining some measure of *discretion*, she's going to shift her tactics in kind!

- **(5:1-6)** — and when the *strange woman* (the Policy of Evil) starts dealing with the son who has had some success already to withstand his initial encounter with her and he starts getting into some advanced sonship decision-making skills—he finds out that the PoE becomes more and more clever itself—and it gets that much more sly and cunning—and that seductress comes back again, and she's **not** going to employ the exact same approach or use the exact same words she used the first time because the son rebuffed her!

- Now she's going to use words—words that *drop as an honeycomb*—and there's real sweetness to that—real attractiveness to that—and you're going to have to be really on guard—because she's waiting on some paths out there to flatter you and seduce you from the best path or from the excellent path—and just that little difference (between good or best can make all the difference in the world, in the proper situation)!

- These exhortations are specific—they're doctrine-specific—and they're even specific to the various components to the doctrine—they follow the sequence of the forms of doctrine—and when you see that, the value of the exhortations should become **indispensable** in your thinking—in fact, you should perceive that if you're being taught God's word by a Bible teacher, you should perceive that if you're not getting the proper exhortation to the doctrine you're being taught, **you know you're being taught improperly!!!**

- And a pastor has to have just as much skill in the exhortations as he does in the teaching of the doctrine!

- And any teaching of Bible doctrine that hasn't first of all provided the proper exhortation to give the son an advanced preview of what the doctrine entails and why it is so important to get it, as well as give the son advanced warning of how the opposition is going to be encountered—any Bible teaching that hasn't done that first, is just teaching an 'unformatted' human spirit, and the doctrine will be (even if it's good doctrine) it will not be placed where it ought to be in the son's inner man.

- It winds up being like running a computer on one kind of an operating system, but God is running a completely different operating system—like trying to load software designed to run on a Mac when you've got a PC—some data will get put on the disk, but it will be un-retrievable at times, you'll end up with a fragmented disk, you won't be able to access the information, and you might possibly even crash the system.

- This is the only way in which your thoughts are going to be thinking WITH the words of God!

- And this is a part of what it means to be "**apt to teach**" (I Tim. 3:2; II Tim. 2:24)!!!

- And you should realize the critical nature of the exhortation that corresponds with the doctrine to be taught—because just as David exhorted Solomon:

- "***for out of it (the son's heart) are the issues of life.***" (Pro. 4:23)

- The exhortation deals with, not just the living words of the living God in general—that's to be understood & appreciated right from the outset of sonship edification) - but you're dealing with those words living in you & living in your heart that makes it so that the decisions you make and the paths you follow are the **issues** of a son's life!

- And these “*issues of life*” are issues in the qualifying for and the responsibility in the Father’s business as you go on through Level II and Level III.

- And for Solomon, those *issues of life* (of functional life) are, for him, dealing with the Father’s business of: ‘You’re going to be the king of Israel!’

- And when it comes to a member of the remnant of Israel: ‘You’re going to be put into position of authority over the nations!’

- And when it comes to us in this dispensation of grace: ‘You’re going to be put into position of intelligence in the creature!’

- And as I said earlier, this (Pro. 4:10-5:6) is the exhortation that corresponds with us when we receive the instruction of judgment over in Romans 13:8-14.

- And it comes as no surprise to find that within that body of information, it is at this point in the sonship education where the son is, for the 1st time, going to meet up with some real **opposition** from the Adversary’s Policy of Evil.

- And the son is exhorted in advance of this opposition—in fact, he’s already become acquainted with one of the main areas of resistance and opposition to his sonship life: the **Evil Man (Rom. 12:2)** — and now he’s going to have to encounter for the 1st time (in a real sense) to opposing and threatening his sonship life (functional life) that **Strange Woman** — (**notice in Romans 13:12** — “*the works of darkness*”)

- In fact, you’re told—even before you get out of Phase 1 of Level I—that you’re going to encounter that **Strange Woman**—and you’re told exactly what her #1, main weapon she’ll use against you as a son is — (Pro. 2:16) — “*which flattereth with her words.*”

- And you’ll find that very thing confronts the son as he rounds out his education in Level I — **see Romans 16:17-18!**



- Level II — Phase 2 Exhortation for the *young man* getting *knowledge and discretion*. (Pro. 1:4b)

- Proverbs chapter 7.

- Here, you're dealing with the 1st exhortation that applies to the initial issue in Level II/Phase 2 of sonship edification.

- (:1-4) - Notice “*my commandments*” and “*my law*” - my understanding is that in this context, these are David’s instructions as Solomon’s father that consist of David’s commandments and David’s laws.

- (:2) “*apple of thine eye*” = an older English expression (even going back to Old English) that comes from the central aperture of the eye, and came to be a figure of speech of someone or something that is, above all others or all other things, the most cherished possession of all. It is an extremely powerful sentiment that depicts an esteeming in the mind of something that nothing else even compares to— or something that is valued more highly than anyone or anything else!

- (:3) - again, you have that expression: “*write them upon the table of thine heart*” - (which occurred back in 3:3 in the exhortation that corresponds with the *instruction of wisdom*).

- (:4) - “*Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.*” — this is a fascinating statement that really takes into consideration that you have now gone from Phase 1 of Level II to Phase 2 of Level II — and there is this progress or advancement or intensification of the Policy of Evil—(just as there was when you went from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of Level I).

- And now there is a need to take the form of doctrine given to Solomon as the “*young man*” he is here in Phase 2 of Level II of his sonship edification—he’s now a “*young man*” who is going to be given “*knowledge and discretion*” - and he’s given that, haven been given the “*subtilty*” that Phase 1/Level II gave him — and based upon that *subtilty*, he’s now moved into that “*young man*” stage—and there is a need now for him to be given “*knowledge and discretion*” in the form of a body of information or a form of doctrine whereby his personal integrity is going to become the **big** issue in his walk—and the integrity of his cause of his Father’s business becomes the **big issue to him**—and he needs to realize that what the PoE is going to do now through that *Strange Woman*, is to endeavor to make him make an indiscretionary judgment/decision that’s going to adversely affect his personal integrity and the cause and operations of his Father’s business.

- And that's why the advancement in the appreciation and the value for the doctrine now shifts to this issue of (:4) when he says, "*Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.*" — why?

(:5) — "*That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.*"

- And, just as was encountered in Phase 2 of Level I, in the exhortation that corresponded with "*perceiving the words of understanding*" - the PoE now moves on to another tactic of **flattery** that is more subtle and more advanced and more intensified than has ever been encountered by the son before!

- And flattery is an indispensable tool of the PoE—and it has many levels to it, and many kinds of intensified ways and means that it can be utilized.

- And when, either a member of the remnant of Israel, or a member of the church, the body of Christ **doesn't** heed the exhortation in preparation for dealing with *flattery*—and **doesn't** take to heart the exhortation of Prov. 7:1-5—so that the doctrine that is going to enable the member of the remnant of Israel, or the member of the church, the body of Christ to deal with the *flattery*— if that exhortation doesn't prepare the *fleshy tables of the heart* for appropriately receiving the form of doctrine that's going to give the **discretion**—then when the *flattery* comes along, then (either the member of the remnant or the member of the new creature) is in all probability going to follow right along with what is further described in (:6 & ff) when this *young man* who is *void of understanding* passes through the street of this *strange woman* and falls for her *flattering words*.

- (And this should just underscore all the more the exacting nature of these exhortations!)

- This exhortation is designed to **enliven** in an initial way the mind and the spirit of the son, preparing it for the writing of the living words of the living God on its fleshy tables.

- And a good example of that is found right here in, especially, (:4), "*Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman.*" — what is that driving at? what is the **nature** of it? ... [it's a particular kind of a **relationship**] ... but what kind of a relationship is it? ... [it's a **natural** relationship!]

- And when that kind of an **attitude** is produced in the human spirit of the son/daughter—that spirit is really **prepared** for being able to **REPEL** the *flattering words* that are going to be coming out of the mouth of the Strange Woman (or out of the mouth of the PoE).

- And those *flattering words* are going to, (in a sense), attempt to produce a **desire** in the son for establishing **another** relationship that would be **more attractive** or **more desirous** than the **natural relationship** that the son has with this *sister*, with his *kinswoman*.

- This is a fascinating way in which the Father uses an analogy or a natural affection to describe the kind of affection that the son's spirit and inner man is to have for the knowledge that God is giving him—because some other knowledge is going to come along from the PoE that is going to have real enticement to it, and it's going to have some relations and relationships to it, and some camaraderie to it, and some fellowship to it—that's going to be real tempting/enticing!

- And the exhortation is of such a nature—and has such carefully chosen terminology used in connection with it—and words with flawless accuracy used in connection with it, so that in the son's mind, he's realizing (and being prepared in advanced—and forewarned & forearmed) for the very words and the enticing nature and their flattering nature that's going to come out of the mouth of the PoE as it endeavors to engage the son in an indiscretion that's going to end up hurting his reputation—damaging his integrity—and potentially ruining an operation of his Father's business.

- And since this is Level II/Phase 2 of sonship edification—and the parallel to that for us the new creature of the church the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace—when you're in Level II, you're in the books of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

- And when you're dealing with the kind of activities of the PoE that match up with those *flattering words* of the *Strange Woman*—that's what you're dealing with, for instance, over in Colossians when Paul talks about those “*enticing words*” that can “*spoil you*” —

- Col. 2:1-8

- Col. 2:18-19, 23

- All these things look good—and sound good—sound Biblical—and the common denominator to them all is that they are all very flattering!
- But what winds up happening is that the reputation of the son ends up being **ruined**—and the bottom line is, your conversation that used to be in heaven (if you fall for those enticing words) **ends up getting ruined**!
- You start minding earthly things—and you're conversation is no longer in heaven! And your influence there is ruined!
 - And you've been beguiled out of that reward you were first told about back in Romans 8—the joint-inheritance you are supposed to have “with Christ!”
 - And that operation of your Heavenly Father's business that you were a part of— has now come under reproach !
- And the exhortation back in Proverbs 7 in connection with Level II of sonship edification deals with this very thing—David takes Solomon as that “young man” and he says, “I'm going to show you an example of a young man void of this understanding—and look what the Strange Woman did to him—his reputation has been ruined!
- And that's what David means down in (:21-23) [read]
 - (:23) - “life” = that's his functional life—it's ruined!
- And that's why Colossians 3 goes on to talk about “setting our affections on things above, not on things on the earth.” (read 3:1-4).
- That's where our life is now as Level II sons—our functional life **and its main influence** is in the heavenly places!
- (There is recovery for it) - but the issue is that the nature of the flattering words, and the relationships that get established by succumbing to them brings a ruining to your sonship life in many different ways!
 - (It's not something to play around with—it's **lethal**!)

- And as you examine what Paul is saying in Colossians, you realize that one of the big enticements to it all is that this other path or this other way of those *flattering words*—**it's a lot more popular!** And **everybody's doing it!** And you'll be **part of a big church!**

- And for the pastor, you can see why Paul, over in the pastoral epistles has to confront the issue of money—and the allurements of money goes hand-in-hand with the *Strange Woman* (PoE) enticing the pastor by the prospect of making more money in a bigger church!



- What accuracy! It's accuracy that only God could be a producer of!!!

- Final Issue (before going on to Level II):

THE EVIL MAN & THE STRANGE WOMAN

- The expression “*the evil man*” - used in the sense of what *the evil man* is to a son within his sonship education and edification—is actually first encountered back in the book of the Psalms—but in the format or pattern for sonship education, it is encountered in the book of Proverbs within the exhortation given to the son when he is to “*perceive the words of understanding*” in **Level I / Phase 2**—and the corresponding exhortation to that which is found in Proverbs 2:10-22 (:12)

10 When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

11 Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

*12 To deliver thee from the way of the **evil man**, from the man that speaketh forward things;
(Proverbs 2:10-12)*

- The expression “*the strange woman*” occurs more frequently within the scope of sonship edification—it's encountered repeatedly throughout the sonship exhortations, beginning in that same exhortation where *the evil man* is first encountered in Level I / Phase 2 (Pro. 2:16) - and then is brought back up in chapter 5, 6, and 7.

- First encountered:

*16 To deliver thee from the **strange woman**, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words;*

17 Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God. (Proverbs 2:16-17)

- And as I have told you before—my understanding of what these 2 expressions represent and are talking about with they come up in the education of us as sons is that—and to put it very simply and very briefly:

- *The evil man* = represents the natural evil and ungodliness of the world and/or the course of this world.

- *The strange woman* = represents an opposing spiritual and/or religious system generated by the Satanic Policy of Evil.

- Now, the *evil man*, as representing the natural evil and ungodliness of this world can be a bit confusing to those of us who have come out of the old systematic, categorical approach to Bible study and Bible learning. (And you could have a ‘snag’ in your thinking about it because of that.)

- And that’s because we were taught by the scholars (such as LS Chafer) that the “world” or cosmos or cosmic system is tantamount to the Satanic system.

- (That is, I was taught that the cosmos is the Satanic system.)

- But my understanding is that (just like most Biblical issues and doctrine that systematic theology screws up) - that’s **not** how the Bible itself (or God Himself) views the natural ungodliness and evil of the course of this world.

- And I do, however, realize where and how the cosmic world system can be seen to be the same as the Satanic Policy of Evil—because it is true that there are occasions where the Satanic PoE **does** use the wisdom of this world to achieve its objectives—and I acknowledge that because of this, some would look at it as if they are talking about the exact same thing.

- But the satanic PoE and the course of this world (or wisdom of this world) are not the same thing!

- And the satanic PoE does have enough of its own unique features to it that makes it so that it needs to be dealt with as a **separate issue** all on its own—and needs to be dealt with **separate** from the wisdom of this world.

- And one of the things that alerts me to that, (even before I ever get to this dispensation of grace in which we live), is the reality of that in how God deals with it in His program with Israel.

- And if you go back to the commencement of God's program with Israel as a nation—at the point in which God had called Abram—and then the nation got developed to the point where they had gone into the “*horror of great darkness*” that Abraham saw, and the fledgling nation has been in Egypt for 400 yrs., and then God raises up Moses and brings them out of the land of Egypt— and then as they begin moving toward the promised land to begin the process of the repossession of this earth from the Adversary and his cohorts —

— as God does that He begins to educate them into His Jehovah-ness and grace and He provides 2 main phases to their education.

- And as that nation is brought out of Egypt—they begin to encounter some temptations that, if you pay attention to what's going on, you'll see how God Himself looks at both the wisdom of this world (the cosmos), and the satanic PoE.

- So when God brings Israel out of the land of Egypt and He begins to educate them in their absolute need for His J-ness & grace—He takes them through 5 trials for their education that all deals with that matter; (and later on those 5 trials will match up with the 5 mandates of the Davidic Covenant that will eventually put the fullness of God's J-ness into effect to get them out of the predicament that they got themselves into and can't get themselves out of).

- And within that education—when they end up being tempted as they are under that initial education they receive when they come out of Egypt—there are 2 MAIN categories in which all those temptations fall! (not that there's only 2 temptations—there's many temptations, but all of them fall into only 2 main categories).

- And 1 of those main categories deals with **the world** that they had just come out of—(which was Egypt) - and they succumb to those temptations when you see them, in Numbers for example, pine for the “*cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick*” that they ate in Egypt freely.

- And what they're doing is that they want to go back into the fashion of the world that they came out of and all that it offered — and that's not to say that the Adversary has nothing at all to do with that, because he does—but my point is that when God deals with them for what they receive temptation-wise—**He looks at it as 2 categories of temptations.**

- 1) was to go back to Egypt to the world that they developed in, and that they knew—and that had all its attractions and all its fashion and all its materialism and all that kind of stuff...

- 2) they are going to encounter specifically designed temptations that don't come from the world at large (so to speak), but come from the Adversary himself—and are designed to have a specific affect on their inner man!

- In fact, when you're over in our epistles—in I Corinthians 10—you have the apostle Paul actually utilizing this very period of Israel's program as our *ensample*—and he reminds us that when they went through those temptations—Paul actually comes along and takes those temptations and puts them in the same 2 categories!

- So you've got the actual historical record and what God says about it there—then you've got the apostle Paul making a parallel to that as he instructs us in this dispensation of grace—plus when you get to dealing with the curriculum for sonship edification as it begins in the book of Proverbs and the details begin to be set forth and as the exhortations begin to be given—you find that Solomon is warned about 2 particular individuals that are going to oppose his sonship education and resist it—and they are described as potentially ruining his sonship education & edification—and they are called ***the evil man*** and ***the strange woman***. (no coincidence—2 categories)

- And it's fascinating that as you go through the development of the outworking of God's program with Israel—when God describes the issue of them succumbing to those temptations and being overthrown in the wilderness, and He judges that generation, and He starts the next generation off after the 40 years of wilderness wandering—well, when He gives them the Deuteronomy (gives them the law the 2nd time) - He packages with the law (as Moses sets it forth) the issue of their failures succumbing to those very 2 categories of temptations.

- And He does that so that when they get into the land—they're prepared for experiencing the exact same 2 categories of temptations and stumbling blocks to them fulfilling God's plan & purpose for them.

- And now, when they enter the land—they're going to go back into the world—but this time it's the world of the Canaanites!

- And they're told not to look at what they **do**—don't look at how prosperous they've been—don't look at their cities, etc.—in fact, they're told that when they go in, they are to destroy everything—in fact, they're told that they are not going to be able to even touch the fruit trees for 3 years!

- And what God does is, He prepares them for destroying the fashion of the world of the Canaanites—because that's going to be the 1st major area of temptation that they're going to have to deal with: **THE WORLD**—and what ungodly man produces and fashions in the world—whether the PoE has anything to do with it or not (augments it, helps it out, etc.) — **but man, on the basis of being an ungodly creature by nature (on his own), fashions his own ungodly world to live in.**

- But then—after that's dealt with in the opening part of Deuteronomy, beginning in chapter 13 of Deut., God comes along and gives them a warning of another 2nd major category of temptation that comes from a specific person:

- Deut. 13:12-15 (:13) — called, "*the children of Belial*"
(that's the Policy of Evil!)

- "*The children of Belial*" is the Adversary's name in God's program with Israel when it came to the particular PoE that the Adversary was going to put together **against** Israel.

- And granted he works out there amongst the nations in their idolatry and everything—but the purpose of the Adversary in doing all that was **to infect Israel with it!**

- (And that's why the concentration of it was in all the nations that surrounded Israel—and that's why he didn't really care what was going on down in Ethiopia or in the isles of the nations—that's why he focused everything on that branch of Ham's children: the Canaanites — because they were the ones in the land, and they were the ones surrounding the land).

- But the point is that when you get to Deut. 13, God begins dealing with **the 2nd major category of temptations**—and that's the temptations that comes from the "*children of Belial*".

- And when you come to view it this way, you come to realize that when God looks at the whole package of what His people are up against—and the opposition that they are going to have to deal with: when He looks at something that is outside of themselves, outside of their own sin nature—He sees 2 categories:

1) He sees the **world** they have come out of,

2) He sees the **Adversary**, and the fact that they no longer belong to the Adversary, but belong to God, being a special target that the Adversary sets his sights on in order to succeed with a particular aspect of his plan of evil—which is to have a **policy of evil** against God's own people to endeavor to thwart the advances God is making when it comes to dealing with Satan and his plan of evil. (repossess the earth)



- So God sees those 2 issues—and that all gets developed and advanced and progresses through Israel going through all 5 courses of punishment.

- And the Policy of Evil will, indeed, utilize the world and its attractiveness so that you sometimes can't make a sharp line of demarcation between the world and the PoE—they'll sometimes work in conjunction.

- In fact, **the world is never aware that the PoE is making use of it!**

- And the only one that's aware that the PoE can make use of the world is the Adversary himself—and the intelligent member of the remnant of Israel—or the intelligent member of the church, the body of Christ (an intelligized son).

- But because there's enough that the PoE can do that is separate on its own—and that it doesn't necessarily have to use the world as a part of it—it needs to be looked upon as a separate area of temptation. (Or separate area of opposition).

- And its fascinating that when you get to sonship edification, those 2 major areas of opposition and temptation gets brought up in the marvelous way only a proverbial style of teaching can do as 1) the evil man, and 2) the strange woman.

- The *evil man* is always associated with what is going on in the world at-large—and the *strange woman* is always after the **soul** and **spirit** of the son!

- And there's enough energy and enough ungodliness in the *world*, on its own, to trip a son up.

- But the PoE comes along (and it can make use of the *world*), but when a son starts withstanding the world, and making advances in his sonship education—that's when the PoE (*the strange woman*) comes into play.

- And when you follow those exhortations that David gives Solomon in connection with *the strange woman*—she's never spoken about as being out there "at-large" — she's always spoken about as being in a **particular place**—and setting her sights on **particular people**.

- And this is especially seen as you get into Level II — when David describes her activity, she's got a particular place where she dwells!

- And the "*young man*" who is "*void of understanding*" — he wound up walking into that area of the city — and if he'd have been "wise" he'd have never been there in the first place!

- And she was there all dolled up—and she was there to entice him—she was there like bait—and that's why David describes her as, she's after the son's soul—she's after his "life" (she wants to destroy his functional life)!

- And that's what the PoE is always after.

- And when you get over to our epistles—that's exactly what you see, when, for instance, you get established as a son in chapter 8 of the book of Romans, and then you begin *receiving the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* (over in chapter 12).

- And as you receive those bodies of information/doctrine—that's where those exhortations in Proverbs introduce *the evil man* and *the strange woman*.

- And when you start off in Romans 12—the first thing is, not to be "conformed to this world" (that's *the evil man*) — and then, when by the time you get down to the end of ch. 13 where you're receiving the instruction of *judgment*, you've got "the works of darkness" brought in—and that's the Adversary—(granted, he's largely operating through the world, but he's got some particular "*works of darkness*" that are designed to be **attractive** to God's sons.

- To just put it this way—he (the Adversary/strange woman) wants to **de-sanctify** God’s **sanctified** people!

- And that’s why you “*cast off*” those “*works of darkness*” — that’s not the garb you want to wear—you want to “*put on the Lord Jesus Christ*” — and you need to realize at that point that you’re up against an Adversary whose going to start by using what’s easily available at his disposal—which is the natural ungodliness of this world.

- But when a son in this dispensation of grace rebuffs that *strange woman* and stands against that — just like back where the format for sonship edification alerted you to (in the book of Proverbs) — that opposition of the PoE will **intensify** — and Romans ends up with the declared statement of what the Adversary going to do now.

- He (the *strange woman*) shifts tactics— and now the attack is with God’s word—but it’s the miss-handling of it, and contrary doctrine— “*offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned*” (Rom. 16:17) - and by “*good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*” (Rom. 16:18)

- So my understanding is that you have to differentiate between the 2, even though one borrows from the other frequently, but my understanding is that God views them as 2 different things.

- And you’ll see that more and more, as a son progresses through his sonship education, that viewing these as 2 separate entities becomes more and more important.

- And this is especially true when the PoE finds it necessary to move away from the basic temptations resident within the *world (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life)* — as a son moves into his more advanced areas of his sonship life (and this has a lot to do with what goes on in the inner man of a son who is now undergoing “*the sufferings of Christ*”) — that’s when the line between *the evil man* (the ungodliness of the world) and *the strange woman* (the opposing PoE) becomes **real sharp and clear**—and you begin to experience far more temptations from the PoE than you ever do the *world*.

- And as sons grow and mature and become that “*wise man*” and that “*man of understanding*” - where the corresponding doctrine for us occurs in Eph., Phil., and Col., — it’s like the *world* becomes less and less of a temptation—and the big thing you’re up against is the Adversary and his PoE—which is why in Eph. 6 the issue of the “*whole armour of God*” is brought in there.

- Because for a Level II son, the *fashion of this world* has pretty much passed away—that’s not the greatest temptation to him—and now his *conversation* is in heaven—and the big thing the Adversary’s after is to stop that!

- And the Adversary knows that in order to stop that, his most effective tool **won’t** be anything from this *world*—it’s going to consist of crafty, subtle, distortions and miss-handlings and corrupted forms of BIBLE doctrine that has certain allurements and appeals and enticements to the son at that Level.

- And that’s why, when you’re following the curriculum for sonship edification along there in the book of Proverbs—and when those exhortations are given that match up with each component of the curriculum—and when you’re in Proverbs chapters 8 & 9 *wisdom* becomes personified into the one doing the talking, because the whole issue now is: *wisdom*, living in that son’s inner man, is up against that *strange woman*—the *evil man* has basically passed of the scene: he’s gone—he’s barely mentioned again.

- And (fascinating) — **look at chapter 9**—how it begins and how it ends!

- That *strange woman*—in order to succeed with her deception, **takes the very words out of the mouth of wisdom and adopts them as her own!** (*A form of godliness that denies the power thereof!*) - [II Tim. 3:1-5]

- The very same words that came out of her mouth are the very same words that came out of the mouth of *wisdom* after she had built her *house* out of those *seven pillars!*

- By the way, when you get over to the pastoral epistles—what they do is to give the bishop and deacons a full-blown education in the scheming and wiles of that *strange woman!*

- And when you follow the format of I Timothy 1:1 through the end of Philemon—those epistles follow the format of the *strange woman* as described in the exhortations of Proverbs 1:7 to the end of chapter 9.

- And that's because in order to be an "*apt*" teacher of God's word, that pastor has to know, understand, and fully be able to appreciate and deal with every tactic of *the strange woman* in this dispensation of grace.

- And that *strange woman* does the very same things and says the very same things that are described in Proverbs as are encountered in the sense & sequence of those pastoral epistles — which is why you go from basic assaults against the principle of *godly edifying which is in faith* at the opening of I Timothy, (I Tim. 1:4) — to the production of "*a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof*" that has all the **look**, and all the outward **appearance** of a genuine 'pillar and ground of the truth' (even to the adoption of all of the terminology; they're carrying the same Book, etc.), **BUT THE POWER HAS BEEN SUBSTITUTED!!!** (Another power is in operation rather than the power according to godliness!)

- Again — what accuracy!



- (**read Proverbs 1:1-6**)

- Now if everything we've covered as to what the Table of Contents informs us about as to what we're going *to know*; *to perceive*; and *to receive* as adopted sons of our Heavenly Father in Level I of our sonship education and edification— if all that is clear to you — if you're clear as to what each Phase of Level I is about and what each component is designed to do —

- What is the first part of Level I / Phase 1 designed to do?
(**Sonship Orientation**)
- What is the second part of Level I / Phase 1 designed to do?
(**Sonship Establishment**)
- What is Level I / Phase 2 designed to do?
(**Sonship Decision-making Skills**)

- Once you as God's son have properly gone through all of Level I in the curriculum for our sonship education & edification—and all that's contained in Level I is fully and properly and effectually working in your inner man, you are now qualified to move on to Level II.

- LEVEL II

4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. (Proverbs 1:4)

- By the time you have gone through all of Level I of your sonship education, you are now fundamentally established as a son—you are properly oriented, you have perfected your attitude, and you have acquired some keen decision-making skills that work to have you now thinking the thoughts that both the Lord Jesus Christ are currently occupied with, and that your Heavenly Father is occupied with right now in His program with us, the members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ.

- You now have gained skills that your Father wants you to have—you're no longer an empty son—you have actually begun thinking the way your Father thinks, and living the way your Father lives, and even begun (to a significant measure, albeit not a full measure) laboring with your Father in His business.

- You recognize the importance of those godly sonship decision-making skills, and you further recognize that you have been given certain areas whereby you can practice and get your vocational training— and you recognize that all of the areas in which you're making those decisions and honing those skills right now are going to translate into the ability & capacity to properly handle the demands you will face when you are placed as sons in the heavenly places of the "creature" and put your sonship life into practice in your Father's business in those heavenly places.

- (To rule and to govern and to administrate His business for the creature—to actually put your Father's very life into effect for the creature to operate as it's supposed to and as He intended when He created it in the first place.)

- Biblically, as far as the curriculum for our godly edification goes, you have come through the book of Romans—you now know **what to do** with the forms of doctrine that comprise Level I — you have faced the Adversary for the first time and experienced his determined opposition to your sonship edification. (You've experienced the temptations that seek to oppose and resist your sonship life from *the evil man*, as well as *the strange woman*—at least as far as the PoE **can** oppose you at that level).

- And you know precisely where and when that *strange woman* (the Satanic PoE) will produce its first powerful seduction and temptation and allurements—at the very point of your *receiving the instruction of judgment*—because that’s where not only your sonship life begins to really shine, but that’s where you, for the first time, become a real threat to Satan’s plan of evil for retaining those heavenly places!

- And you not only have had to deal with the PoE against you, but the sonship curriculum has also brought to the surface many inner problems you naturally have in connection with areas that would either diminish or produce stumbling blocks or snags to your sonship life — areas of inner problems that would potentially ruin and stop all progress to your sonship edification.

- In fact, you’ve been confronted with the fact that you’re not yet “*perfect*” - and that one of the most powerfully tempting things you’ll face is right at this point where you are no longer an empty son, but a simple son—and you’ll be tempted (strongly so) to just ‘call it quits’ (so to speak) right here.

- You are told that your Father has intentionally held back some information called “*hidden wisdom*” - He has deliberately hidden some wisdom and reserved it only for those who are “*perfect*” — and “*hidden wisdom*” is **NOT** the knowledge of God’s “*time past*” program with Israel vs. His “*but now*” program with the church, the body of Christ in this present dispensation of grace in which we live!!

- And by now all those sonship problems associated with reaching the “*simple*” sonship status have been dealt with—and you’ve moved on to another major development in your sonship life—enduring not only *the sufferings of this present time*, but encountering and enduring *the sufferings of Christ*!

- And so that *strange woman* cranks up her attacks another notch—and now you’re going to get some more ‘**flattering words**’ that will attempt to allure you and seduce you by means of God’s own words—but God’s words that pertain to something **other** than what He’s doing and engaged in with repossessing the heavenly places—and you’re going to receive subtle attempts to take you back under the law—and thereby destroy and ruin your sonship life!

- But your Father has written books that deals with all those issues in their proper order—and therefore you have not only gone through the book of Romans, but the books of I & II Corinthians and Galatians as well.



- (So that you don't wind up either a Corinthian or a Galatian in your thinking and in your conduct & behavior.)

- And all I'm after in going over just that much of a review—and saying the things I've said about what you will encounter in the 3 other books that make up your basic and fundamental education & edification as a Level I son—is to draw your attention to the fact that, that's an awful lot of information; there's a whole bunch of things that gets accomplished in Level I—in fact Level I contains the most information, comprises the longest period of time, and deals with the most doctrinal information than any other level of your sonship education!

- (A tremendous amount of things gets done in Level II! And I don't want to diminish or minimize the enormity of what goes on in Level I — because the truth is, it's more than just getting through the book of Romans! And I want you to realize the giant step that is being taken by the Table of Contents [which is normal for a table of contents to do] to go from Level I to Level II.)

- So once all that has been accomplished, you now come to the point where you have passed out of that freshman level—and now you are no longer an empty son, but you have come to the point of that sophomore level.

- And, for the first time, you now get one of those descriptive titles: "the simple" son.

- (And in Phase 2 of Level II, you'll receive your second descriptive title: "the young man")

- And my understanding is that Level II is described in the Table of Contents here in the book of Proverbs in chapter 1 and **verse 4**—and that it is divided into 2 distinct Phases:

Phase 1 of Level II: *"to give subtilty to the simple,"*

Phase 2 of Level II: *"to the young man knowledge and discretion."*

- And as we begin to look at some of the details of Level II, I just want to point out something that we noted back when we were first taking a look at these first 6 verses of Proverbs to determine the Levels and Phases of the sonship curriculum—and when we were looking at the terminology that makes up these 2 sentences—(one sentence that runs from vs. 1 through vs. 4; and the other sentence running from vs. 5 through vs. 6).

- (:4) is actually the final clause in one big sentence that began back in (:1) — and as you follow the sentence structure (not that we're going to diagram it), but if you were diagramming this sentence following English rules of grammar, you would know that when (:4) starts off with the 'To-infinitive' = "**To give**" — you know that this is NOT the issue of you, as a son, giving subilty to this 3rd party called "*the simple*" — because the rules of English sentence structure won't let you do that.

- "**To give**" describes what the proverbs are going to do now—or you might say what the sonship curriculum is going to do at this point—in other words, you are not going to be giving anything to anyone, you are going to be **getting** this thing called *subilty* from the wise curriculum your Father has put together to educate you.

- (I don't want to belabor this point, because we covered it before—but I just want to make sure we don't have any snags in our thinking here — ok?)

- Another thing I wanted to point out at the outset of looking at the details of Level II—is that, notice that we go from what could be described as a fairly graphic description and fairly detailed description of what's involved in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of Level I — and we come now to Level II, and it's all said in just over a dozen words!

- Level I = 22 words

- Level II = 13 words

(Phase 1 / Level 2 = 6 words)

(Phase 2 / Level 2 = 7 words)

- And because of that, you should realize that there's going to be an awful lot packed (information-wise) into the words that God has chosen to use to describe what Level II is all about.

- And another thing to make sure you bear in mind as we go through all of this is—that these Levels and even the Phases within the Levels all build one upon another—and Level II builds on Level I, so when we talk about "*subilty*" and when we talk about the *young man* getting the *knowledge* and *discretion*—it's not like you're now doing something completely different than you had been doing in Level I.

- The issue in all the sonship decision-making is going to carry on, but now there's going to be **an increasing to the capacity that's already there** in all those issues gained in Level I.

- And now all those things you learned in Level I (all the appreciation of the *wisdom and instruction*; the *perceiving of the words of understanding*; and all 4 of those sonship decision-making skills—are all going to now have to have additional features added to them, they are all going to have to be further enhanced and advanced capacity given to them— all of which involves the “*subtilty*” in Phase 1 of Level II, and the *discretionary* ability in Phase 2 of Level II.

- (In other words, you cannot just come along and start to talk about the words of (:4) — “*subtilty*” or “*the simple*” or “*the young man*” or “*knowledge*” or “*discretion*” — in just any old way—no—every word has to be kept within the **context** of the sonship education as given from the father to the son in the form of this Table of Contents.)

- So in Level II / Phase 1 of sonship education & edification, the Level I son who is now on the threshold of Level II now receives for the first time an appellative or descriptive title—he can now be called “*the simple*” son—and his Father is now going to give to him (by means of the curriculum the Father has wisely designed): “*subtilty*”

- But before we get into the issue of “*subtilty*” - I think it would be best, (since this is the first time we get one of those 4 distinctive titles), to get a grasp on what it means to be called “*simple*”.

- And first and foremost, you should appreciate (especially from all we’ve just said) that the son is **aptly** and **accurately** described at this point as “*simple*” — **that’s God’s word for it!**

- (You may be offended by that term—but just remember that’s the accurate, flawless, most excellent term chosen by God your Father to describe what you are at that Level!)

- By the way, the properly educated & edified son, as he exits Level I, knows he has a desperate need to be given *subtilty*— he knows why he has to be given *subtilty* at this point! And that’s because he knows he is a *simple* son!!!) [he knows he’s in a dangerous position & he knows his Adversary knows it]

- So we need to define the word *simple* within this very context of how a son who has advanced through the first Level of his education can now accurately be described as *simple*.

- What does it mean to be *simple*? In a context like this?
(If you’re using *simple* as an adjective to describe a person—or even a thing—what is that saying about them?)



- (Various definitions: not complex; unadorned; free from refinement; unsophisticated, plain, homely)

- NOTE: Most often, when you use the word *simple* to describe a person—especially today in the vast decline of the English language, it is most often than not used in a bad sense or a degrading sense or a belittling sense to refer to someone who is stupid or ignorant or silly or an idiot or dull minded (“Simple Simon”) — dimwitted, slow, or ... a... fool!

- But that’s NOT the sense it’s being used here—a son who has been properly educated & edified through Level I CANNOT be called “a fool”!

- Now, *simple* **can** be used to refer to the mental powers of a person—and we would assume it’s being used in a bad sense to say of someone’s mental powers that they are *simple* — (most would jump to the conclusion that we’re trying to say in a round-about way that the person is retarded)

- In fact, we’ve actually got an English word that properly expresses a person who is simple in this bad sense of the word — “**simpleton**”! (In fact, it is quite possible that the KJ translators had that word available [1650])

- But having *simple* mental powers isn’t really a bad thing at all—given the proper context!

- We’re dealing with someone who already possesses fundamental and rudimentary operating skills as a son at this point—**but that’s exactly where he’s supposed to be**—that’s not a slap in the face or anything along those lines—it’s not a slam against him—it’s a statement of reality!

- Well, when defining the word *simple*—one thing that helps us out is the prefix of the word “sim” - which is from a Latin prefix “sem” = **one** — such as in the word simplex (as opposed to duplex).

Definition (I) - ***simple*** = single, consists of one thing, uncompounded (nothing added to it), unmingled (not mixed), not complex.

- Which, if you think about it, all has some application to describing the son at the end of Level I.

- Because that definition points to the fact that you've completed 1 Level—you don't have a comprehensive education—or a comprehensive frame of reference—and really, in the whole scheme of things, your really only **one-dimensional** at this point.

- (see Eph. 3:18—*breadth, length, depth, height*)

- It's kind of like you've got the eyes of your understanding cracked open—you see the point of it all—at least to a certain degree—you appreciate something of what your Father's business is and how you fit into it—and you're enjoying the liberty of making sonship decisions (*wise, just, judgmental, and equitable*).

- But now you're going to be told and taught that there are many more dimensions to your sonship life than that.

- For instance, you're going to begin to think about something you've really not thought much about before—you're going to be told that you've got a **reputation** to uphold—and that your conduct and behavior is going to become paramount—and you're going to begin to be talked about in the heavenly places—and your **conversation** is going to be in heaven.

- And one of the big things you're beginning to see is that when you emulate your Father in making these sonship decisions according to what you've been instructed by Him—that when you do make those decisions according to the instruction you received by your Father—that the things you do reflect upon Him!

- But you're still one-dimensional.

Definition (II) - **simple** = deficient in knowledge or learning characterized by lack of acuteness or quick comprehension/apprehension.

- The son, at this point, needs to acknowledge that, while he's not a freshman by any means, he is a **sophomore** in his knowledge—and that has potential dangers connected with it—he's deficient in his knowledge—he has not mastered this curriculum—he knows enough to know that there's a whole bunch more that he has to know—he cannot be called a *young man* (let alone a *wise man* or *man of understanding*) - he lacks the quickness of comprehension or apprehension he's going to have in order to survive the attacks he'll receive from the *strange woman* in Level II and III....

- And because you are in that sophomoric stage, there's a temptation to think that you know more than you really do—to see yourself as more advanced than you really are.
- And a son who sees himself properly at the end of Level I will indeed determine that he is “*simple*” - he's got some things, but really he's a singular-dimensional son and deficient in the knowledge he needs to have.
- And—in a sense— this is where another word that so well defines what “*simple*” is in this context comes into play = “**unadorned**”
 - Kind of like a room that is empty except for the basic necessities for living there.
 - And a whole lot goes on to get to this! (That may sound strange—a lot of things had to go on in order to finally get to being “**unadorned**” - but it's true).
 - Because a lot had to be rooted up and thrown out—to clean house (so to speak) - and so this idea of being “*simple*” isn't so bad after all!
- But the accuracy of the Father in describing His son at this sophomoric stage as a “*simple*” son is so accurate because there is a tendency for someone who has learned a little to think he's learned a lot, and to think that “I really don't necessarily need to learn much more”—and that's all sophomoric thinking (Corinthian thinking).
- And God chose this word “***simple***” to drive home all this—to indicate to the son in no uncertain terms just exactly what he is at this point—even to the extent of using a term that carries with it some negativity and some stigma—(for instance, God didn't say you're a “singular” son, or a “plain” son, or anything along those lines—nor did He try to sugar coat it and come up with some politically correct term that would never be thought of in a negative light)!
- Because when you're given the simple truth of the matter, that word “***simple***” carries with it (with its negative connotation) the idea that when you're in this sophomoric, *simple* status—**you are very vulnerable and susceptible to being victimized by someone who does know more than you do—and does know some 'subtle' means to manipulate (or “*beguile*”) you out of your reward!!!**

- see Col. 2:1-4, 8, 18-23



- And the truth of the matter is, you, as a son, are going to have to be able to deal with a **very determined** and **highly skilled** (and very **successful**) Adversary who knows very well how to deal with adopted sons in Level II of their sonship edification—and if you **fail** to get the **subtilty** you're supposed to get in Phase 1 of Level II of your sonship education—you will become “*simple*” in the worst sense of the word!

- And you need to face up to the fact that when you finish Level I, you are still deficient, you still need some further skill, and you need to have additional features added to your education in order for you to be able to function properly—and to **not** get yourself victimized by the Satanic policy of evil!

- That's why this “*simple*” stage of your sonship education so aptly parallels the sophomore stage of your earthly education.

- You're not “fresh” any more—you have a foundation under your feet, and you know some things for sure—but the real temptation is to think you know more than you really do, but in reality, you're not even half-way through the education!

- And the reason that's such a dangerous thing—(to not honestly acknowledge your sophomore status and not acknowledge you're a ‘wise-moron’) - the reason that's dangerous is because the result of that kind of thinking is for you to say, “I've arrived, and I can now **stop** all this hard work I've been doing—I can **quit** now.”

- Arrogance becomes a real problem to a sophomore. And that's why it's so necessary for you—at the end of your education in Level I—to have effectually working in your inner man, the instruction of *wisdom* (especially) along with all the other 4 sonship decision-making skills—because in that very 1st decision-making skill of *wisdom*, you're taught “*not to think more highly than you ought to think*”!

- Your Father prepares you, in advance, in Phase 2 of Level I of your sonship education for what you are going to learn in Phase 1 of Level II! (wisely put together)

- Now we should have covered enough about what it means in the context of our sonship education, to be properly called “*the simple*” son in order to realize the excellency of our Father using that term to describe a son who has passed out of the freshman stage of his education and moved into his sophomore stage—and why that is the proper 1st appellative or descriptive title the son gets.

- We have come up with a dictionary-type definition for the term—and yet even that definition is taking into consideration the context here).

- But now we can **add** to that definition a working definition for what the *simple* son is—and we can define it in the 2 areas in which it properly applies:

(I) = It’s a state of being one-dimensional in the understanding and appreciation of your Father’s business.

(II) = It’s a state whereby your deficiencies in knowledge and lacking of acuteness of comprehension makes you vulnerable to the subtleties of the Satanic Policy of Evil—vulnerable to being attacked & victimized by it.

- Well, hopefully, if you have perceived properly what it means to be called “*simple*” at this point in your sonship education—you should clearly understand why you are to be given “subtilty” — why that makes sense—why the first part of the information you’re supposed to receive at the beginning of Level II consists of taking what you’ve already learned and adding to that (not so much more additional information), but adding to that *subtilty* so as to make you no longer a ‘greenhorn’ (so to speak) - to give you depth and acuteness into your Father’s business, as well as into the wiles and tactics of the Adversary and his PoE and how he is going to oppose & resist your sonship edification.

- (And really, the **solution** to being “*simple*” is to add to that, “subtilty”!)

- So, the next logical thing to do at this point is to turn our attention to the solution—to “*subtilty*” and acknowledge what that means.

4 To give subilty to the simple,

- What does “*subilty*” mean? (especially as something you’re going to get from your Father)

- (Usually, when thinking about this term in the Bible, more often than not, a couple of verses pop up in your thinking):

- II Corinthians 11:3

*But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his **subilty**, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

- Genesis 3:1

*Now the serpent was more **subtil** than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*

- (also note) Acts 13:9-10

- And because of this, the word *subtil* almost always generates a **bad** connotation when its first thought of.

- But you know that word isn’t being used in a bad sense here in Prov. 1:4 at all — so therefore, just as with the word *simple*, we’re going to see that *subtle* has 2 basic ways in which it can be used and applied— 1 in a **good** way; 2 in a **bad** sense.

- And in that bad sense, you’ve got it meaning things like, *crafty, cunning, sly, clever*, — but if you think about it, even those words can be used in a good sense as well.

- **Subtile** = from a Latinized form of a French word—**sub**, *under*, and **tela**, *a web or thread being woven fine*.

- Basically, subtile = **thin** ... rarefied, penetrating.

- Used figuratively, especially in a context of the thought process, (which is what is going on here in the educational process of a son), *subilty* means fine or acute in thought. (sharp, keen perception, sensitive and penetrating thought)



- **Subtilty** (in a dictionary-definition-type) = penetrating; acuteness in thought (as opposed to lacking acuteness—as we saw in the word simple); not dense; involving careful discrimination or fine points.

= **Extreme acuteness in penetrating and discriminating the finer points of a thing.**

- Before going on, I want to quote from an authority on English Synonyms—Charles Smith (‘Synonyms Discriminated’) [perhaps this will help clarify the term as we’re going to be using it here].

“*Subtle*” It is in itself a term of neither praise nor blame, which depends upon the use to which the quality which it expresses is put. The *subtle* mind analyzes motives, sees minute differences. In its full sense, it is applicable to nothing lower than the human understanding. The *subtle* intellect can follow out a subject into its complicated (complex) relations without becoming perplexed by its intricacies, or misled by its casual resemblances to that which may be alien to it. *Subtlety* has the quality of mental fineness, sensibility, delicacy. Yet *subtlety* of thought is not the same thing as delicacy of thought, for delicacy touches the truth only, *subtlety* may empty itself in creating fallacies. A *subtle* adversary is formidable, because he will dissect either truth or falsehood as far as it may suit his purpose.”

- It’s a readiness of apprehension, a keenness of penetration, even shrewdness, the capacity of the mind to see mentally into or through a thing, insight, acuteness in discernment.

- And when we talk about *subtilty* being this acuteness of thought and penetrating thought, it becomes the cure for the *simple*, because your going to be given some information and additional features to your already-working decision-making skills you learned in Level I—and by those additional features, you gain the capacity to see (or comprehend) some things **that are hidden by a veil and are impenetrable to common observation!**

- Therefore we can take our dictionary-type definition (“Extreme acuteness in penetrating and discriminating the finer points of a thing.”) — and we can easily and simply add to that the 2 major areas or 2 sides of the coin (so to speak) that the son is going to have developed by the effectual working of the forms of doctrine that go to make up Phase 1 of Level II