

The Promises of God - Lesson 9

Introduction:

1. In our study of God's promises we have observed from the Scriptures that:
 - a. they are "*exceeding great and precious*" (2 Peter 1:4a)
 - b. they are "trustworthy" -- God "*is not slack concerning His promise*" (2 Peter 3:9)
 - c. they are "effective" -- by them we can be "*partakers of the divine nature*" (2 Peter 1:4b)
 - d. some of them are "conditional."
2. In this lesson we are examining "God's promise to provide direction."
3. Our study is based on the principles revealed in Proverbs 3:5-6.

Discussion:

- I. IN VS.6b SOLOMON DECLARED GOD'S PROMISE TO PROVIDE DIRECTION
 - A. In the context Solomon was showing his son how to enjoy some special blessings, including:
 1. long life (vs.1-2)
 2. favor with God and man (vs.3-4)
 3. good health (vs.7-8)
 4. abundant physical blessings (vs.9-10).
 - B. In vs.6b Solomon mentioned another blessing to his son -- his paths being directed by God.
 - C. This is a promise that God has made to His people; however, it is conditional.
- II. IN VS.5-6a SOLOMON REVEALED THE CONDITIONS FOR THIS PROMISE
 - A. One condition is negative -- "*lean not unto thine own understanding*" (vs.5b).
 1. This condition is addressed many times in the Bible (Proverbs 3:7a; Romans 12:16b).
 2. We must avoid leaning unto our own understanding because:
 - a. man's ways result in death (Proverbs 14:12)
 - b. what seems right to us may not please the Lord (Proverbs 16:2; 21:2)
 - c. trusting in our own hearts is foolish (Proverbs 28:26)
 - d. man cannot direct his own steps by himself (Jeremiah 10:23).
 3. In addition to teaching us not to lean unto our own understanding, the Bible explains why we must avoid this practice.
 - B. Two conditions are positive.
 1. Rather than lean unto our own understanding, Solomon said:
 - a. "*trust in the Lord with all thine heart*"
 - b. "*in all thy ways acknowledge Him.*"
 2. These conditions indicate that we are to depend completely upon God.
 3. When we make any plans, when we make any decisions, and when we endeavor to anything, we must seek counsel from God.
 4. This involves:
 - a. searching His Word to know His instructions (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - b. talking to God through prayer, asking Him for wisdom (James 1:5).
 - C. The Lord will direct our paths if we will comply with these conditions.
- III. THESE PRINCIPLES ARE ILLUSTRATED IN THE BIBLE
 - A. Naaman illustrates the danger of leaning unto our own understanding (2 Kings 5:9-12).
 - B. Bible characters whose paths were directed by God:
 1. Joseph (Genesis 45:5, 7-8)
 2. Peter (Luke 5:1-6)
 3. Paul (Acts 16:6-12)

Conclusion:

1. God has promised to provide direction for His people, but this promise is conditional.
2. May God help us:
 - a. to comply with His conditions
 - b. to adopt the request made by David in Psalm 143:8.