

PROVERBS: ALIGNING TO GOD'S FIXED MORAL ORDER

Part II: Sparking The Reader's Motivation To Heed God's Fixed Moral Order

F. Motivating YOUNG MEN To STAY ALIGNED To God's Fixed Moral Order

(Proverbs 4:1-27)

I. Introduction

- A. In trying to motivate a young man or woman to heed God's *fixed* moral order, we may succeed in having him **BEGIN** well but find it hard to **keep** him at it as he may not see *instant* **BENEFITS** from doing so.
- B. Solomon addresses this need in Proverbs 4:1-27, giving us parents insight in handling it as follows:

II. Motivating YOUNG MEN To STAY ALIGNED To God's Fixed Moral Order, Proverbs 4:1-27.

- A. We recall Solomon structured Proverbs after the Egyptian literary *sboyet*, a genre designed to train young princes about an observed fixed moral order that must be heeded if one were to succeed as a ruler.
- B. However, as blessing arises from adhering to God's *fixed* order, one must *not SWERVE FROM* that order if he be blessed, a special problem for youths who tend to appreciate **immediate** gratifications.
- C. To get youths to think **long-term** and *stay aligned* to God's order, Solomon spoke to youths (as follows):
 - 1. Solomon challenged his sons to pay attention to his instruction and **not forsake** it, Proverbs 4:1-2.
 - 2. He then related how this instruction was **proven** over **TIME** in his **own** life, Proverbs 4:3-9: This news, coming from the wealthy, famous, revered Solomon (1 Kings 4:21-34) would impress a youth that **staying aligned** to God's fixed moral order would **work** for **him as well** over **time**.
 - 3. Having shared his testimony on **staying aligned** with God's order over time, Solomon admonished young men on **staying aligned** with God, and just **what** that **meant** in **PRACTICAL** terms, 4:10-27:
 - a. Solomon stated that were his son to heed what he said, his pathway would tread along "straight wagon-tracks", be typical of traversing clearly defined, established roadbeds, Proverbs 4:10-11.
 - b. Also, were his son to adhere to God's fixed moral order, Solomon noted his son would not have his steps hampered in life, and were he to run he would not trip up in calamity, Prov. 4:12.
 - c. Holding firmly to God's fixed moral order would produce a good life, Proverbs 4:13.
 - d. Solomon warned about veering off from God's fixed moral order to walk in the way of evil, for such shifting leads to a violent, sleepless life in contrast to the growing blessing of the upright, 4:14-18.
 - e. People who reject God's fixed moral order walk in darkness, i.e., they do not know what makes them stumble in life versus those who heed God's order and are not as surprised by calamity, 4:18-19!
 - f. Solomon repeated the need to stick with God's fixed moral order to affect his health, 4:20-22.
 - g. Finally, Solomon summarized broad **characteristics** of **staying aligned** with God's fixed moral order: (a) Sticking with God's fixed moral order included guarding the spiritual, emotional and mental areas of the heart, for out of these come all the sources of one's ability to function, Proverbs 4:23. (b) Perversity of speech is to be put away to adhere to this fixed moral order, Proverbs 4:24. (c) Shifting in one's goals causes one to depart from that order, so one should be steadfast to the upright goals he has set in accord with God's fixed moral order, Prov. 4:25. (d) Sticking to God's fixed moral order makes one **sensibly** plan for **obtainable** goals, traversing a road that is **level** instead of winding upward in undue hardship, Prov. 4:26. (e) Sticking to God's fixed moral order causes one to stick to his upright plans and methods without swerving from them, Prov. 4:27!

Lesson: (1) We can **MOTIVATE** a youth to **STICK** with God's fixed moral order by (a) sharing the testimony of the blessings we have enjoyed during our own years of adherence to it (b) while also speaking of the practical benefits of living this way in terms of minimizing calamity, minimizing our being blind-sided with trouble and maximizing our degree of peace and insight as opposed to experiencing the calamity and ignorance of the wayward. (2) We then can supply **TIPS** on a youth's **DIAGNOSING** just **I F** he **IS ADHERING** to God's fixed order as follows: sticking to it leads (a) to traveling settling established paths, (b) living with insight on what is going on around one's self and with his own affairs, (c) good communication with others, (d) setting workable goals (e) and sticking with those goals without changing course with hardship often in the midst in various ventures!