

“Through the Bible in a Year with Pastor Don and the FBC Family”
November 3, 2016

1 Kings 3:1–4:34. God’s gift of wisdom to Solomon and beginnings of his double-mindedness.

Mark 3:1–3:35. Jesus’ authority rejected—He is called insane and demonic.

Proverbs 1:13–19. Warning not to follow the wrong crowd.

COMMENTS.

1 Kings 3:1–4:34. Solomon certainly made a good beginning, for he “loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father” (3:3); but a good beginning doesn’t guarantee a good ending. Saul, the first king of Israel, started out with humility and victory, but he ended up being rejected by the Lord and committing suicide on the battlefield. **3:2-4:** God purposed that the people of Israel have a central place of worship and not imitate the nations in Canaan by building “high places” wherever they chose. When Israel entered the land, they were instructed to destroy these “high places” and the idols that were worshiped there. However, until the temple was built and centralized worship was established in the land, the people of Israel worshiped the Lord in the “high places.” In time, the phrase “high place” began to be used to mean “a place of worship” and the Jews worshiped Jehovah at these temporary shrines. In **3:16-28** evidence is given to demonstrate that Solomon received the gift of wisdom. An added blessing Solomon receives is the awe and respect of the people. In **chapter 4** he organizes his administration efficiently (**4:1-19**). Among his many assets, Solomon’s wisdom is his greatest (**4:29–34**). Wise men were known in other countries; ancient documents of wisdom have been found by archaeologists. But Solomon’s wisdom exceeds that of any and all others. Solomon has a natural propensity to wisdom (he chooses wisdom in the first place, 3:9) but the Lord greatly enhances and enlarges it. His knowledge and wisdom range over the entire spectrum of creation, human life, and its affairs. He is given the gift of expression in sayings, poems, and music.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. Solomon starts with massive advantages, yet we see early stages of his moral and spiritual double-mindedness that would come to destroy him. Solomon marries a princess from Egypt, the land of physical and spiritual bondage. He may have intended to strengthen the border between Israel and Egypt, but the marriage is contrary to Mosaic ordinances (Deut. 7:3; 17:16–17). Solomon’s use of high places (hilltops or ridges) which Canaanites also used as fertility worship centers is contrary to Mosaic legislation (Deut. 12:1–4; allowance for places of worship other than the central place had been made [Deut. 12:5–19]). That no house of worship had yet been built is one explanation for Solomon’s use of high places; the tabernacle did not fulfill the requirement of that single place. Solomon undoubtedly is sincere in his worship (**3:4–15**). His thousand burnt offerings, offered at Gibeon where the Mosaic tabernacle is, are acceptable to the Lord. Even with so much wisdom, because he did not continue to walk with the Lord *by proper knowledge and proper love*, he would end up dying in misery and shame, forsaking the Lord. As we have noted many times, love is an act of the will and while it depends on the mind, the mind is never the efficient cause of love. No matter how much wisdom one may have, it is the will that drives the person to will’s highest desired “good.” The will has enormous power over the

intellect to suppress what it finds distasteful. The will always turns the mind to what it truly desires. The double-minded person is like an unfaithful husband or wife who wants to love both the spouse and another. James' directive for double-mindedness is to purify the heart (James 1:8). Apart from cleansing the heart, 2nd person love will continue to be undermined until one comes to the point where there is no longer a desire to be close to the spouse or seek the spouse's good for his or her own sake. In effect, the spouse becomes a tool instead of a person. The same thing happens with our relationship with God: He becomes a tool or an object for something else. He who sets his love on the world instead of God becomes a spiritual adulterer and ceases to love God *as a Person*: he stops desiring God's good for His own sake and stops striving to get nearer God. James 4:4, *Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.* 1 John 2:15, *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world-- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life-- is not of the Father but is of the world.*

Mark 3:1–3:35. The Herodians' and Pharisees' rejection of Jesus contrasts with the common people's acceptance. Jesus' popularity exceeded John's (3:7–8), extending into the Gentile areas of Lebanon and Transjordan. The silencing of demons suggests that the time was not yet right for the revelation of Jesus' divine sonship. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit involves a stubborn refusal to acknowledge God at work in Jesus and attribution of that work to Satan (3:29-30). Repentance and forgiveness are not possible for those who consistently reject God's saving work in Christ. Note how Jesus defines His family as the community of those who enter into a student-Teacher relation with Him as per "those who sat around him" in 3:34 and those who obey God's will in 3:35.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. In verse 21, Jesus' own family thought He was insane. In verse 22, the scribes thought He was demon possessed. We see the same thing in John 10:20 *And many of them said, "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?"* Paul experienced similar reaction from unbelievers in Acts 26:24 *Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!"* However, Paul admitted to the Corinthians that if he was indeed crazy, it was according to the world, and it was only because of his devotion to God (2 Cor 5:13). Many contemporary dedicated Christians are misunderstood and persecuted by family members and society because of their dedication to God. They are viewed as crazy for being so serious about the spiritual life, of putting God, the Word of God, fellow believers, and the local church above things of this world. As America continues to become more secular, fewer will understand the spiritual dynamics found in Christ and the first followers, and so we can expect more persecution from family members, society, and even those who call themselves Christians. In the eyes of the unsaved world, we are all "crazy" to set our hearts on Christ rather than the riches of the world and govern our lives by His norms and standards rather than the world's. There really is only one way to break free from fear of being considered a kook by society and that is not to live for the praise of man and to live the Christ-centered life *by proper knowledge and proper love*: 2 Corinthians 5:13 *For if we are*

beside ourselves, it is for God . . . 14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died. Galatians 1:10, For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

Proverbs 1:13–19. After appealing to a young man to stay on the right path, **verses 15-18** expound upon the prohibition with the warning that the gang members are all headed for an early grave. **Verses 18-19** is a concluding warning about a life of crime. The heart of the warning is that crime is self-destructive: gang members are really ambushing themselves.

Life in God by second person proper knowledge and proper love. In verses 11-14, we have the voice of temptation. In this context, the voice is to satisfy evil desires, to find enjoyment in doing evil. However, the voice of the temptress also comes offering many things that seem pleasant. She has many apples for us to consider. The only true solution is to no longer see these apples, that lead to forsaking God, as goods. However, the only way that these juicy apples of Satan are no longer seen as good is *by life in God by proper knowledge and proper love*. Consider what Paul thought of all of the apples/glory that this world offers and why he thought this way: Philippians 3:8, *Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as dung, that I may gain Christ.* For Paul, these apples were viewed as dung in comparison to knowing and loving Christ. To be tempted by the riches and approbation of the world and overcome this temptation requires virtue, but to not even be tempted by the world's goods because of a will that seeks God is virtue on a much deeper and greater level. In other words, a man who is not tempted by an evil has far more integrity in his will than one who is tempted by evil. In sum, the former no longer loves and sees evil as a good in some way and the latter sees evil for what it is and has cultivated a will for the goodness of God *by knowledge and by love*. As the maxim goes, "as the end appears to a man, so he is." Moreover, whatever he feeds his will, his will becomes, and what his will becomes will determine and drive his life.

Life in God by proper knowledge and by proper love,

Pastor Don