



# SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

## LESSONS I HAVE LEARNED

**KEY PASSAGE:** Proverbs 3:1-12 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE:** Joshua 1:6-9 | Psalm 27:14 | Isaiah 40:8; 64:4  
Luke 6:38; 24:49 | John 15:1-5; 17:23 | Acts 5:29 | Romans 1:16; 7:14-25; 8:28 | 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 | Galatians 2:20

### ► SUMMARY

**Christians have two opposing options for life—one leads to peace, the other to stress.**

We can either be guided by biblical principles or by feelings and the pressures of the moment; be led by the Spirit or influenced by our environment; live confidently under God's direction and for His purpose or constantly react to whatever circumstances arise.

### ► SERMON POINTS

The Bible is God's instruction book for living and is filled with godly principles by which the Lord wants us to live. Proverbs 3:1-12 is one of many passages of wise instruction. My purpose in this sermon is to share some of the most important principles that have guided me for all these years. There are many more, but these have been the most influential in my life and the ones for which I am very grateful.

#### **1. Obey God and leave all the consequences to Him.**

In many ways, this principle is foundational for all the others. In order to live by it, we must first know what God wants us to do. That's why learning to listen to Him is essential. Otherwise, we could easily act on our own, rather than being guided by the Lord and His Word.

**2. Trust the Lord for every need in your life.** One reason we're sometimes reluctant to obey God is because we want Him to give us all the details about what will happen if we do. But the Lord isn't obligated to reveal the future to us. He wants us to trust Him with

the unknown consequences. That's why it may take courage to step out in obedience.

One of the ways God builds trust is through trials. When we face opposition, failures, and doubts, our trust may waiver because we don't understand what He's doing. That's when we must remember that the Lord is trustworthy. We can rest in absolute assurance that He'll keep every promise He's made. Instead of looking at the circumstances and worrying about the situation, He invites us to rest in His faithfulness. In fact, it's when we feel hopeless and helpless in our hardships that we discover how trustworthy God is.

#### **3. Wait upon God for His direction and timing.**

Oftentimes we think we know the best course of action, but the Lord's the only one who knows the future. That's why we should wait on Him to guide us with His infinite wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. During the wait, He works in our lives to prepare us, puts together the circumstances according to His perfect timing and manner, and prepares what He knows is best for us. It may not be what we want, but He never makes mistakes. The Lord always acts on behalf of those who wait for Him (Isa. 64:4).

**4. Give generously to the Lord's work.** There's an amazing promise in 2 Corinthians 9:8 and 10, "God is able to make all grace overflow to you, so that, always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed ... Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness."

When we give generously, God commits to supplying our needs and making it possible for us to continue contributing to His work in and through the church. The motive should never be to make money by giving, but to walk obediently before almighty God. Generosity protects us from greed, selfishness, and materialism and teaches us to rely on the Lord to provide whatever He desires us to have.

**5. Admit that you can't live the Christian life because Christ is the one who lives it through you.** This truth is expressed in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." Our best efforts apart from abiding in Him will result in failure. We must rely fully on Christ to transform and empower us.

**6. Accept that God loves you unconditionally.** When Jesus prayed for His followers, He said that the Father loved them just as He loved Him (John 17:23). There's nothing we have to do to earn that love because it's not based on us but on the nature of God and our union with His Son. There's nothing we can do to make God love us more or less, or separate us from His love.

**7. Know that God is in absolute control of every circumstance of life.** We are not victims of our circumstances or others' actions because the Lord is sovereign over everything—even painful and difficult situations. "We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). This verse assures us that our heavenly Father is engineering every circumstance for our good and His glory. His sovereignty should be a great source of comfort because we live under the canopy of divine love, knowledge, wisdom, and power. He is always faithful and can take great adversity and use it to build and strengthen us.

**8. Depend upon the Holy Spirit for everything.** God wants us to recognize our absolute dependence upon

Him. It's the only way we'll grow and be protected from pride. As a child matures, he becomes more independent, but in the spiritual realm, increased dependence on the Father demonstrates maturity. He gave us His Spirit to teach us His Word, transform us into the image of His Son, and empower us to obey and serve Him.

**9. Make your personal time of meditation with God the priority of your life.** You can't do anything more foundational, fruitful, or valuable than this. Begin each day by spending time with the Lord in prayer and the Scripture. Reflect on God's Word and your life, humble yourself before Him in worship and praise, and obediently apply what you've learned.

**10. Recognize that the gospel of Jesus Christ, when clearly presented in the power of the Holy Spirit, can penetrate the most hardened heart, transform that life, and change his or her eternal destiny.** Never be ashamed to share the gospel because "it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16).

#### ► RESPONSE

- Is your life guided by biblical principles, or are you letting circumstances, feelings, and pressures dictate the course of your life? How would living by God's principles free you from worry, burdens, and fears?
- Does God's sovereignty over every event in your life comfort or disquiet you? Why? How does knowing you're dependent on the Lord in every way make you feel?
- Read over these 10 principles again. Notice how many of them require trust in God instead of self-reliance. What fears or desires tend to hinder your trust in the Lord?

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