



STRUCTURAL INSIGHTS: PROVERBS 3:21-35



- Pr 3:21** My son,
let them not depart from your eyes—
Keep sound wisdom and discretion;
22 So they will be life to your soul
And grace to your neck.
- 23** Then you will walk safely in your way,
And your foot will not stumble.
- 24** When you lie down, you will not be afraid;
Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
- 25** Do not be afraid of sudden terror,
Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
- 26** For the LORD will be your confidence,
And will keep your foot from being caught.
- 27** Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
When it is in the power of your hand to do so.
- 28** Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give *it*,"
When *you have* it with you.
- 29** Do not devise evil against your neighbor,
For he dwells by you for safety's sake.
- 30** Do not strive with a man without cause,
If he has done you no harm.
- 31** Do not envy the oppressor,
And choose none of his ways;
- 32** For the perverse *person* is an abomination to the LORD,
But His secret counsel is with the upright.
- 33** The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked,
But He blesses the home of the just.

34 Surely He scorns the scornful,
But gives grace to the humble.

35 The wise shall inherit glory,
But shame shall be the legacy of fools.
You and The Lord → You and the Neighbor → You and the Wicked
[Loving God → Loving Others]

Mt 22:36 "Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?" **37** Jesus said to him, " *'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'* **38** This is *the* first and great commandment. **39** And *the* second *is* like it: *'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* **40** On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

TRUE LOVE FOR GOD always results in kindness toward others. The two are inseparable. To harden my heart against one who needs my kindness is to turn away from the face of God. (David W. Baker, Elaine A. Heath, and Morven R. Baker, *More Light on the Path: Daily Scripture Readings in Hebrew and Greek* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998), 41.)

Jas 3:10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

Proverbs 3:21-26 You and the Lord: Watch, Walk, Wait

Pr 3:21 My son, let them not depart from your eyes— **Keep** sound wisdom and discretion; **22** So they will be life to your soul And grace to your neck. **23** Then you will walk safely in your way, And your foot will not stumble. **24** When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet. **25** Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes; **26** For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

Keywords:

- **Not Depart:** escape from one's view on the path
- **Keep (Command):** preserve, keep, guard, watch over
- **Sound Wisdom (Thinking wisely):** The capacity for understanding for proper thinking
- **Discretion (Acting wisely):** The ability for wise decisions and proper judgments
- **Grace:** favor of God
- **Stumble:** fall and be injured

- **Afraid (Pr 3:24):** fear and trembling
- **Afraid (Pr 3:25):** great fear, distressful circumstance
- **Trouble:** to be ruined
- **Confidence:** trust mentally, physically, and spiritually
- **Caught:** Ensnared

Process:

- **Command for the Son (Watch):**
 - Guard Your Godly Thinking and Living || Pr 3:21b Keep Sound Wisdom and Discretion
 - **Don't Leave the Godly Path || Pr 3:21a** Don't let them out of your sight/path
- **Purpose:**
 - **Salvation & Sanctification || Pr 3:22** Life to your soul & Grace to your neck
- **Product (Walk & Wait)**
 - **Be obedient to God and not sin significantly || Pr 3:23** Then you will walk safely in your way, And your foot will not stumble.
 - **Sleep well in your integrity, not fearing judgment || Pr 3:24** When you lie down, you will not be afraid; Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.
 - **Not worried about the wicked and their plans || Pr 3:25** Do not be afraid of sudden terror, Nor of trouble from the wicked when it comes;
 - **Trusting in the sovereignty of God || Pr 3:26a** For the LORD will be your confidence, And will keep your foot from being caught.

Table Talk: What are some ways to deepen our intimacy with the Lord?

Proverbs 3:27-31 You and the Neighbor: Five-Fold "Do Not"

Pr 3:27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in the power of your hand to do so. **28** Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it," When you have it with you. **29** Do not devise evil against your neighbor, For he dwells by you for safety's sake. **30** Do not strive with a man without cause, If he has done you no harm. **31** Do not envy the oppressor, And choose none of his ways;

Keywords:

- **Withhold:** refuse and deprive
- **Good:** kindness, mercy, moral obligation
- **Due:** owner, rightful possessor, master, lord, higher authority
- **Power:** strength and ability
- **Devise:** plan in detail
- **Evil:** disaster, misery, misfortune
- **Strive:** quarrel, contest, argue, attack, lawsuit
- **Envy:** jealousy, get heated, annoyed, tormented over
- Oppressor (two Hebrew words): violent (hamas) man (ish)
- **Choose:** desire, prefer, pursue

Quote: The way in which we repay any kind of debt is a mark of character. (Neil S. Wilson, *The Handbook of Bible Application* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2000), 135.)

Process: Moving from the Moral to the Evil

1. **(Pr 3:27) Higher Authority:** Do not withhold "moral obligations" when you are able
 - a. **Ro 13:7** Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes *are due*, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.
 - b. **Ga 6:10** Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.
 - c. **Tt 2:14** who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.
 - d. **Jas 2:15** If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, **16** and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit?
2. **(Pr 3:28) Neighbor:** Do not "delay" "material ownership" when you have it (you are able)
 - a. **Le 19:13** 'You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning.

3. **(Pr 3:29) Neighbor:** Do not "devise" "misfortunate opportunities" when you're their protection
 - a. **Mic 2:1** Woe to those who devise iniquity, And work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, Because it is in the power of their hand.

4. **(Pr 3:30) People:** Do not "pick a fight" with others who intend you no evil
 - a. **Pr 22:24** Make no friendship with an angry man, And with a furious man do not go, **25** Lest you learn his ways And set a snare for your soul.
 - b. **Pr 29:22** An angry man stirs up strife, And a furious man abounds in transgression.
 - c. **Ro 12:18** If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. **19** Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord. **20** Therefore "*If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.*" **21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
 - d. **2 Ti 2:14** Remind *them* of these things, charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers.

5. **(Pr 3:31) Opressor:** Do not "envy" the violent man or "prefer" his ways
 - a. **Pr 23:17** Do not let your heart envy sinners, But *be zealous* for the fear of the LORD all the day;
 - b. **Ps 37:7** Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. **8** Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—*it* only *causes* harm. **9** For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.

Two Key Ideas: Selfishness & Antagonistic

Implication: As one becomes morally compromised, their treatment of others becomes more fleshly. Failing to honor authority, leads into self-centeredness, unwilling to be inconvenienced, and subtle ways of selfishness. As the heart hardens towards others, one begins to think evil of others, becomes aggressive to others, and their perspective and priorities shift, envying and preferring a "violent person's" path.

Table Talk: What are some ways to serve our neighbors?

Proverbs 3:32-35 You and the Wicked: Consider the Contrast

32 For the perverse *person is* an abomination to the LORD, But His secret counsel *is* with the upright. **33** The curse of the LORD *is* on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the home of the just. **34** Surely He scorns the scornful, But gives grace to the humble. **35** The wise shall inherit glory, But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

Keywords:

- **Perverse:** devious, crooked, misleading, incorrect path
- **Scorn:** mock, shows no respect
- **Legacy:** increasing shame and disgrace

Consider the Contrast	THE WICKED	THE RIGHTEOUS
Affections	Perverse Person → Abomination to the Lord (Distance/Relationship) [Not to be envied]	Upright → Secret Counsel (of the Lord) (Intimacy/Relationship) [To be desired]
Actions	The curse of the LORD <i>is</i> on the house of the wicked	But He blesses the home of the just
Advantage	Surely He scorns the scornful	But gives grace to the <u>humble</u>
Apex	But shame shall be the legacy of <u>fools</u> .	The <u>wise</u> shall inherit glory

1. God Will Get Close to the Nonviolent Person (v. 32).
2. God Will Bless Nonviolent Homes (v. 33).
3. God Will Help the Nonviolent Person in Times of Trouble (v. 34).
4. God Will Reward the Nonviolent Person with Honor (v. 35). (Robert J. Morgan, *Nelson's Annual Preacher's Sourcebook*, 2008 Edition. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2007), 266.)

Implication: Solomon reveals the contrast between the perverse and upright. For the perverse, there is nothing but trouble and judgment. For the upright, there is nothing but grace and glory. It's an incredible contrast between the unbeliever and believer.

Table Talk: Is there a difference between the OT and NT when it comes to the wicked and the believers response to them?