

Proverbs 3 Handout

Proverbs 1:1–6

1 These are the proverbs of Solomon, David's son, king of Israel.

2 Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise.

3 Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair.

1:4 These proverbs will give insight to the simple,



Proverbs 9:10

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

RC Sproul:

We need to make some important distinctions about the biblical meaning of "fearing" God. These distinctions can be helpful, but they can also be a little dangerous. When Luther struggled with that, he made this distinction, which has since become somewhat famous: He distinguished between what he called a *servile* fear and a *filial* fear.

The servile fear is a kind of fear that a prisoner in a torture chamber has for his tormentor, the jailer, or the executioner. It's that kind of dreadful anxiety in which

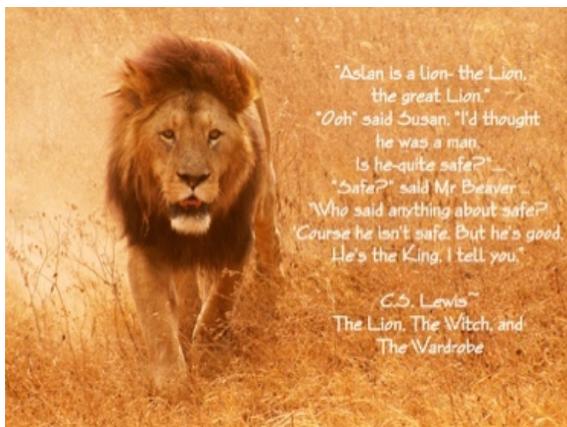
someone is frightened by the clear and present danger that is represented by another person. Or it's the kind of fear that a slave would have at the hands of a malicious master who would come with the whip and torment the slave.

Beryl Markham. The country was gray-green and dry, and the sun lay on it closely, making the ground hot under my bare feet. There was no sound, no wind. Even the lion made no sound, coming swiftly behind me.

What I remember most clearly of the moment that followed...a scream that was barely a whisper, a blow that struck me to the ground, and as I buried my face in my arms I felt the lion's teeth close on [my flesh].

I remained conscious, but I closed my eyes and tried not to be. It was not so much the pain as it was the sound. The sound of the lion's roar in my ears will only be duplicated... when the gates of hell slip their wobbly hinges one day...

It was an immense roar that encompassed the world and dissolved me in it. I shut my eyes very tight and lay still under the weight of the lion's paws.



Without the fear of the Lord, we make final decisions based on our faulty human understanding. When we incorporate the fear of the Lord into every moment of our lives, we make decisions based upon His approval. We live with the knowledge that the Creator of the universe is intimately involved in our every move. He sees, knows, and evaluates all our choices, and

we will answer to Him.

Proverbs 21:19 Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and nagging wife.

Proverbs 27:15-16 A continual dripping on a rainy day and a contentious wife are alike. Trying to keep her in check is like stopping a wind storm or grabbing oil with your right hand.

Proverbs 25:24 It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.

Proverbs 12:4 A wife with strength of character is the crown of her husband, but the wife who disgraces him is like bone cancer.

Proverbs 14:1 A wise woman builds her home, but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands.

Authored by Reddit user MissFranJanSan

My "Aha Moment" happened because of a package of hamburger meat. I asked my husband to stop by the store to pick up a few things for dinner, and when he got home, he plopped the bag on the counter. I started pulling things out of the bag, and realized he'd gotten the 70/30 hamburger meat – which means it's 70% lean and 30% fat.

I asked, "What's this?"

"Hamburger meat," he replied, slightly confused.

"You didn't get the right kind," I said.

"I didn't?" He replied with his brow furrowed. " Was there some other brand you wanted or something?"

"No. You're missing the point, " I said. "You got the 70/30. I always get at least the 80/20."

He laughed. "Oh. That's all? I thought I'd really messed up or something."

That's how it started. I launched into him. I berated him for not being smarter. Why would he not get the more healthy option? Did he even read the labels? Why can't I trust him? Do I need to spell out every little thing for him in minute detail so he gets it right?

Also, and the thing I was probably most offended by, why wasn't he more observant? How could he not have noticed over the years what I always get? Does he not pay attention to anything I do?

As he sat there, bearing the brunt of my righteous indignation and muttering responses like, "I never noticed," "I really don't think it's that big of a deal," and "I'll get it right next time,"

I saw his face gradually take on an expression that I'd seen on him a lot in recent years. It was a combination of resignation and demoralization. He looked eerily like our son does when he gets chastised. That's when it hit me.

"Why am I doing this? I'm not his mom."

I suddenly felt terrible. And embarrassed for myself. He was right. It really wasn't anything to get bent out of shape over. And there I was doing just that. Over a silly package of hamburger meat that he dutifully picked up from the grocery store just like I asked. If I had specific requirements, I should have been clearer.

I didn't know how to gracefully extract myself from the conversation without coming across like I have some kind of split personality, so I just mumbled something like, "Yeah. I guess we'll make do with this. I'm going to start dinner."

He seemed relieved it was over and he left the kitchen. And then I sat there and thought long and hard about what I'd just done. And what I'd been doing to him for years, probably. The "hamburger meat moment," as I've come to call it, certainly wasn't the first time I scolded him for not doing something the way I thought it should be done.

He was always putting something away in the wrong place. Or leaving something out. Or neglecting to do something altogether. And I was always right there to point it out to him.

Why do I do that? How does it benefit me to constantly belittle my husband? The man that I've taken as my partner in life. The father of my children. The guy I want to have by my side as I grow old.

Two cases in point. #1. I recently found a shard of glass on the kitchen floor. I asked him what happened. He said he broke a glass the night before. When I asked why he didn't tell me, he said, "I just cleaned it up and threw it away because I didn't want you to have a conniption fit over it."

#2. I was taking out the trash and found a pair of blue tube socks in the bin outside. I asked him what happened and why he'd thrown them away. He said, "They accidentally got in the wash with my jeans. Every time I put in laundry, you feel the need to remind me not to mix colors and whites. I didn't want you to see them and reinforce your obvious belief that I don't know how to wash clothes after 35 years."

So it got to the point where he felt it was a better idea — or just plain easier — to cover things up than admit he made a human error. What kind of environment have I created where he feels he's not allowed to make mistakes?

And let's look at these "offenses": A broken glass. A pair of blue tube socks. Both common mistakes that anyone could have made. But he was right. Regarding the glass, I not only pointed out his clumsiness for breaking it, but also due to the shard I found, his sad attempt at cleaning it up.

As for the socks, even though he'd clearly stated it was an accident, I gave him a verbal lesson about making sure he pays more attention when he's sorting clothes. Whenever any issues like this arise, he'll sit there and take it for a little bit, but always responds in the end with something like, "I guess it just doesn't matter that much to me."

What this constant nagging and harping does is send a message to our husbands that says "we don't respect you.

We don't think you're smart enough to do things right. We expect you to mess up. And when you do, you'll be called out on it swiftly and without reservation." Given this kind of negative reinforcement over time, he feels like nothing he can do is right (in your eyes).

If he's confident with himself and who he is, he'll come to resent you. If he's at all unsure about himself, he'll start to believe you, and it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Neither one is a desirable, beneficial outcome to you, him or the marriage.

As I sat and thought about it, I realized my husband didn't display the same behavior toward me. I even thought about some of the times I really did make mistakes.

The time I backed into the gate and scratched the car? He

never said a word about it. The time I was making dinner, got distracted by a call from my mom, and burned it to cinders? He just said, "we can just order a pizza." The time I tried to put the new patio furniture together and left his good tools out in the rain? "Accidents happen," was his only response.

I shuddered to think what I would have said had the shoe been on the other foot and he'd made those mistakes.

The bottom line in all this is that I chose this man as my partner. He's not my servant. He's not my employee. He's not my child. I didn't think he was stupid when I married him – otherwise I wouldn't have. He doesn't need to be reprimanded by me because I don't like the way he does some things.

When I got to that point mentally, it then made me start thinking about all the good things about him. He's intelligent. He's a good person. He's devoted. He's awesome with the kids. And he does always help around the house. (Just not always to my liking!)

Even more, not only does he refrain from giving me grief when I make mistakes or do things differently than him, he's always been very agreeable to my way of doing things. And for the most part, if he notices I prefer to do something a certain way, he tries to remember it in the future. Instead of focusing on those wonderful things, I just harped on the negative.

If we keep attempting to make our husbands feel small, or foolish, or inept because they occasionally mess up (and I use that term to also mean "do things differently than us"), then eventually they're going to stop trying to do things. Or worse yet, they'll actually come to believe those labels are true.

In my case it's my husband of 12+ years I'm talking about. The same man who thanklessly changed my car tire in the rain. The guy who taught our kids to ride bikes. The person who stayed with me at the hospital all night when my mom was sick. The man who has always worked hard to make a decent living and support his family.

He knows how to change the oil in the car. He can re-install my computer's operating system. He lifts things for me that are too heavy and opens stuck jar lids. He shovels the sidewalk. He can put up a ceiling fan. He fixes the toilet when it won't stop running. I can't (or don't) do any of those things.

And yet I give him grief about a dish out of place. He's a good man who does a lot for me, and doesn't deserve to be harassed over little things that really don't matter in the grand scheme of things.

Since my revelation, I try to catch myself when I start to nag. I'm not always 100% consistent, but I know I've gotten a lot better. And I've seen that one little change make a big improvement in our relationship. Things seem more relaxed. We seem to be getting along better. It think we're both starting to see each other more as trusted partners, not adversarial opponents at odds with each other in our day-to-day existence. I've even come to accept that sometimes his way of doing things may be better!

It takes two to make a partnership. No one is always right and no one is always wrong. And you're not always going to see eye-to-eye on every little thing. It doesn't make you smarter, or superior, or more right to point out every little thing he does that's not to your liking. Ladies, remember, it's just hamburger meat.

Proverbs 25:24 It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.

Proverbs 12:4 A wife with strength of character is the crown of her husband, but the wife who disgraces him is like bone cancer.

Proverbs 14:1 A wise woman builds her home, but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands.

Proverbs 31:10–31

10 An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.

11 The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain.

12 She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.

13 She looks for wool and flax and works with her hands in delight.

14 She is like merchant ships; She brings her food from afar.

15 She rises also while it is still night and gives food to her household and portions to her maidens.

16 She considers a field and buys it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.

17 She girds herself with strength And makes her arms strong.

18 She senses that her gain is good; Her lamp does not go out at night.

19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hands grasp the spindle.

20 She extends her hand to the poor, And she stretches out her hands to the needy.

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household, For all her household are clothed with scarlet.

22 She makes coverings for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple.

23 Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.

24 She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies belts to the tradesmen.

25 Strength and dignity are her clothing, And she smiles at the future.

26 She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

27 She looks well to the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness.

28 Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying:

29 "Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all."

30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

Proverbs 1:24 "Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention;

25 And you neglected all my counsel And did not want my reproof;

26 I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes,

27 When your dread comes like a storm And your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you.

28 "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently but they will not find me,

29 Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the LORD.

30 "They would not accept my counsel, They spurned all my reproof.

31 "So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way And be satiated with their own devices.

32 "For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them.

33 "But he who listens to me shall live securely And will be at ease from the dread of evil."