



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

## Greatness – Growing In Character (Proverbs 1:3-7)

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*A simple definition of wisdom is “the ability to learn from both instruction and the experience of others.” Learning from our own experience can be time consuming, costly, and hazardous to relationships. How do you get useful feedback as you grow?*

### INTRODUCTION

Much of what happens in your life is **not about you!** Jesus was asked the meaning of a tragedy in his neighborhood. A tower in Siloam fell and eighteen people lost their lives. Jesus was asked if God had sent judgment on those victims. He explained that those speaking should be more concerned with their eternal destiny than loss of life here on earth. Jesus said: *“Do you think that they were more guilty of sin than all others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”* (Luke 13:4-5). These were being given more time to ask forgiveness. What human suffering has been avoided because of your leadership and service?

### FEEDBACK FROM GOD

*Proverbs 3:11-12 My Child, do not despise the LORD’s discipline or be weary of His reproof, for the LORD reproves the one He loves, as a father the son in whom He delights. (NRSV)*

God finds it necessary to apply fatherly discipline to even the wisest of His children. Rather than resist, we should rejoice in this opportunity to increase wisdom and blessing. *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing* (James 1:2-4).

**Discipline is tough!** Pray about your current trial and ask God to show you any sin. Stop sinning and He may end the period of tribulation. King David asked God for mercy and received a reprieve (1Chronicles 20:17).

**Is there no sin revealed** in your life? Perhaps you are being “pruned” so that you will produce more fruit!

*Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit* (John 15:2b). God, the master vinedresser, will cause us some pain. This is to keep us focused on the fruitful works that He has designated for us to accomplish. **Do you sometimes go in several directions, spreading yourself thin, and producing “fruit” that is not very appealing?**

### FEEDBACK FROM OTHERS

*Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens the wits of another. (NRSV)*

Solicit personal feedback from family and close friends. Take notes. Consider yourself in training for a prize that will last a lifetime! Use judgment when listening to positive comments from those who may be trying to gain your favor for their own gain. *Faithful are the wounds of a friend but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy* (Proverbs 27:6). **Reflect on some helpful feedback and unhelpful feedback that others have given you.**

### BE SCHOLARLY

*2 Timothy 2:15 Study to show yourself approved by God, a workman who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (MEV)*

Study wisdom literature. Start with the Book of Proverbs. Solomon wrote much of this to train up the young men and women in the royal court during his sixty-year reign as King of Israel. Wisdom is superior to knowledge. It is the ability to discern between options, making the right choices. This empowers you to: **1) Govern yourself, 2) Counsel or govern others, 3) Conform to the standards of God, 4) Live a pleasing life** (Proverbs 1:3-7). **In which of these skills are you gaining some confidence?**

### A PRAYER

Almighty God: Please help me to gain wisdom so that I may make wise decisions. Teach me discernment through the counsel of others who have gained Your favor. Show me how to be humble in listening. Bless my work as I serve the people in this great State of Kansas. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen!