

Life Lesson Walk

Introduction: The book of Proverbs, especially chapter 8, makes it abundantly clear that wisdom is not hiding from us but calling to us. It is right where we spend our time and live our lives, crying out to us that we might learn and become wise. This theme is exemplified by the author in the closing verses of Proverbs 24. *"I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of a man lacking sense, 31 and behold, it was all overgrown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. 32 Then I saw and considered it; I looked and received instruction. 33 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, 34 and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man [Proverbs 24:30-34]."*

The Life Lesson Walk follows the pattern of this story from Proverbs 24 and is designed to give us an opportunity to grow in wisdom, deepen our understanding of the world around us, and enrich our relationship with God. This is not a science project or a mental exercise. It is a relational walk, built upon a trust that God is present and that He wants to equip you with truth. It acknowledges that we not only are called to seek wisdom, but that it is also seeking us. In this way, this is not only an exercise in our seeing but also our hearing. It is not only an invitation to engage our minds, but also our hearts and our intuition ("gut" feelings).

The Life Lesson Walk also requires that we slow down and pay attention. We must allow time to investigate and consider what is taking place. Finally, it directs us to prayer, inviting God's Spirit to make application into our lives, trusting that this is not just a general truth but a specific and personal gift. Ultimately, the treasure is found in the relationship that is sought, not the insight that is received.

Starting Your Walk: The Life Lesson Walk works best when you are not feeling rushed. It is recommended that you allow yourself at least 20 minutes for this walk. Take some time to feel the ground beneath your feet and to breathe deeply, drawing your attention to the present moment. As you set your intention for the walk, offer a simple prayer before starting. Then begin your walk.

As you walk, pay attention to what you see around you. Try not to be anxious to find something right away. As you walk, work to keep a sensitivity not only to what you are thinking about the things you are observing but also to the things you are feeling and to any intuition [sometimes a "gut" feeling] that you might have in regards to where to direct your attention, or stop and turn aside, etc.

Once you have identified something to give attention to, take some time to observe it. This might involve moving around to see it from different angles, investigating it over time, etc. During this part of the walk, be careful not to rush to the first conclusion that comes to mind, but rather stay curious and be willing to push a little "deeper" before drawing a specific conclusion. If you have time, you can even walk away for a few minutes and then come back to re-engage the subject a second time.

After you sense you have truly investigated, you can engage in consideration of what you have seen and what it means. This may involve staying in the vicinity of the subject or transitioning to walking again. As you consider what you have seen, let a “lesson” begin to form in your thinking. This process involves sorting and consolidating the things you have observed into a cohesive reflection. The “lesson” is often most impacting when it is simple and memorable – for example it can be communicated in a single sentence.

Finally, take this “lesson” to God in prayer, inviting Him to help you consider its application in your life and circumstances.

These Life Lesson Walk stages can be simplified like this...

- 1. Observe and Investigate**
- 2. Consider and Consolidate**
- 3. Pray and Apply**

After Your Walk: When your prayer walk activity is complete set some time aside to go through the same process you started with of paying attention to your body and your breath. As you finish your walk, offer a brief prayer of thanksgiving for the time and ask God if there is something specific, He wants you to take with you from this prayer walking experience.