



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Through the Bible

June 16 - 22

Proverbs 3:5-6

Things to Know

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

*Reminder. Seek to understand and apply God's word, **not** rehash the sermon.*

Sermon Recap

1. **Stop White-Knuckling the Wheel** – Trusting God starts when you take your hands off the illusion of control and let Him do the driving. Faith isn't about asking God to bless your path—it's about walking the one He's already paved.
 2. **Your Gut Isn't the Gospel** – Leaning on your own understanding is like asking a broken compass to guide you home. God's wisdom doesn't always feel right, but it's never wrong.
 3. **God Doesn't Do MapQuest—He Does Mission** – When you acknowledge Him in all your ways, He doesn't just give directions—He gives purpose. His straight path may not be the shortest, but it always leads to Him.
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Discussion Questions

1. What does it look like to trust God with your whole heart—not just your beliefs, but your emotions, desires, and decisions?

(Based on “Trust in the Lord with all your heart” – v. 5)

2. Can you share a time when you leaned on your own understanding and it led you away from God's best? What did you learn from that experience?

(Based on “Do not lean on your own understanding” – v. 5)

3. What areas of your life are hardest to surrender to God's direction—career, relationships, money, family? Why do you think that is?

(Based on “In all your ways acknowledge him” – v. 6)

4. How have you seen God “make your path straight” after a season of uncertainty or difficulty? How did trusting Him impact the outcome?

(Based on “He will make straight your paths” – v. 6)

5. What step of faith is God asking you to take right now that requires more trust than understanding? How can our group support you in that?

(Bringing together the full context of Proverbs 3:5–6)

Read

Read Proverbs 3:5-6 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
 - What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?
 - Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
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Scripture

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.

⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths

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Proverbs 3:5-6

Living on Mission In Community

God is not asking you to figure everything out—He’s inviting you to trust Him even when you can’t. The Christian life isn’t about mastering every detail or having perfect clarity before you move forward. It’s about surrendering control to the One who already sees the whole road ahead. Trusting the Lord with all your heart means giving Him access to your fears, your decisions, your finances, your relationships—everything. It means choosing obedience even when the outcome is uncertain. You won’t always feel confident in the

path, but you can be confident in the God who directs it. So here's the question: What part of your life are you still holding onto instead of handing over to Him?

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
 2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*
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Leader Resources

Small Group Curriculum on Proverbs 3:5–6

Title: The Path of Trust

Text: Proverbs 3:5–6

Main Theme: Trusting in the Lord is not passive—it's the active surrender of your own understanding for His perfect direction.

1. Session Overview

This session explores the call to trust God with our whole hearts, reject self-reliance, and submit every part of our lives to Him. God promises to direct our paths—not always with clarity before the step, but with certainty after we obey.

2. Opening (Prayer & Icebreaker)

Prayer Prompt:

“Lord, we confess that we often rely on ourselves more than we trust in You. Help us tonight to be honest, open, and humble as we learn to trust You more deeply.”

Icebreaker Question (Break into pairs or triads):

What's one decision or situation in your life right now where you feel unsure or overwhelmed? Is there any way we can pray for your personal walk with God this week?

3. Scripture Reading

Read Proverbs 3:5–6 aloud together:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. (ESV)

4. Teaching Points

A. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart”

Biblical trust is not partial or occasional—it is whole-hearted.

This verse doesn't say "trust your feelings about the Lord," but to place your whole heart on the solid foundation of God's unchanging character.

Quote: "Faith is the refusal to panic." – Martyn Lloyd-Jones

B. "And do not lean on your own understanding"

The Hebrew idea of "leaning" implies putting your weight on something unstable.

Our understanding, while valuable, is limited and often distorted by sin, fear, and pride.

Illustration: Charles Blondin could walk a tightrope across Niagara Falls. Once, he asked a man if he believed he could carry him across. The man said yes—but refused to climb on his back. Faith doesn't just believe God can carry you. It gets on His back.

C. "In all your ways acknowledge him"

Acknowledge = "Know Him" (Hebrew: yada)—intimate, relational trust.

We're not called to add God to our plans but to submit our paths to Him entirely.

D. "He will make straight your paths"

Not always easy, but directed—aligned with His will.

God doesn't promise ease, but He promises to lead us to Himself.

Quote from Charles Spurgeon:

"God is too good to be unkind, and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart."

5. Discussion Questions

Verse 5 – What does it practically look like to "trust the Lord with all your heart"? What gets in the way of full trust?

Verse 5 – How have you seen the consequences of leaning on your own understanding in the past?

Verse 6 – What are some specific "ways" in your life that you struggle to surrender or acknowledge God in?

Verse 6 – Can you think of a time when God “made your path straight” even when it was difficult to follow Him?

Application – What is one area of your life where you need to stop leaning on your own understanding and start trusting God this week?

6. Application Points

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you are trusting in your own wisdom instead of God’s promises.

Take one practical step this week to “acknowledge God” in a specific area: relationships, work, finances, parenting, or decision-making.

Write Proverbs 3:5–6 on a note card and place it somewhere visible this week as a daily reminder of who’s really in charge.

7. Closing Reflection & Prayer

Reflect Together:

Invite members to reflect silently for a moment. Then say:

“God wants your heart. He doesn’t ask for half of it or most of it. He asks for all. What would it look like if we really lived like He was trustworthy?”

Closing Prayer:

“Father, thank You that You are faithful and trustworthy. Forgive us for leaning on ourselves. Teach us to know You, to trust You, and to follow the path You set before us—even when we don’t understand it. Make our paths straight—not always easy, but always leading closer to You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

8. Memory Verse

Proverbs 3:5–6 (ESV):

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

9. Leader’s Notes

- Encourage vulnerability during the prayer time. Model it yourself.
- If your group is in a season of big decisions (graduations, job changes, parenting transitions), highlight God's direction as a comfort.
- Avoid overemphasizing the idea of "God will make your life easy." The "straight path" is often the cross-bearing path, but it's the right one.

