

**FAMILY LESSONS ON
THE PATH OF FREEDOM**

Based on Proverbs 3:5-6

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LESSON #4

A LITTLE HORSE SENSE

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

Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV84)

What does God mean when He says, “lean not on your own understanding”? Does this mean that our understanding is not important? The Hebrew word for “lean” was used to describe a person putting his weight on a staff or spear to support himself. How do we value our own understanding without putting all our weight on it?

When my father was a young man, he taught at a military academy. On one occasion he was assigned to lead a group of twelve junior high boys on a horseback adventure into a mountain wilderness area. The wranglers at the stable told him to just follow the signs, and the trail would bring them back in about two hours. What they didn’t tell him was that there were many other trails that split off from the main loop. Along the way my father came to several well-weathered signs and had to decide which way to go. After about three hours he realized he was lost and had no idea how to get back. It was already late and the sun was going down. Without alarming the boys, my father quietly prayed for God’s help. As he sat there trying to read one more illegible trail marker, and with the sunlight rapidly slipping away, a thought suddenly came to him. He remembered that horses had a natural sense for how to get home, since that is where they always find food. Loosening the reins, he let his horse take the lead. Slowly, she began to turn until she made a complete U-turn and started going in the other direction. As my father doubled-back past the boys, he waved his arm high in the air yelling, “Follow me men.” One by one each horse turned to follow. In the dwindling light, it soon became impossible to read the trail signs; but without hesitation, the lead horse chose her path and kept moving forward. Each time they passed another sign, my father encouraged the boys by calling out to them, “Follow me men.” Before long, the warm glow of the stable lights could be seen glimmering through the trees as the horses made their way home for dinner.

God has unlimited power to show us the right path. Sometimes the answer is right in front of us and we just can’t see it. But when we lean on Him, instead of ourselves, we gain the advantage of His Spirit, showing us solutions we have either ignored or forgotten. Sometimes the smallest idea or memory is all that He uses to solve the biggest of problems.

What should you do before taking on a difficult task (Proverbs 16:3)? What does James say we should do when we know we lack wisdom (James 1:5)? Does prayer change God, or does it change us (Philippians 4:6-7)?

For additional study materials on the Bonus Verse and a copy of the “Ten Step Bible Memory Method for Life,” go to www.icsva.org/student-life/bonus-verse on the Immanuel Christian School website.