

## Plato or Proverbs?

Plato (c. 428 – 347 B.C.) is widely considered the most pivotal figure in the development of philosophy, especially the Western tradition. He was the founder of the Academy in Athens (the first institution of higher learning in the Western world) about 370 B.C.

Although usually remembered as a philosopher, Plato was also a master mathematician. It is said that over the doors of his academy, these words were written: “Let no one destitute of geometry enter my doors.”

In contrast, Solomon (c. 1010 – 931 B.C.) a man of great wisdom, wealth and power, opened wide the doors of *Proverbs*, welcoming the unlearned, the simple, the foolish, the young and even the wise, that all “will increase learning” (Proverbs 1:5).

In ancient times, collections of proverbs were textbooks for sons of nobility in Egypt and Greece. The Proverbs of Solomon are similar in form, but distinct in that God is the beginning point in the search for wisdom. The *Book of Proverbs* is practical wisdom that teaches believers how to live.



Nowhere is that more evident than in Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

Those verses give both a principle and a promise:

- *The principle* – Put God first.
- *The promise* – He will guide you to success.

Solomon expanded the principle to put God first in our future (verses 5-6), our finances (verses 9-10) and our family (verses 11-12).

Solomon would admonish that wisdom is more than mastering mathematics or science. It is a matter of knowing God and trusting in His wisdom, rather than our own.

A good prayer for us is: *Father, teach me to trust You instead of trying to figure things out by myself.*

– Beecher Hunter