

# Grandma's Building Blocks

## Devotion

*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 (Proverbs 3:5–6).*

Sometimes the couplet was printed on the card; sometimes it was scrawled in her swirly penmanship. Other times it was just noted “Proverbs 3:5–6” after her signature. *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths* (NKJV). Regardless of how it was written, I saw it noted in every birthday card during my childhood years; and not just in **my** cards, but in the cards of my siblings as well. Did our Grandma know any other Scripture? Did she think this was my favorite verse? Certainly, it must have been hers.

Through the years, it was the brunt of a joke or two as we kids opened her mail, knowing full well that the same verse would be staring at us from somewhere on the cardstock. It was never accompanied by a present, nor attached to warm relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. My grandparents lived in the sunshine state of Florida, 20-plus hours away. Communication between them and my parents was strained due to a history of hurts. The Proverbs verses were viewed with some resentment during those early years.

Adolescence came with its standard insecurities and more than my share of bullying and rejection, despite the faith principles of the small parochial school I attended. Confusion and hurt made me challenge my parents, test all authority, and break boundaries that I didn't like or that didn't make sense to my childish mind — *lean not on your own understanding*.

High school and college piled on a few disappointments when I dated guys who didn't follow Christ. Regret and shame were consequences of pursuing my own desires for too long — *in all your ways acknowledge Him*.

Grandma continued writing, and then offered to host me the summer before graduation. I saw it as a chance for this cold Wisconsin girl to get a great tan on the Florida coast. She and Grandpa saw it as a chance to share with me Scripture, devotions, and prayer. We lived together for 10 weeks with many messy roller coaster days. They laid one small block after another onto the foundation of my faith. I witnessed their loud and honest love for my spirit. I became wiser, grew in character, and we three began to repair our relationship. Many stones, carefully placed over time, build a monument. *Train up a child in the way he should go: even when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6).*

Several years after that summer, I realized that those verses had etched their way into my memory. When I was fighting moments of anxiety and fear, God's Spirit spoke to mine — *Trust in the Lord with all your heart*. When I was struggling over a decision, I heard a sweet whisper in my soul — *acknowledge Him and He will direct your path*. Over and over again, His grace and wisdom guided my life, just as He said He would. Jesus drew me to seek Him deeper and daily strengthened me through my Christian community, His Word, and the sacraments where I am continually “trained up” in the knowledge of my Savior. How glorious to be reminded of the gift of forgiveness and restoration through the cross of Christ and the certain path to eternity marked by the empty tomb!

Grandpa has gone to be with the Lord in paradise, but Grandma is still here, walking, healthy, and strong with her Lord at age 95!

I never did tell her how I used to feel about Proverbs 3:5–6. It seems too childish to me now. But maybe that was the point.

**Closing Prayer:** Gracious Father, I praise You for Your faithfulness. How beautiful that Your Word is living and active and applies to my life in any and every season. I thank You for the mentors You have placed in my life, whose wisdom and influence has blessed me and made me grow in faith. Continue to place Your truths in my heart and memory. Protect and cover me so that I will not depart from Your ways. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Bible verses are taken from the ESV translation unless otherwise noted.

*Grandma's Building Blocks* by Wendysue Fluegge, Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

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