

Learn Wisdom's Benefits
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Proverbs 1:33; 2:5-12; 3:1-8

The old song says: "Everybody plays the fool...sometimes." But no reasonable, logical person wants to be a fool. We want to have WISDOM.

Opening question: **What's the best advice you ever received from a family member or friend? If a young couple asked for YOUR best marriage advice what would it be?**

It's been said that wisdom comes from age, and there's some practical truth to that.

Today, we'll learn that TRUE WISDOM for life comes from the GIVER of life.

We are beginning a study in Proverbs. Because of the way the proverbs are written this will be a "topical" study. Since we were not able to do the introduction and chapter one last week, let's do a quick introduction to this wonderful book. Proverbs is all about WISDOM...Godly wisdom.

What is the difference between WISDOM and KNOWLEDGE?

Something important to remember about Proverbs: These are PRINCIPLES not always promises. While God provides many wonderful promises in scripture; we need to be careful not to claim the book of Proverbs as absolute promises from God. If we do, we'll be disappointed. (i.e. 20:7; 22:6) If we apply them as WISDOM and GUIDANCE, we'll find they enrich how we live our lives.

To give you a flavor of the topics we'll cover, here are some of the titles of our lessons in the next few weeks: Guard Your Speech; Don't Be a Slacker; Exercise Financial Responsibility; Forge Godly Friendships; Avoid Alcohol and Drug Abuse; Live in Moral Purity.

As we're beginning this study, let me also mention a method of studying the Proverbs that many have used and Pastor Johnny and other have often recommended. Since there are 31 chapters of Proverbs, it's an easy method to read a chapter for the day of the month. Then every month you will have gone through proverbs.

Look at chapter one verses one through five. I'm reading in the NLT:

Proverbs 1:1-5 (NLT)

The Purpose of Proverbs

These are the proverbs of Solomon, David's son, king of Israel.

2 Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline,
to help them understand the insights of the wise.

3 Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives,
to help them do what is right, just, and fair.

4 These proverbs will give insight to the simple,
knowledge and discernment to the young.

- Verses 1-4: Let's underline or circle some key words. **Which words tell us what Proverbs does for us?**
- Verse 5...

5 Let the wise listen to these proverbs and become even wiser.
Let those with understanding receive guidance

Proverbs 1:33 (ESV)

33 but whoever listens to me will dwell secure
and will be at ease, without dread of disaster.”

- **What does the word “whoever” tell us about who has access to God’s wisdom?**
- Our Lesson Commentary: *The term whoever underscores that wisdom isn’t limited to those with academic degrees, family wealth, or social position. Wisdom begins with a right relationship with God and grows as believers—whatever their educational, financial, and social status—listen to and follow God’s ways.*
- **In that verse, who is it we’re listening to? (Hint, verse 20) Whose voice is it really?**
- Verse 33 says if we will listen we’ll have a sense of security and not anxiety. **How do we put that verse into practice?**
- **How have you experienced God’s peace or protection recently by applying His Word to a life situation?**
- (Bible verses by topic: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/>)
- The first two verses of chapter two continue along the same lines...

Proverbs 2:1–12 (ESV)

2 My son, if you receive my words
and treasure up my commandments with you,
2 making your ear attentive to wisdom
and inclining your heart to understanding;
3 yes, if you call out for insight
and raise your voice for understanding,
4 if you seek it like silver
and search for it as for hidden treasures,
5 then you will understand the fear of the Lord
and find the knowledge of God.

- Verses 1-4: **What do these verses teach us about how to gain wisdom?**
- Notice the word “if” shows up three times leading to “then” in verse 5.
- **What do we mean by an “if/then” statement?**
- **How does verse 4 really step up the intensity of seeking wisdom?**
- **In Solomon’s day, before modern equipment, how did they mine for silver? What might that teach us about Bible study?**

Max Lucado writes:

Here is a practical point. Study the Bible a little at a time. God seems to send messages as he did his manna: one day’s portion at a time. He provides “a command here, a command there. A rule here, a rule there. A little lesson here, a little lesson there” (Isa. 28:10 NCV). Choose depth over quantity. Read until a verse hits you, then stop and meditate on it. Copy the verse onto a sheet of paper, or write it in your journal, and reflect on it several times.

Lucado, M. (2011). The lucado inspirational reader: hope and encouragement for your everyday life. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- Ever see one of those “speed eating” contests? Is that how you would enjoy a great meal?

- With the best of intentions sometimes we “speed feed” on God’s word.
- When feeding on the wisdom from God’s word, don’t “gobble it,” TASTE it, SAVOR it.
- Generally Proverbs are principles but not promises, but I believe 6-8 ARE promises.
- Look at the benefits of fearing God and seeking the wisdom of His word:

6 For the Lord gives wisdom;
 from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;
 7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
 he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
 8 guarding the paths of justice
 and watching over the way of his saints.

- Verse 6: The Lord is the SOURCE of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.
- Verse 7: Let’s look at who can understand God’s wisdom. **How can sinful people be “upright,” “saints” and “walk in integrity?” So, who is this promise for?**
- Verses 7 and 8 tell us God is our SOURCE and our SHIELD. But that doesn’t mean Christians live trouble-free lives. Any Christian can attest to that. At times God USES trials to grow us. Still God provides WISDOM and PEACE even in the midst of trials, if we will just access it through His word.

9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice
 and equity, every good path;
 10 for wisdom will come into your heart,
 and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

Solomon taught his son that wisdom brings DISCRETION to stay away from EVIL;

11 discretion will watch over you,
 understanding will guard you,
 12 delivering you from the way of evil,
 from men of perverted speech,

16 So you will be delivered from the forbidden woman,
 from the adulteress with her smooth words

- Let’s move on to chapter 3 for some of the BEST instruction in the whole Bible! Pens ready?

Proverbs 3:1–8 (ESV)

3 My son, do not forget my teaching,
 but let your heart keep my commandments,

- **What does it mean for our “heart” to keep God’s commandments?**

2 for length of days and years of life
 and peace they will add to you.
 3 Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you;
 bind them around your neck;
 write them on the tablet of your heart.
 4 So you will find favor and good success
 in the sight of God and man.

- Wisdom from God improves our relationship with both our Lord and those around us.
- Verses 5 and 6 are LEGENDARY and should be underlined in every Bible...bet you could recite them!

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.

- Verse 5: There is “heart” again. **Why does he keep repeating that word?**
- Up to now Solomon has told us to “treasure,” “listen,” “seek,” but **now what does he say we are to do? What is the difference between KNOWING something and TRUSTING in something?** (Note the word “lean.”)
- **Verse 6: How do we “acknowledge” God in all our ways?**
- Life Application Bible: *“We should not omit careful thinking...but we should always be willing to listen to and be corrected by God’s Word and wise counselors.”*

Our Lesson Commentary makes a great point:

How foolish it would be to trust God for our eternal salvation and not rely on Him in family, business, and other areas of life! When we commit to following Him unreservedly, we can depend on Him to guide us in the right paths. (ETB - Teacher’s Commentary)

In case it’s not clear how this works look at verses 7 and 8:

7 Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord, and turn away from evil.

8 It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones.

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- Go MINING this week for NUGGETS of wisdom from God.
- I would suggest you start with the scripture we’ve covered this morning. 3:5-6 in particular.
- You may already have those two memorized; if not, this would be a good week to do that.
- How about reading a chapter of Proverbs each day for the day of the month.
- If we want wisdom we have to SEEK IT through His word and His presence in prayer.