



PROVERBS

LIVING BY THE SPIRIT'S WISDOM

Church of Christ in Moody
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PROVERBS: LIVING THE SPIRIT'S WISDOM

Date	#	Key Verse	Title
3.30	1	Proverbs 1:7	The Beginning of Wisdom
4.2	2	Proverbs 9:1-6, 13-18	The Two Women of Proverbs
4.6	3	Proverbs 2:6	How to Become Wise
4.9	4	Proverbs 18:2	How to Be a Fool
4.13	5	Proverbs 14:15	Don't Believe Everything You Hear
4.16	6	Proverbs 10:1	The Goal of Parenting
4.20	7	Proverbs 1:8-10	Tools for Parents
4.23	8	Proverbs 6:27-28	How to Keep from Being Burned: Temptation
4.27	9	Proverbs 28:1	How to Sleep Well At Night: Integrity
4.30	10	Proverbs 25:16-17	If You Find Honey: Self-Control
5.4	11	Proverbs 16:18	The Way of Pride
5.7	12	Proverbs 13:20	The Right Kind of Friends
5.11	13	Proverbs 6:6-11	The Wise Worker
5.14	14	Proverbs 16:1-3	Planning for the Future
5.18	15	Proverbs 12:25	A Heavy Heart: Worry
5.21	16	Proverbs 28:6	Wise Money
5.25	17	Proverbs 30:8	Neither Poverty, Nor Riches: Contentment
5.28	18	Proverbs 14:21	Blessed to Bless: Generosity
6.1	19	Proverbs 21:21	Love Your Enemies
6.4	20	Proverbs 21:3	Seek Justice
6.8	21	Proverbs 18:21	Wise Speech
6.11	22	Proverbs 25:11	Read the Room: Answering Appropriately
6.15	23	Proverbs 26:17-27	Wisdom in Conflict
6.18	24	Proverbs 10:23	What Makes You Laugh: Humor
6.22	25	Proverbs 31:10-31	The Proverbs 31 Woman

1

THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

Discussion Questions

1. “The proverbs of Solomon,” the text begins (Proverbs 1:1). At the beginning of Solomon’s reign, God appeared to him in a dream and offered, “Ask what I shall give you.” What did Solomon request and how did God respond (1 Kings 3:3-9)?

2. Think of Proverbs 1:1-7 like a sales pitch about why you should read this book and take it to heart. What benefits does Solomon hope you will receive from its study?

3. Solomon has many descriptions for the contents of this book. What does each description imply about how one ought to approach this book?
 - a. Words of insight, instruction:

 - b. Proverbs:

 - c. Words of the wise and their riddles:

4. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,” Solomon declares. What does he mean by “the fear of the Lord,” and why is this the only starting point for true wisdom?

2

TWO WOMEN OF PROVERBS

Discussion Questions

1. You are introduced to two women, and you want to set your son up on a date with one of them. The first is smart, successful, and stable, and the second is attractive, affectionate, and generous. Which do you encourage your son to date?
2. A young man falls prey to the enticements of Folly, the adulterous woman. Read Proverbs 7:1-27. What drew him in?
3. Wisdom has her own enticements (Proverbs 8:1-36). Which of her promises would convince you to follow her instead?
4. Both Wisdom and Folly are calling for us (Proverbs 9:1-6, 13-18). While sitting in church, it is easy to say, "Of course Wisdom is better," but glimpses in our life can often tell a different story. How would you describe the ways that wisdom and folly compete for your attention throughout a normal day?

Discussion Questions

1. Over the course of your life, whatever wisdom you have gained, where did the wisdom come from and how did you get it?

2. What tools do the wise in Proverbs employ to gain wisdom?
 - a. Proverbs 2:6
 - b. Proverbs 10:13
 - c. Proverbs 12:1
 - d. Proverbs 13:20

3. Pain can be an effective teacher, but the fool refuses to learn (12:1). What consequences are likely to come to those who are not teachable?
 - a. Proverbs 5:7-14
 - b. Proverbs 13:18
 - c. Proverbs 15:10
 - d. Proverbs 15:32
 - e. Proverbs 29:15

4. Pretend you are explaining to your son how to become wise. What specific advice would you give?

Discussion Questions

1. Proverbs has much to say about fools. What themes can you trace from the following verses about the actions of a fool?
 - a. Proverbs 18:2
 - b. Proverbs 12:15
 - c. Proverbs 26:4-5
 - d. Proverbs 26:11-12
 - e. Proverbs 26:16
 - f. Proverbs 28:26
2. A fool can argue, but he cannot convince. What strategies does he employ instead?
 - a. Proverbs 29:9
 - b. Proverbs 29:11
 - c. Proverbs 20:3
 - d. Proverbs 17:12
3. Being a fool is dangerous (14:16). What is a time you have seen someone experience the consequences of his own foolishness?
4. If you were to write a five-step plan in “How to Be A Fool,” what important steps would you list?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
5. Obviously, you do not want to be a fool. How do you avoid these dangers?

5

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU HEAR

Discussion Questions

1. Put yourself in Solomon's sandals, and it is your responsibility to judge the case of the two prostitutes (1 Kings 3:16-23). Which of the two women's stories would you think more believable?
2. In what situations are you likely to hear competing claims?
3. "The _____ believe everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps," (Proverbs 14:15). The ESV translates the blank as "simple." What word would you use to describe the one who believes everything?
4. What steps can you take to determine which claims are true? (Unfortunately, we can't just take a sword to everything, cf. 1 Kings 3:24-27) Consult the verses below for answers.
 - a. Proverbs 14:15
 - b. Proverbs 18:17
 - c. Proverbs 14:8
5. How can you directly apply these steps to the areas of your life in which you are apt to hear conflicting information?

Discussion Questions

1. As a parent, what are the five things you want most for your kids?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
2. What brings a smile to the faces of the parents in these verses?
 - a. Proverbs 10:1
 - b. Proverbs 23:15-16
 - c. Proverbs 27:11
 - d. Proverbs 15:20
 - e. Proverbs 17:21
3. Parenting begins with God, the Father (Proverbs 3:11-12)! This affects multiple levels of the parenting relationship.
 - a. Hebrews applies this verse to every Christian; their discipline means God is parenting them (Hebrews 12:7-8). Parents, how do you parent differently, knowing God is parenting you?
 - b. Paul encouraging believing parents, “Bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). The implication is that the children are His! Parents, how you parent differently, knowing God is also parenting your child?

Discussion Question

1. Have you ever said, “I wish these kids came with an instruction manual?” What do you suppose people generally mean by such a phrase?

2. Notice how often the Proverbs are addressed to “my son” (Proverbs 1:8-10, 15: 2:1; 3:1, 21; 4:1, et al.). It seems the whole book is a parent’s wisdom for a child (Even King Lemuel’s mom in Proverbs 31:1). What are some strategies you could use to implement the wisdom of Proverbs in parenting?

3. The following verses pertaining to discipline may be some of the most shocking and controversial in Proverbs. Because they deal with physical discipline, they could be dismissed by skeptics as “abusive.” But look at the heart of these sayings. What are the essential motivations behind all Christian discipline?
 - a. Proverbs 13:24
 - b. Proverbs 19:18
 - c. Proverbs 22:15
 - d. Proverbs 23:13-14

8 HOW TO KEEP FROM BEING BURNED: TEMPTATION

Discussion Questions

1. When was a time in which you saw playing with fire go badly?

2. Solomon uses carrying fire and walking on coals as an illustration for temptation (6:27-28). What analogy would you use to describe temptation?

3. Where does temptation come from and why is it so powerful?

4. The principles to for avoiding the adulteress can be applied to other temptations. Glean from 6:20-35 a list of strategies for addressing temptation.

5. Solomon describes the anatomy of a sinner (6:16-19). What would this look like in reverse? Use the same parts to describe the anatomy of the righteous.
 - a. Eyes
 - b. Tongue
 - c. Hands
 - d. Heart
 - e. Feet
 - f. Breath

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HOW TO SLEEP WELL AT NIGHT: INTEGRITY

Discussion Questions

1. What is integrity? Look to Job's final appeal to his innocence for an example (Job 31).

2. Is it ever really that "no one is watching"? What do the following verses say about the eyes of the Lord?
 - a. Proverbs 5:21
 - b. Proverbs 15:3

3. Would you rather have integrity or be rich and powerful? On what grounds would Solomon make his decision (Proverbs 28:6)?

4. Most of the time violated integrity makes a violated conscience. Contrast a guilty conscience with a clean conscience in the verses below.
 - a. Proverbs 28:1
 - b. Proverbs 3:21-27

5. "How do you sleep at night?" This is normally an accusation for those whose conscience should feel violated. Answer it honestly. What can you do to practice integrity and sleep well at night?

Discussion Questions

1. Give yourself an assessment. How strong is your self-control?
2. If your answer was, “It depends,” in which areas do you most struggle with self-control?
3. Consider the proverbs about honey and your neighbor’s house (Proverbs 25:16-17). How would you rewrite these proverbs to address modern challenges with self-control?
4. “Lest you have your fill of it and vomit,” and “Lest he have his fill of you and hate you,” are listed as the consequences of excess (Proverbs 25:16-17). Even if the object is good, like honey or friendship, why is there danger in “too much of a good thing”?
5. Solomon repeats the theme of honey, saying, “It is not good to eat much honey, nor is it glorious to seek one's own glory” (Proverbs 25:27). How is the desire for glory like overindulgence in honey?
6. A man without self-control is described as “a city broken into and left without walls” (25:28). Think of a person you know without self-control. Why is this an appropriate analogy?
7. Self-control is a skill that must be learned. How do you grow in self-control.

Discussion Questions

1. When you hear the word pride outside of church, does it usually describe something positive or negative?

2. What about pride's synonyms, like "confidence," "self-respect," "arrogance," or "conceit"? Do these carry positive or negative connotations?

3. What words does God use to describe pride?
 - a. Proverbs 16:5
 - b. Proverbs 6:16-19
 - c. Proverbs 8:13
 - d. Proverbs 21:4

4. What does pride do? Look for hints in the following verses.
 - a. Proverbs 16:19
 - b. Proverbs 21:4
 - c. Proverbs 21:24

5. Proverbs declares that the road of pride ends in destruction (16:18; 18:12), disgrace (11:2), and lowliness (29:23). Whereas the same verses show that humility ends in wisdom and honor. In a worldly sense this doesn't make sense. Why are the outcomes seemingly reversed?
 - a. Proverbs 15:25; 3:34
 - b. Proverbs 16:18
 - c. Proverbs 11:2

6. It is better to be humble (Proverbs 3:34; 12:9; 16:19; 25:6-7). Consult Philippians 2:1-11 to construct a practical definition for humility.

Discussion Questions

1. Parents, have you ever objected to your child's new friend? What red flags did you see and what did you do about it?

2. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals" (1 Corinthians 15:33). It seems self-evident that a person can be negatively influenced by bad friends. So why would Paul feel the need to begin this verse, saying, "Do not be deceived"?

3. What kinds of friends should a wise person avoid?
 - a. Proverbs 1:10
 - b. Proverbs 13:20
 - c. Proverbs 22:24-25

4. What are the attributes of a true friend?
 - a. Proverbs 17:17
 - b. Proverbs 18:24
 - c. Proverbs 27:6
 - d. Proverbs 27:9
 - e. Proverbs 27:17

5. If it becomes necessary to remove the influence of "bad company," what are some practical and tactful ways of changing that relationship?

Discussion Questions

1. Imagine that you are being considered for a position at your job. You must consider your future and how this position might fit into that plan. Use the proverbs listed below to identify important steps in your planning process.
 - a. Proverbs 16:1-3
 - b. Proverbs 19:2
 - c. Proverbs 20:18
 - d. Proverbs 22:3
 - e. Proverbs 15:21-22
 - f. Proverbs 21:5
2. “There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death,” warns Proverbs (14:12; 16:25). What is the difference between a seemingly good idea and a godly idea?
3. The merchants in James 4:13-17 made a lot of plans for their future, but they were rebuked. What mistake did they make in the planning process? (See also Proverbs 27:1)
4. How do you react when your plans fail?
5. Ultimately God’s plans will always succeed (21:30-31). How does that help us understand and appreciate the victories and successes in our lives?

Discussion Questions

1. Complete the following sentence: Money without morality is _____.
(See Proverbs 28:6).

2. What is the best strategy for gaining wealth? Use Proverbs 13:11 and 14:23 to answer the question.

3. Glean from Proverbs 13:7, 22:7, and 30:7-9 three principles to change your financial trajectory.
 - a. Proverbs 13:7
 - b. Proverbs 22:7
 - c. Proverbs 30:7-9

4. Use the Proverbs listed to compile a list of five wise money practices.
 - a. Proverbs 21:7
 - b. Proverbs 6:5
 - c. Proverbs 21:20
 - d. Proverbs 19:17
 - e. Proverbs 13:22

17 NEITHER POVERTY, NOR RICHES: CONTENTMENT

Discussion Questions

1. At what point does wealth become a spiritual danger?

2. Agur requests, “Give me neither poverty nor riches” (Proverbs 30:7-9). According to Agur, what is the spiritual danger to poverty? What is the spiritual danger of riches?

3. Define contentment. Use Agur’s words as a guide (Proverbs 30:7-9).

4. From the following Proverbs, what do you notice about the benefits of contentment?
 - a. Proverbs 13:7
 - b. Proverbs 27:7

5. Paul exemplifies contentment in Philippians 4:11-13. He claims to know the secret of facing plenty and facing hunger. What is the secret to being content in each of these situations?
 - a. Facing plenty:
 - b. Facing hunger:

Discussion Questions

1. “Whoever despises his neighbor is a sinner, but blessed is he who is generous to the poor” (Proverbs 14:21). This verse puts people into two categories: the one who despises his neighbor and is a sinner, and the one who is generous and blessed. How do you determine on which side of this verse you belong?

2. Generosity is a cycle. Summarize the circle of blessing from the following verses.
 - a. Proverbs 11:24-26
 - b. Proverbs 11:17

3. “Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed” (Proverbs 19:17). Together with Proverbs 11:24-26, the generous are said to be “richer,” “enriched,” “watered,” “blessed,” and “repaid.” How should a generous Christian expect to see these promises fulfilled?

4. Generosity is not just about money. What are other valuable resources with which you can be generous?
 - a. Proverbs 31:8
 - b. Proverbs 12:10

Discussion Questions

1. Who do you consider an “enemy” and what did the person(s) do to warrant the title?

2. How does Jesus describe an enemy? Luke 6:27-31

3. In the same passage Jesus said anyone can love the lovable (Luke 6:27-36). Why is it so challenging to love your enemy?

4. Loving your enemy is not a single step. It requires a sequence of decisions. List them from the verses below:
 - a. Proverbs 24:29
 - b. Proverbs 20:22
 - c. Proverbs 25:21
 - d. Proverbs 25:22

5. Paul repeats each of these steps as attributes of genuine love (Romans 12:9, 17-21). He concludes, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” In what sense do these acts of love overcome evil?

Discussion Questions

1. “Death and life are in the power of the tongue,” says Proverbs 18:21. How have you seen the tongue used to inflict death or to bring life?
2. It is wise to slow down and consider our words (15:28) or even to say nothing at all (17:27-28). But there are times in which Christians must speak. How can we tell when and where it is necessary to speak up?
3. Use Proverbs 12:17-23 to compile a list of positive ways to speak and negative ways to speak.

Positive	Negative
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4. The most powerful way a Christian can bring life (18:21) through words is to share the good news about Jesus. Paul instructs Christians, “Walk in wisdom toward outsiders... let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer each person” (Colossians 4:5-6). What should a Christian do to develop speech “seasoned with salt” when answering for faith?

22 READING THE ROOM: ANSWERING APPROPRIATELY

Discussion Questions

1. Which is more challenging, knowing the right thing to say or knowing the right time to say it?
2. “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver” (Proverbs 25:11). Proverbs also calls the well-timed response as “a joy to a man” (15:23), “refreshes the bones” (15:30), and “kisses the lips” (24:26). Think of a time in which you were the recipient of such a response. What made it so special?
3. The right thing at the wrong time is still the wrong thing. Consider the song like vinegar (25:20) and the cursed blessing (27:14). What criteria should be used for determining timing?
4. What can you do to prepare to say the right thing at the right time?

Discussion Questions

1. Where do you turn when you want to laugh?
2. Create the recipe for a joke. Consider the following as a list of ingredients; you determine the amounts. Match the ingredients to the appropriate amount.

Ingredient	Amounts
Wit (Cleverness)	A Heaping Scoop
Truth (Relatability)	A Handful
Tension (Discomfort)	A Tablespoon
Surprise (Twist)	A Dash
Originality (Unique)	A Pinch

3. Humor is a test for the soul. What you laugh at can reveal what is in your heart. What does society encourage us to laugh at that would make God cry? (Proverbs 2:14; 10:23; 26:18-19)
4. Solomon encourages us to guard our heart, almost as if it were a stream that needed to be tended. What choices and strategies should a believer apply to enjoy laughter in a godly way? (Proverbs 4:23; Ephesians 5:3-4)
 - a. Ephesians 5:3-4
 - b. Proverbs 4:23

Discussion Questions

1. After reading the text, list the attributes and actions of the modern Proverbs 31 woman.
2. The section ends declaring great praise for the woman (Proverbs 31:28-31). Why is she so worthy of praise?
3. What other woman in the Bible best compares to the woman described in Proverbs 31?
4. The Jewish tradition of this section is for men to memorize the contents and sing it every Friday evening at the beginning of the Sabbath meal. Their aim is to honor the mother or matriarch of the family. List five ways Christian homes can honor the women in our families.