

Proverbs Bible Study

Week 1

Introduction

Reading the Proverbs Wisely

Proverbs 1-9



Introductions

- Name
- Where is the last place you went on vacation?

WHAT — TO — EXPECT

- Course Materials
 - 4-Week Study
 - Text: Proverbs Pathways to Wisdom
 - Bible: Book of Proverbs
 - Class Format
 - Start and End On time!
 - Opening Reflection/Closing Worship
 - In-class videos/materials to augment reading and spur discussion
 - My Role as Facilitator
 - Discussions and Interactive participation
 - One proverb each week to share
 - Questions for discussion
 - Respect Each Other
 - No politics
 - Make sure everyone has a chance to contribute
 - Anything said in the group is confidential
-

Arrive Early

- Get settled
- Test technology
- Chat together
- Put name on screen
- We will begin and end on time



Zoom: Check Your Technology

- Can you be seen?
- Mute if not speaking
- If zoom, view in speaker mode to best see who is speaking'
- Let live audience know if you can not hear or see presentation



Display

- There is a camera to capture the live participants
- Zoom participants will see standard zoom screen, with room participants as one participant
- Live will see zoom participants on tv when not displaying presentation



Sound

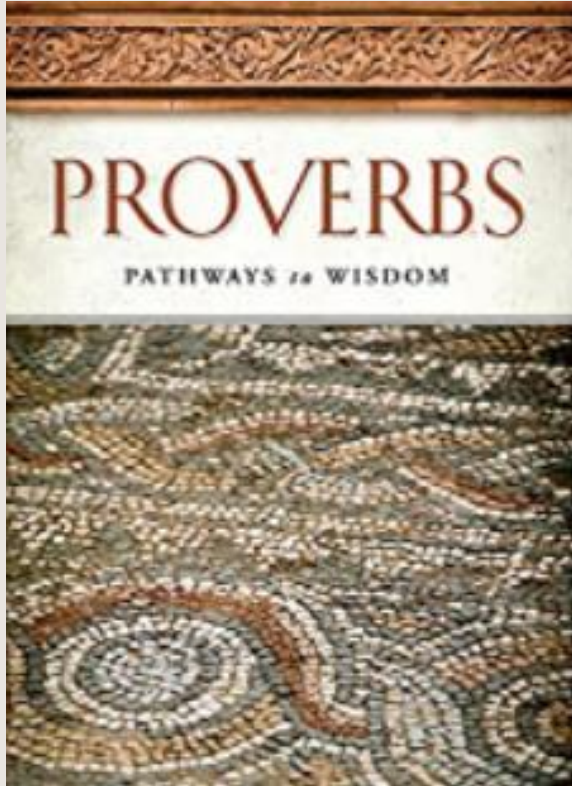
- Sound for videos will be through zoom for remote and through tv for live.
- Sound for speaking will be through conference phone for live - should enable zoom call to clearly hear everyone live if they speak up! Remember to speak up!



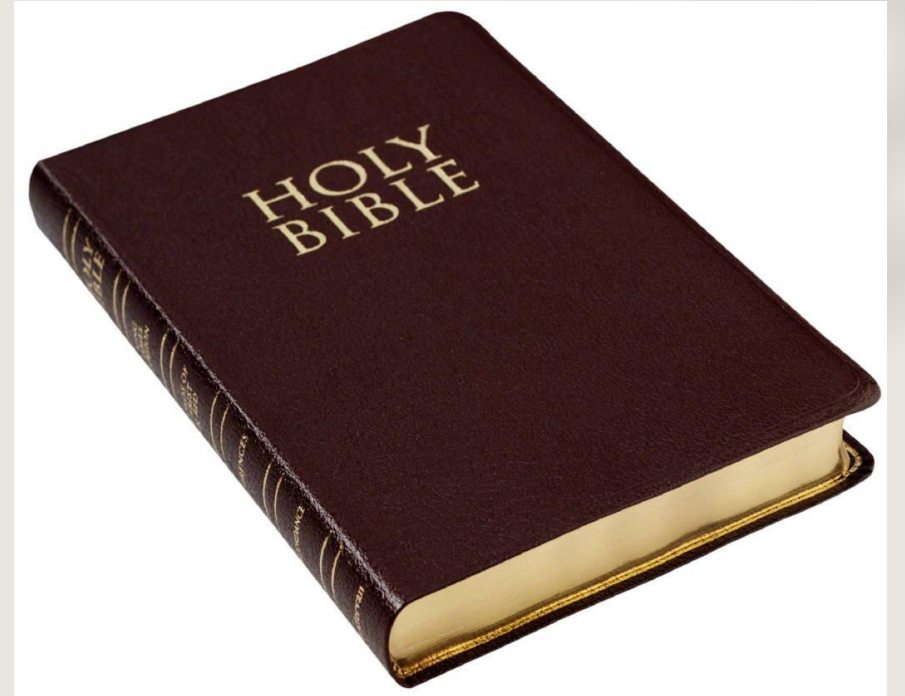
Hybrid Meeting

Provide feedback - Still learning!

Class Resources



Available on Amazon and Christianbook.com



Use the translation you are most comfortable with

Class Organization

- Each week we will read a chapter from the text *Pathways to Wisdom* and a portion of the Book of Proverbs
 - *Pathways to Wisdom* provides a general overview of themes and concepts. Key proverbs are selected and discussed.
 - We will also read through the entire Book of Proverbs.
- There will be a short video from the author of *Pathways to Wisdom* each week that summarizes our assigned reading.
- We will allocate 15 minutes each week for participants to read the most significant proverb from the week's reading (more on this later)
- We will also discuss key concepts and themes from the Bible reading we were assigned.
- Questions are always an important part of the study....be sure to be interactive and ask questions as they arise.

What Proverbs is All About

- One of the books of poetry (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Lamentations) and part of the Bible's wisdom literature: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.
 - Job and Ecclesiastes investigate why things are as they are and how we can make sense of them.
 - Proverbs is practical wisdom, showing us what we can do to get on in this world without losing our way and ending in disaster.
- Proverbs gives us a window on the world. It provides keys as to how things work and how people behave, giving us understanding and insight. It shows what to expect from people and how to react to them.

Memory verse for Proverbs:

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction

The Concept of Wisdom in the Bible

- The art of being successful, of forming a correct plan to gain the desired results. (New Bible Dictionary). How best to find our way through the maze of this world.
- The wisdom of the Bible cannot be acquired merely from books, parents and teachers. Ultimately wisdom is what God is and we can only attain it through personal knowledge of Him. It is the wisdom found in God himself and stamped on His creation (Psalm 104:24: How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.)
- Wisdom is not something to do but is a way of doing things. Wisdom is finding in your own circumstances, a specific opportunity to use a proverb - then following through in your actions with what was before only an abstract idea.
- The wisdom that made the world will help us understand why it is as it is and how we can make the best of our lives in it. It is supremely expressed in the great plan of redemption by which we are delivered from the world's evil (Ephesians 3:10: His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms).
- Wisdom is personified in the redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30: It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.)
- Wisdom, defined in Proverbs 1:2-3, is a combination of discipline, understanding, and prudence (one able to relate to others). Trust, love, and obedience are what it means to “fear the Lord.”

What is a Proverb?

- The word Proverb means “to be like.” Proverbs contain comparisons between everyday physical images and life’s truths. In the Bible, proverbs are plain, ethical statements that illustrate the ways of man versus the wisdom of God.
- A Proverb is terse. It is complete in itself, not requiring development or qualification. Generalizations are greatly condensed so you get some paradoxes.
- A Proverb is poetic. Hebrew poetry, unlike English poetry, lacks rhyme and rhythmic form. It is mainly parallelism, in which the second member of the sentence balances or contrasts with the first.
- A Proverb is popular and practical. There is no abstract discussion of theories and little theology. The subjects are everyday ones: honesty, money, children, speech, sloth, pride, anger. We can see ourselves in them.

READING PROVERBS WISELY

SESSION 1



Overview of Proverbs

- **Authors:** Proverbs is a composite work, bringing together the writings and sayings of a number of “the wise.” King Solomon is author of many proverbs and gave oversight to the rest of the collection. Other wise men also contributed and have collections in the Book.
 - It is a selection of Solomon’s complete works of 3,000 sayings. Only 800 appear in Proverbs.
 - Sayings of Agur (Proverbs 30) and Lemuel (Proverbs 31) are both thought to be kings from Northern Arabia
 - The Epilogue (Proverbs 31:10-31) and perhaps the Prologue (Proverbs 1-9) may have been the work of the person who compiled the book.
 - There are seven collections. The number seven symbolizes divine perfection.
- **Time Period:** c971-931 BC (Solomon). The proverbs as a whole bear Solomon’s stamp but the Book of Proverbs was likely compiled by an anonymous sage in Hezekiah’s (715-686 BC) or Ezra’s time (post exile 480-440 BC).
- **Purpose:** Proverbs describes the importance of living wisely and in the fear of the LORD instead of following the seductive path of folly.
 - Proverbs advances the overarching Biblical theme: God’s calling, preserving, and shaping a people for himself.
 - Offers practical counsel that is also meaningfully spiritual
 - Compiling proverbs and discourses on wisdom was a common practice in ancient world, but only this collection bases its wisdom on the fear of the LORD (YAHWEH)
- **Original language:** Hebrew
- **Audience:** May have originally been written for budding royal officials, but has been democratized for all of Israel’s youth. Especially pertains to young men of marriageable age. This explains the male-centered nature of much of the material (PR:1-9), that focuses on illicit sexual relations with females.

Solomon's Wisdom

- Solomon lived from 970-931 BC
- Many references to Solomon's wisdom (1 Kings, 2 Chronicles)
- Solomon was given wisdom "greater than the wisdom of all the people of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt (1 Kings 4:30). He asked for wisdom to adjudicate and govern his people well.
- When Solomon's proverbs and the sayings of the wise are internalized into the heart by memory and faith, the wisdom of God himself enters hearts of flesh (PR 2:10).
- Comparable wisdom literature from Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Levant staddle the biblical world from the 3rd millennium BC to Greco-Roman times. Some of the collections share similarities with these other works. These proverbs, however, relate to living under covenant with Yahweh.
- James 1:5 says we can all have wisdom: If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.
- Some wonder how Solomon could fall so far if he was wise. Proverbs 19:27 provides an answer: "Stop listening to instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge." Being wise one day is no guarantee of being wise the next.

Proverbs



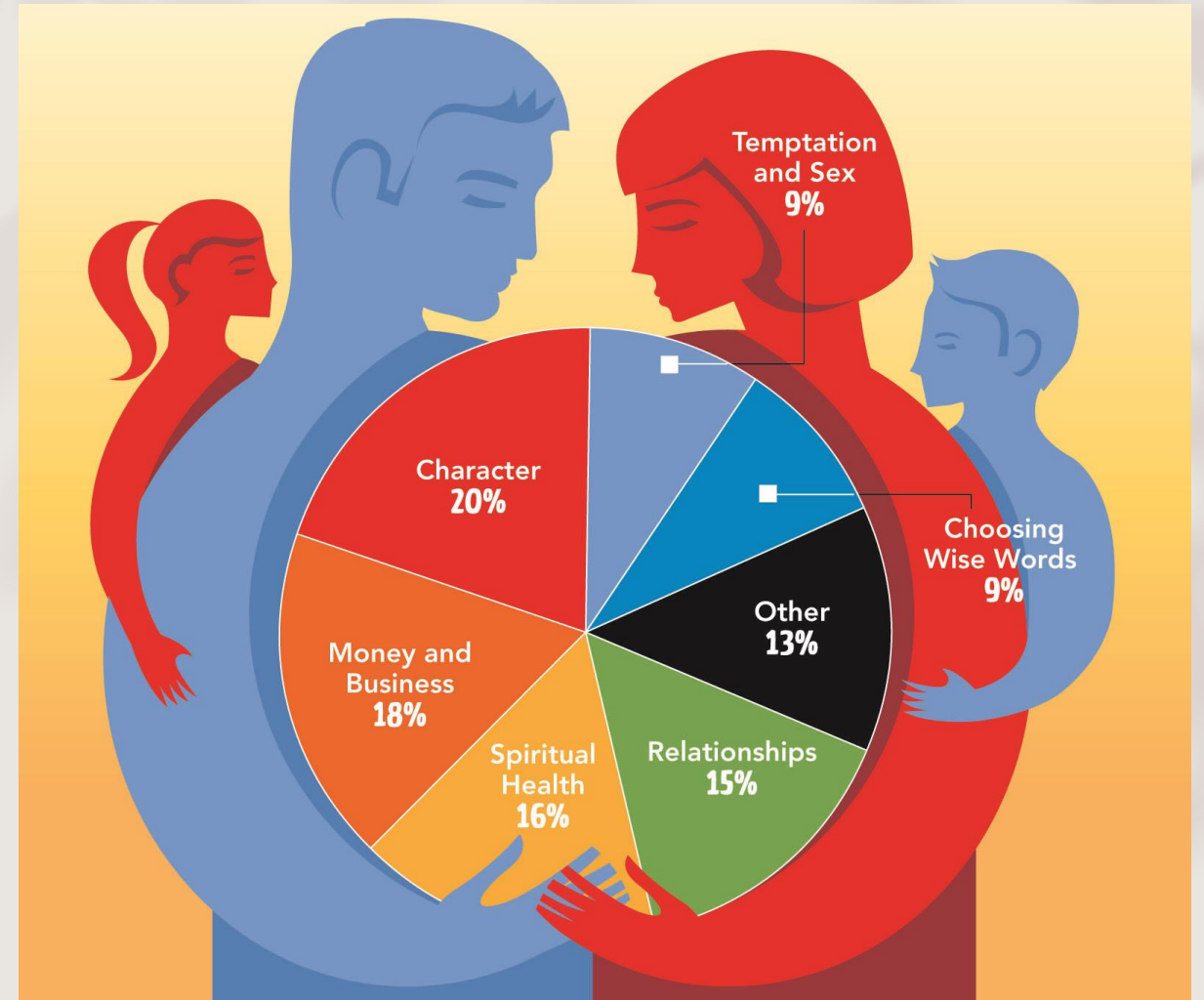
Key Themes of Proverbs

***The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction
(Proverbs 1:7)***

- The knowledge of God is insight. We are to embrace wisdom. Wisdom is the skill in the art of godly living.
- Wisdom begins with the fear of and trust in God. Practically it is making wise choices between good and evil behavior. Such wisdom is to be valued above all else in order to live a full and godly life.
- God's ways are practical and apply to every aspect of his people's lives.
- The wise have faith not in the proverbs per se, but in the Lord who upholds the truth of the proverbs.
- Wisdom is distinct from knowledge but cannot be had apart from it.
- The flow of redemptive history poetically depicted in the theme of two paths and the theme of godly kingship.
- We are transformed by wisdom to become more like the model of wisdom in Proverbs 31 who say Yes to God.
- The dominate metaphor for the moral life in Proverbs is "the way." Life is a journey and our lifestyle is either wise or foolish on that journey. The wise keep in mind the consequences of their actions.

Topics in Proverbs

- Proverbs is a collection (anthology) of individual proverbs that offer skill in the art of godly living.
- They are observations of how God designed the world to work; *they should not be taken as promises.*





*The Proverbs are aimed at the Simple and the Wise
(Proverbs 1:4-6)*

Primary Characters in Proverbs

The Simple: those who remain uncommitted to either wisdom or folly; they are gullible and easily misled. They are not weak-minded but untaught and immature.

The Wise: they embrace God's covenant. They are already trained and leading righteous lives but are not perfect and knows there is more to learn. They are teachable and can become wiser.

The Fool: They are opposed to God. They don't listen to advice. They are fixed in the correctness of their opinion. They are not beyond hope *if* they become teachable.

The Scoffer/Mocker: those who are proud and arrogant and scorn God's ways. They are hardened apostates and are beyond wisdom's call.

The Sluggard: those who have an unreliable and procrastinating nature. They are hard to do business with and lose their families' heritage.

Lady Wisdom: personifies the characteristics of wisdom.

Lady Folly: personifies the characteristics of folly.

Woman of Excellence personifies the ideal woman; a portrait of feminine wisdom. She embodies in all areas of life the full character of wisdom commanded in Proverbs.

How to Read The Proverbs

- The first collection (PR 1-9) illuminates the value of wisdom and identifies the prerequisite for acquiring the wisdom presented in the remainder of the book.
- All are intended to be read and studied in light of the Prologue
 - The need to attain wisdom and reject folly (to walk in righteousness and shun evil).
 - Proverb's fundamental theology: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding (PR 9:10)
- Many of the proverbs are common to other cultures, but the Book of Proverbs is tailored for life in the covenant community of Israel.
 - These proverbs presuppose the covenant of law (PR 6:16-19) but also the life of the people of God in their promised land (PR 2:21-22).
- Pay close attention to the differing outcomes of those who follow God's wisdom and those who do not.
- Watch for contrasting issues (e.g., foolishness/wisdom, laziness/diligence, adultery/faithfulness)
- Look for principles that build strong marriages, undergird faithful parenting, and establish good relationships.

Reading the Proverbs Wisely

- Proverbs describe general principles. They don't cover all exceptions.
- Proverbs are not promises or guarantees from God.
- Wisdom is rooted in relationship with God. It is God who created us and who teaches us wisdom.
- We need to become wise in all areas of life, and learn to apply proverbs correctly to different situations.
- Life is complex. We need to draw on the wisdom of other books of the Bible to understand the complexity of life and suffering.

Key Principles for Reading the Proverbs

- Each verse is an entity in itself. Each saying is self-contained and not particularly connected with what precedes or follows.
- Most of the Proverbs are in the spirit of the old Covenant (the Law). Most are addressed to people to whom the promises of the Old Covenant were given. These said that those who obeyed the Law were assured of plenty of the good things of life, whereas those who disobeyed would be deprived of them (Deuteronomy 11:26-28). But most of the sayings are universal in their application.
- True wisdom comes from God and his instruction. God gave the Mosaic law and the prophets to his people to reveal his will. Proverbs deals with matters that are too fine to be covered in law and too small to be addressed by prophets.
- There is little gospel in Proverbs and to read it in will make us miss God's message. It is a book to be taken at face value. Allegorizing, typologizing, and spiritualizing are inappropriate. The points made apply to Christ, the gospel and Christian life, but these applications must be derived from an understanding of the plain meaning.

Literary Considerations

- **Hebrew Poetry** is marked by terseness, vivid imagery, and figures of speech. It is characterized by parallel lines in which the second line either emphatically restates the first line, expands the meaning of the first line, or presents a contrast to the first line. Sometimes Hebrew poetry does not easily translate.
- **Wisdom Literature** is often more secular but is teaching covenant values. It compliments Israel's covenant tradition by reflecting upon and recontextualizing its ethical and theological worldview.
- **Wise Sayings** within the central collections of the book are distinct and refer to the people of God not the world in general. They are based on faith in Israel's covenant God. The proverbs are examples by which the people of God are to compare their own behavior or thinking.
- **Contextual Truth** is expressed in the Proverbs, but only a limited truth that other proverbs must nuance or qualify. They are not promises. Each proverb presents a truth, but this truth must be discovered within the context of the entire collection of sayings and contextualized or applied in appropriate circumstances.

Proverbs and the New Testament

- The poetic description of Lady Wisdom contributes to an understanding of Jesus' nature and identity.
 - Lady Wisdom existed before the creation
 - She humbles herself, calls sinners to repentance, and serves as a mediator between God and humanity
- Wisdom's cosmic speeches resemble Jesus' public teachings. Jesus' public discourses, like the Sermon on the Mount, make a public appeal to turn to lives of true faith and righteousness.
 - Like Lady Wisdom, Jesus uses parables, rhetoric, and hyperbole to provoke our imaginations to reckon with the cosmic realities that lie behind our personal and private behavior.
 - Jesus' promises and warnings in his parables are the same as Woman Wisdom's. The source and help and salvation is the same: embrace God.
- Christ's apostles cite the book in various ways about 60 times. In addition to direct references, the book of Proverbs plays a significant role in the church's understanding of ethics.
 - Proverbs distills and reapplies the ethical principles of Israel's covenant tradition
 - Provides a foundation for the concept of kingdom ethics for Jesus and New Testament writers
 - Proverbs describes how people can embody the virtues that mark the Kingdom of God
- Jesus taught us to be "wise as serpents" and to learn from the people of the world. Proverbs encourages this and shows us how to direct our lives to holy ends:
 - It teaches us shrewdness in the common things of life: how to discern motives and methods of the people we deal with.
 - It teaches us tact in handling our relationships; with our friends, with the bad tempered, with the foolish and the powerful. We need to be able to discern character.
 - It teaches us to be aware of the dangers that surround us and the kind of people it is best to avoid.
- The Book of Proverbs is about how to equip ourselves for everyday life in the real world and become a street-wise follower of Jesus.



Teachability

- Wisdom requires a spirit of teachability to both gain and apply knowledge
 - The reader of Proverbs, to gain wisdom, but be dedicated to receiving and obeying instruction
 - Hearing with your eyes – reading and listening—recognizing that you fall short of wisdom in some areas and need guidance
 - Walk with the wise – associate with those who offer good counsel
- We can only be taught if we listen instead of talk – we must be willing to receive instruction
 - Learning information and implementing that knowledge in life decisions
 - Receiving and obeying commandments
 - Accepting and responding to correction
- We need to recognize the limitations of our knowledge
 - We are not so self-sufficient that we don't need to learn more
 - Our desire to act independently limits our ability to walk with God
 - Read the proverbs to discern where your own wisdom could improve

*The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,
but a wise man listens to advice (PR 12:15)*

*Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes?
There is more hope for a fool than for him (PR 26:12)*

Lady Wisdom (Proverbs 1:20-33)

- Personification of wisdom shows diverse images of prophet, teacher, counselor, lover, daughter, mother, host.
- Lady Wisdom's voice follows and reinforces the father's teaching with a voice from the cosmic realm. Together with the parents Lady Wisdom provides an antidote for seductive speech.
 - Personal, moral, social, and political structures in this world are grounded in the order of God's creation.
 - She provides an urgent warning about the consequences of rejecting her counsel.
 - She is the antithesis of the adulterous woman and the woman folly.
- Lady Wisdom consistently portrayed in the most public places in the busiest times of day.
- Wisdom addresses three classes of people who have rejected her counsel: the simple, mockers, and fools.
 - Emotions play a role in rejecting wisdom's counsel. The simple *love*...simple ways, mockers *delight* in mockery, fools *hate* knowledge.
 - Wisdom upholds and reinforces the Old Testament view of the ideal human life as one that sets its heart on God and his wisdom, teaching, and law.
- Wisdom spells out the consequences of rejecting her counsel
 - Warns fools of pending calamity, violence, chaos and death. These words spoken in a metaphorical and symbolic sense, typical of poetic language of wisdom literature. Language is aimed at shaping present behavior and belief, not in predicting future events.
- Wisdom laughs at the fate of the fool. Yahweh also laughs at conspiring and rebellious kings and nations (Psalm 2:4). The laughter illuminates the deep spirit of defiance, indifference, and antiauthoritarianism that pervades the hearts of the wicked. Their aims can not succeed.
- Ultimately, to choose folly is to reject the fear of the Lord – the key to wisdom.

Lessons From the Father to the Son

- Warning against the enticement of sinners (PR 1:10-19)
- Warning against rejecting wisdom:
 - The son must seek wisdom (PR 2:1-4)
 - Then he will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God (PR 2:5-6)
 - Which in turn will protect his way (PR 2:7-8)
 - And enter his heart to guard him (PR 2:9-11)
- God's promises of blessings and the son's obligations (PR 3:1-10)
 - Love and faithfulness = favor with God and people (PR 3:3-4)
 - Trust in the LORD = straight paths (PR 3:5-6)
 - Humility = good health (PR 3:7-8)
 - Tithes and Offerings = abundant crops (PR 3:9-10)
- The Value of Wisdom (PR 3:11-35)
 - Wisdom provides blessings (PR 3:13-18)
 - The role of wisdom in creation (PR 3:19-20)
 - Wisdom blesses with peace and prosperity (PR 3:21-26)
- The Importance of Wisdom (PR 4:1-27)
- Warnings Against Adultery, Folly, Laziness, and Wickedness (PR 5:1-6:35)
 - Seven things the LORD hates (PR 6:16-19):
haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up controversy.
- Warnings Against the Unfaithful Wife (PR 7:1-27)

The Rival Banquets of Wisdom and Folly (PR 9:1-18)

- Proverbs 9 begins and ends with rival invitations to “all who are simple” to banquet at the houses of Wisdom and Folly (PR 9:1-6; 13-18). Folly mimics Wisdom and echoes the seductions of the unfaithful wife.
- Two brief lessons (PR 9:7-9, 10-12) contrast the wise and mockers leading you to read the proverbs themselves with diligence and thoughtfulness.

If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; If you are a mocker, you alone will suffer (PR 9:12)

Wisdom Personified (Proverbs 1:20-33)

Out in the open wisdom calls aloud, She raises her voice in the public square; On top of the wall she cries out at the city gate she makes her speech

How long will you who are simple love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? Repent at my rebuke! Then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings.

But once you refuse to listen when I call and no one pays attention when I stretch out my hand, Since you disregard all my advice and do not accept my rebuke, I in turn will laugh when disaster strikes you; I will mock when calamity overtakes you—

Then you will call to me but I will not answer. Since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.

For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, with out fear of harm.

Folly Personified (Proverbs 9:13-18)

Folly is an unruly woman,
She is simple and knows nothing
She sits at the door of her house,
on a seat at the highest point of the city,

Calling out to those who pass by,
who go straight on their way,
“Let all who are simple come to my house!”

To those who have no sense she says
“Stolen water is sweet;
food eaten in secret is delicious!”

But little do they know that the dead are there
That her guests are deep in the realm of the dead

Wisdom, Jesus, and Rhetoric

- Wisdom's cosmic speeches resemble Jesus' public teachings. Jesus' public discourses, like the Sermon on the Mount, make a public appeal to turn to lives of true faith and righteousness.
- Like Woman Wisdom, Jesus uses parables, rhetoric, and hyperbole to provoke our imaginations to reckon with the cosmic realities that lie behind our personal and private behavior.
- Jesus' promises and warnings in his parables are the same as Woman Wisdom's. The source and help and salvation is the same: embrace God.

Assignment

- In reading Proverbs 10-16 next week, pick out a Proverb you want to discuss
 - It holds an important truth you want to discuss
 - It talks to one of your strengths
 - It refers to an area of your life you want to work on improving
 - It was confusing
- We can't discuss each of the proverbs we read during the week, but we will highlight ones you found important. Come prepared with one proverb that you will
 - Read to the group
 - Explain its significance to you
- 15 minutes will be allocated each week to reviewing these. Everyone should try to participate.



WEEK 1 STUDY GUIDE: PROVERBS 1-9

The Preamble (PR 1:1-7)

- The proverbs originate with Solomon, the son of David, and King of Israel (PR 1:1)
- The purpose of Proverbs (PR 2-5)
 - To attain a prudent life that is righteous and just
 - The proverbs are addressed to the everyone: the young and the simple (PR 1:4) as well as the older and wiser (PR 1:5)
- Basic contrast between the wise and foolish is presented: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

The Prologue (PR 1:8 – 9:18)

- The prologue introduces how to read the Proverbs that begin in PR 10
- The prologue provides 10 lessons from a father to his sons
 - Each new lesson begins with “Listen, my son or My son” followed by the lesson
 - The lessons are structured and arranged, building toward the climax of PR:9 where wisdom and folly make their final appeals.
 - Most of the material comes as admonitions

Lesson One: Warning and Rebuke (PR 1:8-33)

- Warning against the enticement of wicked men who plot evil against others for easy money or ill-gotten gain (PR 1:10-19)
- In the interlude (PR 1:20-33) personified wisdom speaks, rebuking not the “son” but the “simple ones” and “mockers” who would entice the son away from his parents’ wisdom. Her rebuke describes the just end of such people.

Lesson Two: Safeguard Against the Wicked (PR 2:1-22)

- The Safeguards against the wicked:
 - The son must seek wisdom (PR 2:1-4)
 - Then he will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God (PR 2:5-6)
 - Which in turn will protect his way (PR 2:7-8)
 - And enter his heart to guard him (PR 2:9-11)
- The son needs protection
 - From wicked men (PR 2:12-15)

- From the “wayward wife” (PR 2:16-19)
- Once protected, he can return to his walking in the paths of righteousness (PR 2:20-22)

Lesson Three and Four: The Value of Wisdom (PR 3:1-35)

- God’s promises and the son’s obligations (PR 3:1-10)
 - Love and faithfulness = favor with God and people (PR 3:3-4)
 - Trust in the LORD = straight paths (PR 3:5-6)
 - Humility = good health (PR 3:7-8)
 - Tithes and Offerings = abundant crops (PR 3:9-10)
- God disciplines those he loves (PR 3:11-12)
- Three poems that highlight the value of Wisdom in 6-2-6 couplet arrangement (PR 3:13-36)
 - Wisdom provides blessings (PR 3:13-18)
 - The role of wisdom in creation (PR 3:19-20)
 - Wisdom blesses with peace and prosperity (PR 3:21-26)
- PR 3:27-35 (the end of lesson 4) correspond to lesson 3 by offering negative admonitions and warnings.

Lesson Five - Seven: The Supremacy of Wisdom (PR 4:1-27)

- Because the family has a heritage of wisdom, the son is urged to continue in it (PR 4:1-9)
- Stay off the wrong way...the way of wickedness (PR 4:10-19)
- Do not swerve off the right way, the way of righteousness (PR 4:20-27)

Lesson Eight: Warnings Against Adultery, Folly, and Wickedness (PR 5:1-6:19)

- Warning against adultery (PR 5:3-14, 20), and an admonition to marital fidelity (PR 5:15-19)
- Warning against the wicked (PR 5:21-23)
- Warning against two kinds of folly: Securing strangers (PR 6:1-5) and sloth (PR 6:6-11)
- Final warning against the wicked (PR 6:12-19)

Lesson Nine: Further Warning Against Adultery (PR 6:20-35)

- Lesson begins as the others did (PR 6:20-23) but ends on a warning note (PR 6:24-25) that will be elaborated upon.
- A three-fold series of couplets (PR 6:26-29, 30-33, and 34-35) point out the fearful consequences of adultery (punishment, disgrace, and a vengeful husband).

Lesson Ten and Second Interlude: The Unfaithful Wife and Wisdom's Call (PR 7:1 – 8:36)

- This final lesson corresponds to Lesson 8, focusing on the seductive tactics of the unfaithful, adulterous wife who will also serve as an analogue for the invitation of Folly at the end of the Prologue (PR 7:1-27)
- The second interlude (PR 8:1-36) corresponds to the first one (PR 1:20-33) which followed the warning against the “wicked men.”
 - This time Wisdom offers self-praise to the simple and foolish (PR 8:5) to recognize her value both to kings and the prosperous (PR 8:12-21) and Yahweh himself (v 8:22-31).
 - At the end (v 8:32-36) wisdom steps into the father's shoes and invites the sons to watch daily at her doorway (vis-à-vis the seductress).

Epilogue: Rival Banquets of Wisdom and Folly (PR 9:1-18)

- This final series begins and ends with rival invitations to “all who are simple” to banquet at the houses of Wisdom and Folly (PR 9:1-6; 13-18). Folly mimics Wisdom and echoes the seductions of the unfaithful wife.
- Two brief lessons (PR 9:7-9, 10-12) contrast the wise and mockers leading you to read the proverbs themselves with diligence and thoughtfulness.

References:

Fee, G.D. and Stuart, D. *How to Read the Bible Book by Book*. Zondervan. 2002.

References