

Wisdom for God's People

Summary and Goal

God has given us His Word to instruct us in how to walk in wisdom. In the Book of Proverbs, we see how wisdom is rooted in the fear of the Lord, how it leads us to trust in God, and how it offers us practical guidance in everyday matters of life. We also see that wisdom points us to Jesus Christ, and wisdom in the life of the Christian leads us to point others to Him as well.

Main Passages

Proverbs 1:1-7

Proverbs 3:1-12

Proverbs 22:1-10

Session Outline

1. Wisdom is rooted in the fear of God (Prov. 1:1-7).
2. Wisdom leads us to faith in God (Prov. 3:1-12).
3. Wisdom shows us how to live in the world God has made (Prov. 22:1-10).

Theological Theme

Biblical wisdom involves the skill of faithful living in the world God has made.

Christ Connection

Wisdom is the skill of living faithfully in God's world, but all of us have sinned. Wisdom shows us how to live but cannot save us. For this reason, Jesus became God-given wisdom for us (1 Cor. 1:30) so that through His death and resurrection (which appear foolish to the world), we might be saved according to the wise plan of God.

Missional Application

God calls us to follow the path of the wise and, like the Wisdom character in Proverbs, to call others to faithful and wise living through Jesus.

Wisdom for God's People

Introduction Option

Before the group meeting begins, post on opposite sides of one wall the following phrases:

- "Relationship with God"
- "Relationships with Others"

As group members arrive, point out the spectrum created by the two phrases on the one wall. Ask:

"Is wisdom more about our relationship with God or our relationships with other people?" and encourage them to stand along the spectrum in a place that matches their answer to that question.

Read the "Voices from the Church" quote by Jay Adams (leader p. 94; PSG p. 74), and then ask the following question:

- Why must the exercise of wisdom involve both a relationship with God and relationships with people?

? For Further Discussion

How would you explain the concept "the fear of the LORD" to an unbeliever?

How does our fear of God fit with our love for God?

Introduction

Begin with the question "What is wisdom?" (leader p. 94; PSG p. 74). Refer to Proverbs 6:6-8 and 30:24-25 to show how the Bible illustrates wisdom using ants (leader p. 94).

- ? What comes to mind when you hear the word *wisdom*?
- ? What are some situations you are facing right now in which wisdom is needed?

Draw attention to the Proverbs information on Pack Item 7: Wisdom Literature as needed throughout this session. Summarize this session on the Book of Proverbs, which God has given to instruct us how to walk in wisdom (leader p. 95; PSG p. 75).

1. Wisdom is rooted in the fear of God (Prov. 1:1-7).

State that wisdom starts with a relationship with God (leader p. 95), and then ask a volunteer to read Proverbs 1:1-7. Note what wisdom involves, stressing that it is a gift from God (leader p. 95; PSG p. 75).

- ? How will a Christian's receiving of instruction differ from an unbeliever's?

Point out that wisdom is more than merely information because it involves the fear of God. Establish that there's a difference between worldly wisdom and biblical wisdom (leader p. 96; PSG p. 76).

- ? Why is fearing the Lord essential to become wise?
- ? Why is it impossible for people to be truly wise without fearing God and walking in His ways?

2. Wisdom leads us to faith in God (Prov. 3:1-12).

Contrast biblical wisdom with the popular idea of believing in yourself. Then read Proverbs 3:1-12. Show that **faith in God means we throw off self-reliance** (leader pp. 97-98; PSG pp. 76-77).

- Write down a few areas of life in which you are tempted to rely on yourself. What would shifting your reliance from self to the Lord look like in these cases?

Say that Solomon, in verses 9-10, tells us that **faith in God means we let Him manage our finances**. Address how much more should we honor God with our wealth as Christians living this side of the cross (leader p. 98; PSG p. 78).

- What does foolishness look like in financial matters? What does wisdom look like?

Also explain that **faith in God means we suffer well**. Stress that God’s love for us must include that He discipline us; as God’s children, what feels like God harming us is actually a form of healing (leader p. 99; PSG pp. 78-79).

- What are some of the obstacles we face when it comes to faith in God?
- How can we see difficulties not as obstacles but as opportunities for trusting in God?

3. Wisdom shows us how to live in the world God has made (Prov. 22:1-10).

Read Proverbs 22:1-10. Appeal to James 1:22 to speak about the dangers of merely hearing God’s words but not doing them (leader p. 100; PSG pp. 79-80).

- In the proverbs above, what are some practical takeaways you see?

Break into groups of 2-3 and allow a few minutes for group members to fill out the table in the PSG in response to the discussion question above. Use the answers provided in the leader content to converse with the group members about what they have written (leader pp. 100-101; PSG p. 80).

- We sometimes make foolish mistakes, even when we know the wiser way. How does the gospel help us deal with our foolishness?

Conclusion

Close the session with 1 Corinthians 1:30, saying that in Jesus we see that wisdom isn’t merely information; wisdom is a Person (*a connection made on Pack Item 3: Seeing Jesus in the Kingdom*). By placing our faith in Jesus, He makes us wise people (leader p. 101; PSG p. 81). *Apply the truths of this session with “His Mission, Your Mission”* (PSG p. 82).

Point 2 Option

Ask: How is God’s omniscience both good news and bad news for sinners?

Read the “Essential Christian Doctrine” *God Is Omniscient* (leader p. 98; PSG p. 77), and ask the following questions:

- Why should God’s omniscience humble us and cause us to fear Him?
- How does this attribute of God free us from self-reliance and our own ideas of wisdom?

? For Further Discussion

In which areas of life are we most prone to merely hear God’s words but not do them?

Christ Connection: Wisdom is the skill of living faithfully in God’s world, but all of us have sinned. Wisdom shows us how to live but cannot save us. For this reason, Jesus became God-given wisdom for us (1 Cor. 1:30) so that through His death and resurrection (which appear foolish to the world), we might be saved according to the wise plan of God.

Missional Application: God calls us to follow the path of the wise and, like the Wisdom character in Proverbs, to call others to faithful and wise living through Jesus.

Wisdom for God's People

Voices from the Church

"As the Psalms focus on *man* in relationship to *God*, the Proverbs focus on *man* in relationship to *man*. But the relationships one bears to other men are always against the backdrop of one's relationship to *God*, which affects these lesser ones at all points."¹

—Jay Adams

Introduction



What is wisdom? Some people point to knowledge and information. Others may think of wisdom as life experience. A few might recall pithy one-liners similar to what you find in fortune cookies.

But how does the Bible talk about wisdom? We need look no further than the ant. Yes, the ant! Now, I know ants are rarely chosen as the epitome of, well, anything. But that is the point that Solomon wanted to make when he used the ant as an example of wisdom: "Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise. Without having any chief, officer, or ruler, she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest...Four things on earth are small, but they are exceedingly wise: the ants are a people not strong, yet they provide their food in the summer" (Prov. 6:6-8; 30:24-25).

The focus here is not the ant's knowledge or experience or intellect. The point is the ant knows *how* to live. The ant knows what it should *do*. It knows how to navigate the seasons of life. What an amazing, but unlikely, place to look for wisdom, insight, and discernment!

Wisdom is not less than knowledge, but it is certainly more than knowledge. Wisdom isn't so much about knowing *that*; it's more about knowing *how*. Wise people know how to live faithfully in the world. They know how to tame their tongue, delay gratification, control their appetites and desires, and how to suffer well.

As Christians, we are constantly presented with situations in which wisdom is required. For example, I have three young boys; each is wired differently. One is an extreme introvert, one an extreme extrovert, and the other somewhere in between. They don't want the same things in the same ways. They respond differently to correction. One cries, one protests, and one ignores me altogether. I need wisdom as a parent, and I believe that in whatever situation you find yourself today, you need wisdom as well.

-  What comes to mind when you hear the word *wisdom*?
-  What are some situations you are facing right now in which wisdom is needed?

Session Summary

In this session, we look at the Proverbs to see how God has given us His Word to instruct us in how to walk in wisdom. We will see how wisdom is rooted in the fear of the Lord, how it leads us to trust in God, and how it offers us practical guidance in everyday matters of life. We'll also see that wisdom points us to Jesus Christ, and wisdom in the life of the Christian will lead us to point others to Him as well.

1. Wisdom is rooted in the fear of God (Prov. 1:1-7).

Wisdom starts with a relationship with God. He is the fountain of all wisdom, insight, and knowledge, and thus, only the fool attempts to live without God. That is the argument Solomon made in the opening verses of Proverbs:

¹ *The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:*

² *To know wisdom and instruction,
to understand words of insight,*

³ *to receive instruction in wise dealing,
in righteousness, justice, and equity;*

⁴ *to give prudence to the simple,
knowledge and discretion to the youth—*

⁵ *Let the wise hear and increase in learning,
and the one who understands obtain guidance,*

⁶ *to understand a proverb and a saying,
the words of the wise and their riddles.*

⁷ *The fear of the LORD
is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

Notice first how being wise is related to receiving information. Wisdom involves *understanding, words of insight, instruction, learning, and knowledge*. As previously stated, wisdom is more than information, but it is certainly not less. Knowing how to live is dependent on ideas, sayings, and teachings.

So wisdom isn't just something that "comes to us," like a special intuition; it is a gift from God that is granted through His Word (which includes Proverbs—31 chapters of information). God wants us to hear, learn, and obey. He intends to instruct, guide, and exhort His people with knowledge and insight.

This means that as Christians, we must avail ourselves to the knowledge and information around us. We must be diligent to study and read and learn and grow.

Further Commentary

“‘Wisdom’ is having mastery of a subject of knowledge; it encompasses discipline, knowledge, prudence, and other virtues. It is the ability to apply knowledge to overcome any problem in life. Biblical ‘wisdom,’ which is a gift from God (2:6), includes morality and the knowledge of God. ‘Discipline’ has to do with warnings about the consequences of errant behavior, or loving correction to those who have failed to heed such warnings. It can involve physical punishment. The Hebrew word is often translated ‘instruction’ (v. 3) because the goal is always edification and education, not just punishment. ‘Understanding’ means internalizing knowledge so that it directs action. ‘Insightful sayings’ are those that reveal truth. ‘Wise instruction’ is literally ‘the discipline... of prudence.’ Prudence is skill or cleverness; a talent for insight, observation, or scrutiny; practical wisdom that leads to success. The word is translated ‘wise/wiser/wisdom’ (v. 3; 14:35; 16:23; 17:2; 21:11,16), ‘prudent’ (10:5), ‘discerning’ (15:24), ‘understands’ (16:20), ‘succeeds’ (17:8), ‘sensible’ (19:14), and ‘considers’ (21:12). This cleverness is morally guided by ‘righteousness’ (agreement with God’s directives), ‘justice’ (restoration of what is right), and ‘integrity’ (what is straight, right, and fair).”²

—David K. Stabnow,
HCSB Study Bible

Further Commentary

“The beginning (i.e. the first and controlling principle, rather than a stage which one leaves behind; cf. Eccl. 12:13) is not merely a right method of thought but a right relation: a worshipping submission (‘fear’) to the God of the covenant, who has revealed himself by name (‘the Lord,’ i.e. Yahweh: Ex. 3:13-15). ‘Knowledge,’ then, in its full sense, is a relationship, dependent on revelation and inseparable from character (‘wisdom and training,’ 7b). When we fence off (as we must) limited fields of knowledge for special study, the missing context must be remembered, or our knowing is precocious and distorted, as at the fall, and we end by knowing less (cf. 3:7; Rom. 1:21,22), not more.”³

—Derek Kidner

Voices from Church History

“Except a man fear the Lord, he is unable to renounce sin.”⁴

—Ambrose (circa 340-397)

 How will a Christian's receiving of instruction differ from an unbeliever's?

Wisdom involves information. But we must never believe that because we have lots of information we are wise. Solomon went on to say that wisdom is rooted in the fear of the Lord (v. 7). We must start with God, who alone possesses all wisdom and knowledge.


Think about that for a moment. God literally knows all things about all things. He never learns. He never has a new thought. He is never surprised by new information. He knows all information exhaustively. He is an expert on everything. There is no body of information out there that He doesn't know about. For this reason, it is foolish not to fear Him (v. 7). God is not one option among many avenues to true wisdom. He is the only option!

Wisdom, in the biblical sense, is not available to someone who does not fear the Lord or walk in His ways. In other words, we cannot expect God to give us wisdom without also expecting Him to ask for our full obedience. It can't work any other way. We go to Him first. We desire Him first. Only then does God pour out His wisdom on us. We must fear Him, which doesn't mean we cower in fear before Him but that we learn to revere Him and regard Him above all things. No one is more valuable, no possession more precious to us, than the Lord.

We should also note here that Solomon used the word “LORD” (Hebrew, *YHWH*). This is not a mere title; this is God's name. Solomon envisioned a person who feared the Lord and trusted that He—and He alone—brought Israel out of Egypt and established the people for Himself. This is the God who is to be feared and revered. And by doing so, we become wise. No other definition of wisdom can suffice.

There's a difference between worldly wisdom and biblical wisdom. Although people in our society may have some level of wisdom, according to the world, Solomon would make a distinction between the world's wisdom and *true* God-given wisdom. Biblical wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord, and this is a central theme in Proverbs, and in the Bible as a whole. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight” (Prov. 9:10, cf. Ps. 111:10). Wisdom is rooted in fear of the Lord.

 Why is fearing the Lord essential to become wise?

 Why is it impossible for people to be truly wise without fearing God and walking in His ways?

2. Wisdom leads us to faith in God (Prov. 3:1-12).

It's popular in our day to hear people say, "You just have to believe in yourself." In one sense, a measure of self-confidence is something good and healthy. But "just believing in yourself" as a way of life is the way of foolishness. True wisdom leads us not to faith in ourselves but in God.

We saw earlier that the fool despises wisdom and discipline, which is another way of saying that the fool despises the Lord, since he does not fear the Lord. In this section we are going to see how wisdom leads us not only to fear the Lord but also to trust Him, rely on Him, and keep Him at the center of our lives.

- ¹ My son, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my 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.
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.
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.
⁹ Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
¹⁰ then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.
¹¹ My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
¹² for the LORD reproves him whom he loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights.*

If we had to summarize Solomon's main point in this passage, we might say: "Put your faith in the Lord, not in yourself." Wisdom is rooted in the fear of the Lord, and our fear of God must translate into a rock solid faith in God. So what does faith in God look like?

Further Commentary

"The Hebrew verb translated 'trust' is cognate with an Arabic verb that means to throw oneself down on one's face, to lie down spread-eagle in complete reliance—to make it as graphic as I can, to do a belly-flop on God with all our sin and all our failure and all our fears. We stake everything on the gospel promises of God. If God fails us, we are [condemned]. If God comes through, we are saved forever. Real trust is that blunt and daring and simple."⁵

—Raymond C. Ortlund Jr.

Further Commentary

"The command to trust God 'with all your heart' means that the total personality is to be committed to God's care, although it emphasizes the mind and volition. The prohibitions against depending on one's own understanding and against intellectual pride (vv. 5b,7a) implicitly reject a 'secular' search for wisdom and look back to the thesis of the book (1:7)."⁶

—Duane A. Garrett

99 Essential Christian Doctrines

9. God Is Omniscient

Scripture teaches that God is all-knowing. He is the One who “is perfect in knowledge” (Job 37:16), and this knowledge extends to all things past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. His knowledge is complete, and as He is outside of time, He has known from all eternity whatever will come to pass. In response to God’s omniscience, we admit our finite knowledge and trust His decisions as wise and good.

Faith in God means we throw off self-reliance (vv. 5-8).

Only fools think they’ve arrived. In fact, they *have* arrived because fools can go no further than their own worldly wisdom can take them! This is why Solomon pleaded with his son to trust in the Lord with all his might. This, in turn, meant he was never to trust his own wisdom and understanding, nor to consider himself wise by his own standards.

We are not the standard of wisdom. We are not to trust in ourselves and think that we have mastered life. In fact, it is impossible to trust in ourselves and at the same time trust in the Lord. One will inevitably drive out the other. Leaning on our experience and insight naturally tempers our ability and urgency to trust in the Lord. On the other hand, the more we trust in the Lord, the less we will trust in ourselves. We will discover that as we trust in the Lord, He directs our paths and leads us into joy and peace.

- ❓ Write down a few areas of life in which you are tempted to rely on yourself. What would shifting your reliance from self to the Lord look like in these cases?

Faith in God means we let Him manage our money (vv. 9-10).

It is impossible to talk about having faith in God without eventually getting to the subject of money. Jesus said that we cannot serve God and money (Matt. 6:24). Think about that for a second. Jesus did not say you can’t serve God and power. He did not say you can’t serve God and popularity. Both of those are true, but He said “money” because He knows that money has a god-like power. It can give us power, status, acclaim, and security.

Solomon tells us that faith in God has to translate into trusting Him with our finances. This starts with giving. We are to honor Him with the first fruits of our income. We can debate the ins and outs of how much Christians ought to give and what percentage God expects of us. But let’s be certain that we always consider money and giving in light of the cross. Solomon was talking about honoring God with our wealth before the cross. How much more should we honor God with our wealth as people who have seen and experienced the grace of God displayed through Jesus’ death and resurrection! “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).

Our God gave everything to us. This means that we can trust Him with all our wealth and possessions. To state it clearly, we cannot say we have faith in God if we do not trust Him with our money.

- ❓ What does foolishness look like in financial matters? What does wisdom look like?

Faith in God means we suffer well (vv. 11-12).



Since God loves us, He must discipline us. Because He wants our growth, maturity, and holiness, He chooses to send trials and difficulties our way. Solomon said we must interpret these events as evidence that God delights in us. He compared this to a father who delights in his son. It is precisely because he delights in his son that he must discipline him. If my son runs into the street, knowing I commanded him not to, and if I did not take action to discipline him, what kind of father would I be?

God is the perfect Father. He knows exactly how to discipline us and bring about our good. Even though it feels like God is harming us, He is actually healing us. We must not despise this, knowing that discipline is medicine, not food. We don't enjoy medicine, but we know it kills off the bacteria and sickness that is robbing our health.

Suffering and trials are a means to an end—our joy and sanctification. They expose the things that we so dearly cling to for joy and security, and they reveal our lack of faith in God. But faith in God means that we trust Him especially in the midst of trials and sorrows, believing that He is good and does good (Ps. 119:68).

Many of you have perhaps sung the hymn “Trust and Obey.” One of my favorite verses says: “But we never can prove, The delights of His love, Until all on the altar we lay; For the favor He shows, And the joy He bestows, Are for them who will trust and obey.”⁷

John Sammis, the man who wrote this hymn, understood what Solomon was saying in this text. There is no greater way to experience the blessings and fullness God has for us than by trusting Him with all our might and obeying all He says to do. This is our message to a world so consumed with self-reliance and self-exaltation. Wisdom offers another way, a way into peace, joy, and hope. May we proclaim that message boldly!

-  What are some of the obstacles we face when it comes to faith in God?
-  How can we see difficulties not as obstacles but as opportunities for trusting in God?

3. Wisdom shows us how to live in the world God has made (Prov. 22:1-10).

Proverbs is a practical book. And that should come as no surprise since wisdom is about life. Wisdom is truth in action. God wants us not only to *know* things but to *do* things. Solomon intended for his hearers to actually live out the truths and sayings he put forth. Here are some examples:

Voices from the Church

“To ask God to refrain from giving us ‘discipline’ would be to ask Him to love us less.”⁸

—David K. Stabnow

Voices from Church History

“Let not the Lord’s dealings with you seem harsh, rough, or unfatherly, because it is unpleasant. When the Lord’s blessed will bloweth cross your desires, it is best in humility to strike sail to him and to be willing to be laid in any way our Lord pleaseth: it is a point of denial of yourself, to be as if ye had not a will, but had made a free disposition of it to God, and had sold it over to him; and to make use of his will for your own is both true holiness, and your ease and peace.”⁹

—Samuel Rutherford (circa 1600-1661)

Further Commentary

“This proverb [22:6] is not a sure formula for success in child rearing; it is an assurance of how profound a parent’s influence can be—though that influence might be rejected. The Proverbs provide reliable guidance but they do not address every contingency encountered in a sinful world. Wise parents invest in a child during the crucial, early years, because such care typically has godly results. But even the best parenting can result in a prodigal and a prideful son (Luke 15:11-32). Ultimately, the way a child ‘should go’ (Prov. 22:6) is not a college or career choice but an eternal choice to live for God. Such a ‘way’ is profoundly influenced by parents’ actions, but is ultimately determined by the child’s heart.”¹⁰

—Raymond C. Ortlund Jr.,
Gospel Transformation Bible

Voices from the Church

“The book of Proverbs will not allow you to be a passive learner, merely soaking up information. It requires you to put God’s wisdom to work in your life...[S]omeone once described Proverbs, quite appropriately as ‘the Ten Commandments in shoe leather,’ for in that book we begin to see how wisdom can be walked out in real life.”¹¹

—Anthony Selvaggio

¹ *A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.*

² *The rich and the poor meet together; the LORD is the maker of them all.*

³ *The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it.*

⁴ *The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life.*

⁵ *Thorns and snares are in the way of the crooked; whoever guards his soul will keep far from them.*

⁶ *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

⁷ *The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.*

⁸ *Whoever sows injustice will reap calamity, and the rod of his fury will fail.*

⁹ *Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.*

¹⁰ *Drive out a scoffer, and strife will go out, and quarreling and abuse will cease.*

It is tempting to read the Lord’s words, talk about them, but never actually do them. James warned us of the dangers of merely hearing the word when he said, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (Jas. 1:22).

Reading these words without doing them is self-deception. When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them *to observe all that I have commanded you*” (Matt. 28:19-20, emphasis added). Jesus wants us to do what He said, not simply learn what He said. We often fall into a mind-set that suggests information automatically results in transformation. To be sure, we need information, but what Jesus wants us to do is obey the information we’ve been given.



In the proverbs above, what are some practical takeaways you see?

Let’s look at each verse in this section and summarize what Solomon called us to do.


- Verse 1: Build your character, not just your bank account.
- Verse 2: Don’t think your worth is based on what you have or don’t have.
- Verse 3: Know your limitations.
- Verse 4: Be humble!



- Verse 5: Guard yourself.
- Verse 6: Teach your children wisdom.
- Verse 7: Be careful and wise with debt.
- Verse 8: Live justly.
- Verse 9: Be generous.
- Verse 10: Don't be afraid to confront difficult people.

Now step back and look at this list. Think of all the areas that we covered and all the life issues we addressed. And that was in 10 verses! Wisdom comes crashing into every aspect of our lives—our finances, how we parent, our attitudes, and our posture toward the world. Wisdom leaves no stone unturned when it comes to our lives. God has spoken to us. The question is will we listen and obey. Will we actually do what He tells us to do?

The danger for many of us is to memorize these words, study them more in-depth, discuss them with one another, but never actually get around to doing them. These words, and all that God has said, must take root in our hearts and result in actual obedience to God. Only then can we really call others to embrace them and obey what God has said. Unless His truth pierces our hearts and brings about obedience, we will be ineffective and unfruitful as we call others to Him.

-  We sometimes make foolish mistakes, even when we know the wiser way. How does the gospel help us deal with our foolishness?

Conclusion

We saw at the beginning of this session that wisdom starts with a relationship with God. We see this even more vividly in the New Testament when Paul wrote, “And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30). In Jesus, we see that wisdom isn't merely information or insight; wisdom is a Person.

Jesus is God's wisdom on full display. And this Person did something that looks like foolishness in the eyes of the world—He laid down His life for us. Now, because of His death and resurrection, we can know and follow this Jesus. We can fear Him. We can put all of our faith in Him. As we do, He makes us wise people who reflect His name and announce His gospel in the world.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Wisdom is the skill of living faithfully in God's world, but all of us have sinned. Wisdom shows us how to live but cannot save us. For this reason, Jesus became God-given wisdom for us (1 Cor. 1:30) so that through His death and resurrection (which appear foolish to the world), we might be saved according to the wise plan of God.

Voices from the Church

“Living in wisdom leads to evangelism...Compelled by Christ's love and guided by Scripture's wisdom, we seek to persuade people to trust in Christ. Wisdom looks to Christ and points others to Him as well.”¹²

—Jonathan Leeman

Additional Resources

Wisdom for God's People

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10. Raymond C. Ortlund Jr., in *Gospel Transformation Bible* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 822, n. 22:6.
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Study Material

- "How Do We Interpret Proverbs?"—Chapter 28 from *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible* by Robert L. Plummer
- "Reasons to Fear God"—Article by T. M. Moore; find a link to this article at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources
- Previous *Biblical Illustrator* articles, including "The Fear of the Lord: The Meaning," can be purchased, along with other articles for this quarter, at LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator. Look for Bundles: The Gospel Project.

Sermon Podcast

Alistair Begg: "The Source of Wisdom"

Find a link to this at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources

Tip of the Week

Want Some Teaching Options?

Individuals are different. Teachers are different. Groups are different. What works for one may not work well for another. In recognition of this fact, we have a resource that provides group leaders with additional teaching options. This resource is available for each session and includes four or five interactive teaching options a teacher can make use of during group time and that point group members to their personal study guide. You can download this document for free from GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources.