

PROVERBS

Section 1 11 weeks

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This study of Proverbs groups the Proverbs by subject or topic. I have used it several times in a small group setting in the churches where I was Pastor. We always had good discussion from those in the group. There are a few things I feel I should share with you before using this material:

First: I had no intent of sharing or publishing this material until encouraged to do so by some friends. While I did consult several commentaries as I was preparing the original sermon series, I did not make notes of the references used in the messages. There was not in the beginning, nor is there now, any intent to plagiarize. Should you see anything you feel is the original thought of another, I ask for your grace and mercy.

Second: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I tend to spell certain words phonetically for the purpose of emphasis. When transforming these notes from sermon notes to teaching notes, I felt inclined to leave a number of these phonetic spellings. They help me to make emphasis in the lesson at particular points.

Third: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I make little effort to conform to rules of grammar. One example is that I often use a hyphen (-) to indicate a point where I may want to pause slightly and to keep certain thoughts connected as I speak. Another example is that I will use local colloquialisms to make points in the message.

Please accept that these notes are not an academic work. But I do hope they will help the preacher or teacher to be able to more quickly prepare their own sermon or teaching.

There are too many Christians who look at the Book of Proverbs as a "hodge-podge" of disconnected sayings. They don't have any desire to read this book, let alone to study it and feast upon it. While this collection of proverbial wisdom is characterized by short pithy statements, the Book of Proverbs is truly a marvelous collection of "wise" sayings. It is also a valuable and useful set of instructions and guidelines for living a productive and effective life.

What is a Proverb?

A proverb is an object lesson based upon a comparison or an analogy. It can be a short saying providing general truth or it can be a lesson drawn from a real life experience.

This book gives instructions for living and it doesn't skirt around or ignore the difficulties of everyday life. The instructions, wisdom, and guidelines found within this book have very practical help for the work-a-day life most of us find ourselves having to deal with. The writer (or writers) of this book present these insights in a fashion as though they are dealing with plain, ordinary people who live in the real world and deal with the common things of life.

These insights deal with individuals rather than nations, tribes, or families. They are applicable to all people regardless of the era of history, economic status, or educational level. They are based upon respect for authority, traditional values, traditional teachings, and the wisdom of mature teachers. The Book of Proverbs presents very practical ways of developing success in this life and for avoiding failure and shame.

Read Proverbs 1:5-6 and make notes:

Let the "wise" hear (listen) for the purpose of increasing (add to) their learning. Let the "discerning" get direction (guidance). We need to develop our ability to understand - especially the sayings of the "wise."

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

Make a short list of past situations in which you could have used some divinely inspired wisdom, insight, or understanding. (those times when your decision or choice turned out to your harm)

Read Proverbs 1:1-4 and make notes:

The purpose of the Book of Proverbs is explained in the first six (6) verses of chapter one. The purpose of the Book of Proverbs can be summarized into two primary purposes:

- (1) to give moral skillfulness
- (2) to give mental discernment.

"Discipline" is a necessary companion of wisdom. Discipline is a training of the moral nature, which involves correcting the way.

To "Discern" is to distinguish between things, make comparisons, and to evaluate. The meaning of discernment has an example in the kind of rope pulling that is done by sailors aboard a ship. Certain ropes are pulled at certain times and situations in order to guide the ship in the proper direction as well as to protect it in times of trouble or distress. Discernment is determining which is the proper rope to pull, how much, and when.

Prudent means to act circumspectly. An example of this is found in the actions of Abigail, Nabal's wife in 1 Samuel 25. (Prudent will be covered in lesson 7). The term prudent involves conformity to a standard where weights and measures are required to be right.

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

In the Christian sense, it signifies what is right according to God's standards of covenant community. Proverbs will help train us to discern lessons of life and to distinguish permanent values for living successful and Godly lives.

The student of the Book of Proverbs will acquire a discipline which will produce a prudent life demonstrated by doing what is right, just, and fair at all times in all circumstances. Evaluate HONESTLY how you are doing - write down where you are in the area of:

(A) Self - Discipline

(B) Discernment

(C) Prudent

Read Proverbs 1:7 and make notes:

Where do we begin if we wish to have this wisdom, discernment, and prudence the Book of Proverbs declares we can have? This speaks of the "beginning" of knowledge. Raw knowledge has little value. It is possible to "know" something and yet if we don't know how to make use of what we know, it is useless to us.

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

There is an old saying which states: **"I don't understand what I know!"** You can take the time to memorize some fact or data; but what do you do with it? How can you use it? We have need to go beyond the beginning of knowledge. We need to understand what we know and we need to have wisdom or insight as to how to use what we know.

Read Proverbs 9:10 and make notes:

Wisdom, as used in the Bible, basically means "skill." Wisdom is what helps us make use of what we know. It gives us the skill to use our knowledge efficiently and productively. Those who do not have a "fear of the Lord" may attain knowledge, but will fall short of the real value of what they know. Reverence for the Lord is the only solid foundation upon which knowledge and wisdom can be built. Built upon any other foundation, knowledge and wisdom will ultimately fall.

Read Proverbs 15:33 and make notes:

The discipline of wisdom (discipline of acquiring wisdom) teaches us to reverence the Lord. The reverse is also true, reverence for the Lord increases our wisdom.

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

What does it mean to "fear the Lord?" "Fear" can describe "dread", "being terrified", "standing in awe", or "having reverence." When used in connection to our relationship with the Lord all of these may be appropriate, depending upon our current situation.

For the Christian it should not be a fear that paralyzes us from action; but it must not be merely a polite respect.

Read Proverbs 8:13 and make notes:

God hates evil. When we begin to despise and hate evil, we place ourselves on God's side of the issues.

Read Proverbs 22:19-21 and make notes:

The teachings of the Lord are not just interesting trivia. The teachings of the Lord are revelation which demands a response from the hearer. The disciple is expected to devote themselves to studying the wise sayings in order to firmly establish their religious lifestyle and so that they too may one day give out wise counsel.

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

List some things you "know" of - which you do not understand how to make use:

There are specific Benefits to having a "reverence" for the Lord:

#1:

Read Proverbs 10:27 and make notes:

#1 - The promise of "Long Life."

#2:

Read Proverbs 3:8-10 and make notes:

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

Reverence for the Lord actually brings health to the physical body and even strength to the bones of the skeletal structure. We don't simply get long life, we get a long life that can be enjoyed. An important part of Reverencing the Lord is giving back to God a portion of our material wealth, specifically our first fruits, or tithe. There are specific promises of blessing for those who do.

Read Proverbs 14:27 and make notes:

This has the exciting implication that reverencing the Lord not only has benefits for us, but for those around us as well. It actually causes us to have a "fountain" of life. A fountain gives forth. Others can come along and receive of what the fountain is giving forth, in our case this is "life."

Read Proverbs 16:6 and make notes:

This is like hearing a traffic report on the radio and being able to take a different route and avoid the aggravating and perhaps costly delay of being held up in traffic. We are able to avoid those things which intend to harm us or to stop us in our tracks.

#2 - Being able to "avoid evil."

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

#3:

Read Proverbs 19:23 and make notes:

Who in their right mind would pass up the opportunity to be untouched by trouble? Who in their right mind would pass up the opportunity to rest in contentment?

Read Proverbs 14:26 and make notes:

Reverencing the Lord bring us security in this life that will extend to our children.

#3 - Security !

Read Proverbs 23:18 and make notes:

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

Those who reverence the Lord WILL NOT have their hope cut off. Not only do we receive security in the present, but our future is secure as well.

Read Proverbs 22:4 and make notes:

The simple truth is reverencing the Lord has the promise to bring us the very things most people kill themselves trying to earn or attain through all the schemes and plans of man.

Read Proverbs 15:16 and make notes:

The "best way" to live our life is to live a life of "reverence" for the Lord.

List some ways in which a lack of reverence for the Lord has caused someone you know to experience a shorter physical life.

Read Proverbs 24:21-22 and make notes:

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

It is not enough to respect only the civil authorities and not God. Neither is it acceptable to respect only God and not the civil authorities. There are untold calamities awaiting those who refuse to respect the spiritual and civil authorities. How many times do we witness young adults refuse to respect the civil authorities and then experience calamities come upon themselves?

Read Proverbs 29:25 and make notes:

The "fear of man" is the concern about what others will think. This reverence for man will inevitably lead to us being trapped. This reverence of others will make us concerned about how we may appear to them and eventually leads us to be controlled by others. This is such a sharp contrast to those who "fear God." Those who reverence the Lord find increasing liberty while those who reverence man find less and less liberty.

List some experiences where evil probably would have been avoided if only you had demonstrated a reverence for the Lord.

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

Concerning the coming Messiah:

Read Isaiah 11:2-3 and make notes:

The prophetic word declared our Messiah would "actually" delight in the reverence of the Lord. When we survey the life of Jesus as reported in the Gospels, it is evident He did delight in reverencing His Heavenly Father.

Read Proverbs 23:17 and make notes:

We are not only instructed to seek to have a reverence for the Lord, but are told to be "zealous" for it. It should not surprise us to find in the Scriptures an instruction to seek to have a reverence for the Lord since our Savior had such a reverence.

Read Proverbs 2:1-5 and make notes:

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

IF you accept - IF you store up - IF you listen (turn your ear) - IF you apply your heart - IF you call out - IF you look with diligence (as for silver or treasure) - THEN! This is why we are going to take a look at the Book of Proverbs; to find these words of the wise - to help us in all areas of our daily life.

Read Proverbs 28:14 and make notes:

Our likelihood for success and happiness in our endeavors depends heavily upon our reverence for the Lord. The one "who always fears the Lord" is the person who is continuously attentive to the need for reverence and does not allow it to be accidentally overlooked.

List some areas in which you would like to find some specific words of wisdom.

Proverbs – 01 Purpose For Proverbs

Write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Purpose For Proverbs” so that you can share them when we meet:

Read Proverbs 1:7 and make notes:

Reverence for the Lord (fear of) is the foundational base upon which all real knowledge will grow and remain. The second part of verse 7 is the anti-thesis for the first part of the verse. The "fool" is a fool because he is without knowledge. The fool is without knowledge because he "despises" wisdom and discipline; both of which are important factors in obtaining knowledge. If we accept God's Words, remember His commands, listen to His Wisdom, and make an effort to understand; if we call to Him for insight and understanding - - THEN!

Read Proverbs 2:5 and make notes:

The great majority of people who are "ignorant" of God will be found to be lacking in one or more areas of the first 4 verses of chapter 2 of the Book of Proverbs:

- (A) They do not accept God's Word
- (B) They do not remember His Commands
- (C) They do not listen to His Wisdom
- (D) They do not make an effort to Understand
- (E) They do not call to Him for Insight

Read Proverbs 2:6 and make notes:

Knowledge Comes From God !

The simple reason the person who seeks the Lord finds knowledge is God is the source of knowledge! The fact that knowledge comes from the mouth of God is the reason we need to "listen" to Him and "call out" to Him.

Read Proverbs 22:12 and make notes:

The Lord is the one who watches over knowledge and makes sure it succeeds. The point should be clear enough; the Lord acts to vindicate the words of knowledge; but the Lord frustrates the "unfaithful" words or the words of the foolish.

Read 2 Chronicles 1:11-12 and make notes:

Proverbs – 02 Knowledge (1)

We find an interesting account concerning God's view of knowledge and the value He places upon it in 2 Chronicles chapter 1. This is the account of Solomon making his prayer to God for help after he became the king over Israel. Solomon could have asked for anything in his prayer to God. It certainly would have been natural for him to ask for a strong and secure army. It would have been only natural for him to ask for sufficient provision. It would have been natural for him to ask God for victory over his enemies. And the list of natural requests could go on and on. Solomon, however, in his time of prayer, became very humble before the Lord and asked for the thing he knew he didn't have and any king surely would need to be successful. It pleased the Lord when Solomon asked for wisdom and for knowledge.

Read Ecclesiastes 2:26 and make notes:

This bit of wisdom found in Ecclesiastes tells us God gives knowledge to those who please Him.

The Basic Way to Obtain Knowledge is to PLEASE THE LORD !

Read Proverbs 19:27 and make notes:

The basic way to remain in knowledge is to make sure you don't stop listening to the Lord's instruction.

Read Proverbs 21:11 and make notes:

Those who are simple can become wise by observing - example or demonstration (i.e. the mocker being punished). Those who are wise can become knowledgeable by way of instruction.

The mocker should be punished, not only to bring justice to the mocker, but also to provide object lessons for those who are simple within our community. The purpose being to bring the simple to the place of being counted among the wise. Once they become wise, they can acquire knowledge by instruction and no longer require the time consuming and frequently expensive demonstrations or examples.

Read Proverbs 14:6 and make notes:

The contrast is clear. The mocker may desire to have wisdom; but as a mocker, he will never find it. The one who has the ability to discern finds knowledge rather easy to come by. The mocker is often intellectually arrogant and frequently even a religious person. This "arrogance" gives them the appearance of confidence and boldness but is in reality a barricade keeping them from the allusive knowledge. For some, it even prevents them from seeing the need for knowledge.

Proverbs – 02 Knowledge (1)

The person who thinks they "know everything" sees no need to acquire any additional knowledge. The person who has a sincere desire to learn never spends their time complaining "I have no time to learn." This person will make time to learn!

Read Proverbs 18:15 and make notes:

The ear of the wise listens for knowledge - like a radio which is continually tuned to a specific station so that you are always ready to receive the message broadcast by them. The heart of the wise discerns what is heard and filters out the knowledge for use in their life. The more knowledge of God's Word we acquire, the more need we see to obtain knowledge of God's Word. The more we know, the more we know how much we don't know very much at all.

Read Proverbs 15:14 and make notes:

The wise are not simply those who are receptive to knowledge should knowledge just happen to come by where they are. The wise are those who actively, consistently, and faithfully "seeking" out knowledge. (folly will be covered in lesson 8)

Proverbs – 02 Knowledge (1)

The serious hunter studies the environment in which their prey is to be found. The serious hunter is always alert and on the lookout for any signs their prey may be near. Then effort is made to get to the specific area for the purpose of finding, and acquiring the desired prey. The serious hunter will make an effort to dress properly, smell properly, and to move properly in order to get as close to their prey as possible. How many of God's people put forth such effort to acquire Knowledge?

Consider the 5 major reasons people are ignorant. Consider the effort you put forth in order to acquire knowledge. Do you appear to be one who would be listed among the Knowledgeable?

Characteristics Of Those Who Have Knowledge:

#1:

Read Proverbs 12:23 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 17:27 and make notes:

Wisdom and folly are most easily distinguished in one's speech. The contrast is seen in the fool always being ready and quick to "tell" what they know about almost everything. And the prudent person gives careful thought before sharing the knowledge they have.

Proverbs – 02 Knowledge (1)

It can be seen in the person who is slow to tell others how to do things, or how they should do things. It can be seen in the person who believes they know something negative about another person and gives careful thought and consideration to the matter before they share it with others or not to share it at all.

The person who restrains their speaking is the one who truly has knowledge. The person who restrains their speaking also has the opportunity to hear what others know, learn from them, and add to their knowledge. They frequently learn who it is in the community who thinks they know much and in fact knows little. This can be a valuable bit of information to possess, especially among the Christian community.

#1 - They Have Control Of Their Mouth!

#2:

Read Proverbs 13:16 and make notes:

Our actions either display prudence or folly. The person of knowledge studies the facts, weighs the situation, and gives careful thought to what they do before engaging in an activity. The prudent is the one who knows the circumstances, the positives, the negatives, the dangers, the pitfalls, and the profits of the matter before they take action. Knowledge makes a person a careful or cautious person.

#2 - They Have Control Of Their Actions!

#3:

Read Proverbs 28:2 and make notes:

One of the greatest benefits of things being in "order" is Stability. Nations have stability when their ruler maintains order. Leaders who have knowledge maintain order. Families have stability when the parents maintain order. Parents who have knowledge maintain order. Individuals feel as though they have stability when they have order in their daily life. This is the basic reason you find people suffering from psychological disorders becoming upset when things are not done in the same order at all times.

Persons who have knowledge maintain order in their daily life. The ignorant usually see no reason or purpose for doing things in "order." The ignorant not only are at home amid the disarray of things and approve of the absence of order, but they frequently are heard to speak against those who suggest or ask for things to be done in an orderly manner.

#3 - They Maintain Order!

#4:

Read Proverbs 12:1 and make notes:

Proverbs – 02 Knowledge (1)

Those who love knowledge have a profound love of discipline. Those who love knowledge also love to be corrected when they are wrong. This proverb doesn't speak of the person who is only less than excited about correction - thank goodness because most of us would rather not be corrected - but it says rather plainly that the one who "hates" correction is STUPID.

#4 - They Love Discipline And Accept Correction!

Read Proverbs 19:25 and make notes:

Along with the idea of those who have knowledge accepting correction - is the insight that those who accept a rebuke actually gain knowledge. This proverb speaks of three different kinds of people:

- (a) the mocker - this is the person who has a closed mind
- (b) the simpleton - this is the person who has an empty mind
- (c) the discerning - this is the person who has an open mind

Usually, very little is accomplished by punishing the mocker except the administering of justice and providing an object lesson for others. The simpleton learns by what they observe. The discerning person doesn't need to be flogged, doesn't need the object lesson of seeing someone else flogged; but learns from the verbal rebuke, even if it is painful to hear.

Consider the 4 major characteristics of a person of Knowledge. Which of these 4 do you need to improve or increase in your life in order to be a person of Knowledge?

Proverbs – 02 Knowledge (1)

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have - regarding the “Knowledge Proverbs” in this lesson, so that you can share them when we meet:

In the previous lesson on Knowledge, we saw that real Knowledge comes from God; the basic way to obtain Knowledge is to PLEASE THE LORD; and there are four (4) characteristics of those who have Knowledge. In this lesson we will take a look at the “Benefits” of having Knowledge and some General Instructions concerning Knowledge.

Benefits Of Knowledge:

#1:

Read Proverbs 11:9 and make notes:

#1 - Escape Harm, Danger, or Destruction.

#2:

Read Proverbs 24:5-6 and make notes:

Ignorance is equated with weakness and vulnerability. Knowledge is equated with strength and security. As with most things in life, each of these increase with time. The ignorant become even weaker and more vulnerable. Those with Knowledge become stronger and more secure. You need more than strength to win wars. You need Knowledge. When you make use of advisers, you get the benefit of the combined Knowledge of those with whom you consult.

Read Proverbs 24:10 and make notes:

Times of trouble and testing serve a valuable purpose. When we fall in a time of trouble, it reveals to us where we are weak or how weak we are. It is important to identify our weak areas and to know where we need to work on increasing our strength.

#2 - Increase In Strength.

#3:

Read Proverbs 24:4 and make notes:

Analogy of a house built by wisdom: The imagery is significant. After wisdom has built the house, with what will the house be furnished? Will it be a beautiful structure filled with worthless objects or filled with valuable furniture and treasures? If Knowledge fills the house with beautiful treasures, the other side of this statement tells us ignorance will fill the house with rubbish and worthless items.

#3 - Brings Valuable Things Into Our Life.

General Information On Knowledge:

Read Proverbs 2:10 and make notes:

The Hebrew word translated "pleasant" in this verse describes that which makes one attractive. Knowledge is attractive and at the same time attracting. Our "soul" (or the inner person we are), is just naturally attracted to Knowledge. When we find someone who is purposefully turning away from Knowledge, it is an indication they are being influenced by something or someone who has no good intentions for life.

Read Proverbs 3:20 and make notes:

Knowledge is not something of value only to man. Knowledge has value to God. He made use of Knowledge in creation. He makes use of Knowledge still in forming clouds and having them to release rain upon the earth. A well educated meteorologist shared that we have acquired a basic understanding of how clouds form, and yet we are still unsure of exactly how it occurs.

Man, even with all our technological advances can not create a cloud and have it remain while it moves along. Neither can we reliably cause a cloud to release it's moisture. God makes use of Knowledge on a regular basis that we still do not have. Consider your mind as a house for the next few minutes. With what are you furnishing this house?

Read Proverbs 8:10 and make notes:

God's instruction to the Believer is to "choose" His instruction and to "choose" His Knowledge over worldly treasure. Those who are wise and those who have Knowledge understand the principle that true wealth comes from the Knowledge which God provides and worldly wealth can never bring true Knowledge. Those without Knowledge usually work themselves to an early death in an effort to obtain wealth. The sad part is true wealth could be theirs if only they would apply themselves to the obtaining of Knowledge.

Read Proverbs 23:12 and make notes:

Again, this proverb is God's instruction to the Believer to "apply" your heart to instruction and "apply" your ears to the words of Knowledge. These two proverbs make it clear God doesn't simply present the obtaining of Knowledge as a "good idea" or a "suggestion" from on high. This is one of our instructions (things we are expected to do).

Read Proverbs 20:15 and make notes:

Proverbs – 03 Knowledge (2)

God views Knowledge as being very precious and valuable. It is so unfortunate, but it seems rare these days to find someone who speaks Knowledgeably. Undoubtedly this is not the first generation to experience this shortage of Knowledgeable people. This proverb makes a parallel of the rare find of a precious jewel and the finding of one who speaks Knowledge.

Read Proverbs 14:18 and make notes:

The precious nature of Knowledge makes it a fitting crown for the prudent person. The simple, or empty minded, person is destined to inherit folly, or foolishness. The prudent will certainly be crowned with Knowledge. This signifies something more than simply receiving or obtaining Knowledge. This speaks of Knowledge actually becoming an object of honor which can be seen and admired by others.

The Hebrew word translated "crowned" can be used to describe the wearing of a crown such as royalty; but it can also describe being encircled or embraced. Either of these uses of this word brings a beautiful picture to the prudent with Knowledge. The prudent go about their daily life wearing Knowledge as a person of royalty wears their crown. The prudent go about their daily life wearing a robe of Knowledge. The prudent go about their daily life being embraced by Knowledge every step of the way. Either of these three pictures describe a situation where others would certainly notice. This gives us a little deeper insight into the way God views Knowledge.

Read Proverbs 1:22 and make notes:

Proverbs – 03 Knowledge (2)

Contrasted to God who holds Knowledge as precious is the fool who "hates" Knowledge. The simple, or naive, person loves their simple empty headed ways. The mocker, or the defiant cynical person, takes delight in making light of others, usually those who are seeking Knowledge. The fool, or the morally insensitive, person, actually hates the idea of obtaining or striving after Knowledge.

Read Proverbs 15:2 and make notes:

The view of the wise toward Knowledge stands in sharp contrast to the simple, the mocker, and the fool. The wise actually "commend" Knowledge. The Hebrew word translated "commends" describes the action which "makes good" or "treats in a good or excellent way." The wise person would never be content to be without Knowledge. The wise person would never make fun of others for trying to acquire Knowledge. The wise certainly would never hate Knowledge or the pursuit of Knowledge.

Read Proverbs 15:7 and make notes:

The wise person views Knowledge as something good and helpful; so they spread Knowledge every opportunity they are given. The traditional view of this verse is referring to teaching. The Hebrew word translated "spread" has a much broader meaning than just a teacher in a class room teaching.

General Instructions Concerning Knowledge:

Read Proverbs 8:12 and make notes:

This is an interesting parallel. Wisdom claims to "possess" Knowledge.

Read Proverbs 5:1-2 and make notes:

When we consider the value God places upon Knowledge, it should not be a surprise to find God expects Believers to "preserve" Knowledge. We are to protect, maintain, and prevent from spoiling or being lost, the precious knowledge with which we are entrusted.

Read Proverbs 7:1 and make notes:

Proverbs – 03 Knowledge (2)

We are not expected to only "hear" the commands or instructions. The exhortation is for the younger inexperienced one to "store up" the commands, instructions, and wisdom which has been acquired by the older, more experienced wiser one. Will we, as the children, listen, pay attention, and store up the instructions given to us by our Father?

Read Proverbs 7:2 and make notes:

The expression "apple of your eye" is a translation of the original language whose message is missed by most contemporary readers. In the days when these Proverbs were written, this phrase referred to the pupil of the eye. The original language phrase literally spoke of the "little man in the eye." They had observed that you could frequently see a reflection in the pupil of the person upon which the eyes were focused. When they could see "the little man in the eye" they knew who you had your sight focused upon.

We are expected to be so focused upon the teachings of the Lord that it could be seen reflected in our eyes. If something is precious to us, it will be guarded. The more value we place upon it the more we will guard it.

Read Proverbs 7:3 and make notes:

Proverbs – 03 Knowledge (2)

The idea of having something bound to our fingers speaks of making sure it touches everything we touch. It is like wearing gloves. Everything we handle will also have come into contact with the glove. The Knowledge and the teachings of our Lord should be kept so close that we could not handle any situation without also applying the Knowledge of God. The Knowledge of God should be so dear to us that it is to be written on the tablet of our heart. It is expected to be placed in the dearest and most loved area of our life.

Read Proverbs 20:12 and make notes:

God created mankind with the ability to hear and to see. These two words also refer to listening and understanding which means we have been given the ability to listen and to understand. Hearing also can refer to obey, which means God created us with the ability to obey. Having the ability to do something all too frequently doesn't mean a person does it. This Proverb helps to remind us that we are basically without excuse if we go through our life without listening to, gaining the understanding of, and obeying the Instructions of the Lord.

Read Proverbs 24:32 and make notes:

Proverbs – 03 Knowledge (2)

Many people observe events, activities, situations, and interchanges between people and make no effort to learn anything from what they see. They are pleased that they had the opportunity to have seen it. The Teacher shares a major secret to being able to become a person of Knowledge. Apply yourself to everything you see in the attitude of "what can I learn from this?".

Read Proverbs 19:2 and make notes:

A person who has great energy and excitement to do a particular work without the Knowledge of how to do the work, will have a lot of motion and little successful results. It would be sad if the only result of zeal without knowledge was to be un-successful. The tragedy is that frequently this person actually causes harm in the process. It is NOT GOOD to have zeal without Knowledge.

Have you ever been in such a hurry that you missed the place where you were supposed to turn off a particular road onto another? Have you ever been in such a hurry to find a particular piece of information in a book that you kept skipping right over it? If so, then you understand the real practical application of this Proverb.

Read Proverbs 30:5-6 and make notes:

Proverbs – 03 Knowledge (2)

The word translated "flawless" is used in many places in referring to the refining of metal. It is being made a flawless metal by having the impurities removed from it. The more contemporary view might be that it is being purified. The Word of God is Pure! It is safe to take refuge in the Knowledge (Word) of God because it is pure and there is nothing in it to harm us. When we add anything to that which is pure, we destroy it's purity; thus destroying it's safety. Can you see why God would rebuke those who add to His Word?

Look back over the past 10 years of your life:

Have you drawn close to Knowledge or further away?

Do you love Knowledge more today than 10 years ago?

Do you hate evil more today than 10 years ago?

What about your lifestyle or attitude supports your answer?

Proverbs – 03 Knowledge (2)

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have - regarding the “Benefits of Having Knowledge” and the “Instructions Concerning Knowledge” in this lesson, so that you can share them when we meet:

Characteristics of the Wise:

#1:

Read Proverbs 12:15 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 19:20 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 13:10 and make notes:

We may be tempted to think of the Wise as those who dispense advice to others. The Wise, recognize advice, listen to advice, and accept advice. The fool tends to be one who is set in their ways and will not listen to advice. The prideful person would rather argue against advice. Stubborn pride causes one to try and argue reasons why advice is not needed or is wrong. Stubborn pride ultimately leads one to quarrel with almost everyone, but especially with those offering advice. Pride tends to cause an attitude of contempt toward the opinions of others. It is this kind of attitude from the proud which creates strife, inflames passions, and hurts the feelings of others within the community.

Proverbs – 04 Wisdom (1)

Advice as used in these texts applies to wisdom and knowledge about a specific situation. By accepting advice, one can become wise. The purpose of advice appears to be it helps make one wise.

#1 - They Accept Advice!

#2:

Read Proverbs 9:8 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 15:31 and make notes:

The characteristic of the Wise accepting advice is more than just the friendly suggestions of those passing by. The Wise will actually love a person for trying to correct them when they are in error. The reality of this Wisdom is seen in the fact that it does not say the Wise will love the rebuke. The Hebrew word translated "love" in this text has the idea of choosing and embracing. The Wise understand the value to life that is found within advice and rebuke.

#2 - They Accept Rebuke!

Proverbs – 04 Wisdom (1)

#3:

Read Proverbs 9:9 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 10:8 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 13:1 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 21:11 and make notes:

Proverbs – 04 Wisdom (1)

More than just accepting advice, the Wise are those who can be taught. One of the common characteristics to be found in the fool is the determined attitude that "no one is going to tell me what to do." Notice in these texts we are told the Wise accepts "commands." The Wise are those who can be told what to do. You can't teach a mocker. The Wise will respond positively to instruction. Perhaps this lack of a teachable attitude is what makes the mocker, or scorner, the highest level of fool. The mocker will typically have no respect for authority and reviles any aspect of religion which tries to guide the way we live, thus being unteachable. Not only is the mocker not teachable, they don't even listen to a rebuke.

Notice the connection between the Wise and the righteous. The contrast is distinct between the Wise person and the mocker. The Wise person listens and responds to instruction, the lowest level of correction; while the mocker won't respond to any level of instruction or correction, not even a rebuke.

#3 - They Are Teachable!

#4:

Read Proverbs 14:16 and make notes:

The fool, being hot-headed, ignores the dangers of evil and is reckless with their own life and that of others. The Wise person holds a reverent attitude toward the Lord and shuns or puts aside evil from their life. In the context of this proverb it is in order to recognize the Wise person also has a fear of the consequences and as a result they are cautious in their actions.

#4 - They Have Reverence For The Lord!

#5:

Read Proverbs 10:19 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 16:23 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 17:28 and make notes:

Controlling the tongue helps us avoid sin. (compare this proverbial wisdom with the Word found in James 3:1-12). The Wise use their heart to make sure what they say is Wise. This requires taking the time to check your heart before speaking forth. Silence can be seen as one indication of Wisdom. When a fool is silent, at least they are concealing their foolishness and this makes them look more like the Wise. Perhaps the fool who takes the suggestions to remain silent is no longer as much a fool as before.

#5 - They Are Slow To Speak!

#6:

Read Proverbs 29:11 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:4 and make notes:

It takes a certain amount of Wisdom to restrain anger. The fool lets his anger "all hang out." The fool would appear to be a slave to impulse and finds himself repeatedly at the mercy of the moment and circumstance. The Wise don't only show restraint when it comes to being irritated or made angry. The Wise show restraint in the efforts toward earning a living. The times of our anger and our drive to earn a living pretty much describes the two extremes of our life's actions. If the Wise have control of their actions in these two extremes, then it is a safe interpolation to say the Wise have control of their actions in most, if not all, areas of their life.

#6 - They Control Their Actions!

#7:

Read Proverbs 10:5 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 14:1 and make notes:

There is a clear contrast between idleness and diligence in the book of Proverbs. Many a household thrives or falls according to the Wisdom of the woman of the house. An example which is plain to almost anyone is drawn upon to help make this point. This proverbial Wisdom is speaking of a much broader spectrum than just the woman. Idleness leads to ruin while diligence builds. This applies to men and women alike.

#7 - They Are Diligent Workers!

#8:

Read Proverbs 16:21 and make notes:

The knowledge shared by the Wise is found to be helpful, thus pleasant, to those who hear and receive. The Wise earn a reputation for being discerning - "they will know what to do."

#8 - They Are Discerning!

Proverbs – 04 Wisdom (1)

Consider the characteristics of those who are Wise:

Accept Advice; Accept Rebuke; Teachable;
Reverence the Lord; Slow To Speak;
Control Their Actions; Diligent Workers; Discerning.

How well are you doing currently in your daily life? Don't look at one of two specific situations; but instead consider your responses in these areas on the average – over all areas of your life.

Results of being Wise:

#1:

Read Proverbs 19:11 and make notes:

This is the ability to not only respond more slowly to the person or circumstances which make us angry; but it is also the ability to think through things before acting on those opportunities which excite us. Wisdom helps us shrug off the insult or offense and it removes from us the hypersensitivity toward brooding. It denies our adversary the pleasure of hearing us cry out in distress; but it also allows us to keep open lines of communication which "can" bring about healing and restoration.

#1 - Brings Patience!

#2:

Read Proverbs 9:12 and make notes:

Read Ecclesiastes 7:11 and make notes:

The actions of the mocker will cause them to suffer, and it will cause them to do so alone. For some, Wisdom may be its own reward. For them it is sufficiently satisfying just to have Wisdom. But this verse clearly tells us the actions of the Wise will bring rewards.

Even Christians are found at times looking back to the past and thinking "those were the good old days." When we look back at the days of the early Church, some of the periods of revival, or other times in the history of God's people, we may be tempted to think, "I would have been better off back then." Wise people learn from the past and at the same time live and interact with the opportunities of the present. Too much dwelling on the past has prevented many people from being over-comers in the present.

Few would argue against the comment about there being more wickedness today than in some of the past eras. Didn't Jesus say it would be so? The Wise are always alert for the reward this day has to offer, and ready to receive it.

#2 - Brings Rewards!

#3:

Read Proverbs 17:2 and make notes:

This proverb points out the assurance of receiving an inheritance does not come from being a child; instead it comes from being Wise. There is no security in simply being a child, for the disgraceful child will be disinherited. There is no hopelessness in being only a servant, for the Wise servant will surely share in the inheritance.

#3 - Brings Inheritance!

#4:

Read Proverbs 3:35 and make notes:

Two opposites; both are a "sure thing" - The Wise will receive honor and the fool will receive public shame.

#4 - Brings Honor !

#5:

Read Proverbs 14:35 and make notes:

The shameful servant is the one who continually makes a mess of the king's business and causes the king material loss as well as distress. The indiscretions and inability of this servant brings scandal and criticism to the king. The Wise servant enhances the king's material assets and is a delight to the king. The skill and care of this servant brings respect and honor to the king.

#5 - Brings Favor With Those In Authority!

#6:

Read Proverbs 12:8 and make notes:

It doesn't take long traveling along the path of life to discover how much those with the "warped minds" become despised by others and frequently avoided by others. Those who have Wisdom are not only not avoided by others, but are sought after and praised by those who are blessed by the wisdom they share.

#6 - Brings Praise!

#7:

Read Ecclesiastes 8:1 and make notes:

The truly Wise don't have to go around telling everyone just how Wise they are. It shows! Those who lack Wisdom are frequently discouraged and depressed. The circumstances, and toil of daily life appear to be one wave after another of trouble, pain, and struggle. The Wise are able to see the potential good, the hope of success, and the promise of the Heavenly Father. This transition from despair to hopelessness to reward, is seen by others when favor and encouragement literally changes the countenance. Perhaps the bright glowing is a small reflection of the hope and glory of the Lord we serve.

#7 - Brightens Countenance!

#8:

Read Proverbs 23:15-16 and make notes:

When we have wisdom, it brings gladness and joy to our family.

#8 – Joy to Family

Proverbs – 04 Wisdom (1)

Consider the results of having Wisdom. Think about the things, situations, and people you deal with on a typical day in your life (work, school, home, etc.) Rate yourself as to the extent these results are evident in your personal life.

1. Patience
2. Rewards.
3. Inheritance.
4. Honor.
5. Favor with those in authority.
6. Praise.
7. Brightened countenance.
8. Family Joy

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Characteristics of the Wise” and the “Results of Being Wise” so that you can share them when we meet:

In the previous lesson we saw the Characteristics of those who are wise and the Results of having Wisdom. In this lesson we will look at the Benefits of having Wisdom.

Benefits of Wisdom:

#1:

Read Proverbs 24:5 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 21:22 and make notes:

Wisdom will win out over brute strength repeatedly! Having Wisdom means being victorious more often. The Wise will be able to see ways to overcome the defenses of the strong. The Wise will be able to discover and take advantage of the weaknesses of those who trust only in the safety of earthly fortresses and safeguards.

#1 - Power!

Proverbs – 05 Wisdom (2)

#2:

Read Proverbs 2:12 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 14:3 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 4:6 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 28:26 and make notes:

Read Ecclesiastes 7:12 and make notes:

Proverbs – 05 Wisdom (2)

Wisdom is a sure protection from the wicked. The truly Wise do not fear the wicked. What one says has a great deal to do with how they are received by others. The words of the fool continually bring punishment and harm to them personally. The very words of the Wise bring personal protection to them. Wisdom will protect and guard the Wise person much like a mother guards and protects her young.

Security in this life comes from Wisdom and not from self-sufficiency. There is a way that seems right to a man; but the end of it is destruction. The person who always follows the way that "seems right" to them is clearly a fool and they will ultimately be displayed for everyone to be seen as such. The one who continues to seek out Wisdom and walks in it may be ridiculed at the beginning of the trip; but will ultimately be revealed as one who is wise and will be found to be secure because of it.

The Wisdom of the ancients recognized money proved a certain amount of shelter in daily life. No doubt there have been those in every generation who have preferred to take shelter in finances rather than Wisdom. The profound statement made here is that money cannot preserve one's life while Wisdom can. That Wisdom is the superior shelter should be clear.

#2 - Protection!

#3:

Read Proverbs 3:13 and make notes:

#3 - Blessed!

Proverbs – 05 Wisdom (2)

The verses following 13 give some summary reasons as to why or how the Wise are blessed: profit, long life, honor, pleasant ways, peace, tree of life to others.

#4:

Read Proverbs 10:1 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:24 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 29:3 and make notes:

A child who is wise brings joy to the parents and in reality to the whole family. This is the one who honors and respects their family. The foolish child doesn't just fail to bring joy to the family but brings pain into the family. Proverbs 10:1 says the foolish child brings grief to the mother while 15:20 says the foolish child "despises" their mother.

There is no shortage of real life stories where the family has anguished over the foolish lifestyle of one of their children. And yet, there is such joy and delight in the home where the child is living a life of Wisdom.

#4 - Joy To Family!

#5:

Read Proverbs 15:24 and make notes:

"Upward" has been a fairly consistent reference to life and success in many generations and people groups. The Wise have every reason to expect their path to lead them to victory and to life. Those without Wisdom have every reason to expect defeat and death.

#5 - Victory!

#6:

Read Proverbs 14:24 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 21:20 and make notes:

The Wise will have enough to meet their needs and enough to share. For the Wise, wealth becomes much like an ornament. It is not what they live for, it is not the object of their actions, but it becomes an ornament adorning those who use Wisdom.

Proverbs – 05 Wisdom (2)

The fool only receives the moment of laughter or folly for their lifestyle. The original language suggests "the abundance of the wise is their riches" and the "abundance of the fool is their folly." The contrast being drawn is the fool can expect an increase in their exposure to folly while the wise can expect an increase in their wealth.

#6 - Sufficiency!

Consider the benefits of having Wisdom. Are the results evident in your life? Rate yourself on each one - as "Most Of The Time":

Lacking comes and goes present

1. Power
2. Protection
3. Blessed
4. Joy to Family
5. Victory
6. Sufficiency

Read Proverbs 11:29 and make notes:

This proverb at first glance is speaking to the one who is living foolishly; perhaps as a warning. When you consider the reverse side of the "wisdom saying", it is a declaration that the Wise will be leaders.

Read Proverbs 12:18 and make notes:

The Wise do not cause damage to others by their reckless or careless words. Reckless words are those spoken in haste without giving thought to their truthfulness or to the harm they might cause. The opposite to the piercing destroying words of the "unwise" are the words of healing, restoration, and comfort which are spoken by the Wise. Words which are faithful to the truth, while being gentle; and all the while encouraging and lifting up the one being spoken to.

Read Proverbs 25:12 and make notes:

It isn't that the Wise only speak kind, gentle and approving words. It is simply that the words spoken by the Wise are so healthful, helpful, and reviving that even their "rebukes" are seen as valuable by those who receive them. The rebuke from the Wise is something which has lasting value. The person who receives the rebuke of one who is Wise is as pleased to have heard it as the person who wears earrings is pleased to wear an earring of fine gold.

Read Proverbs 13:14 and make notes:

Proverbs – 05 Wisdom (2)

The teaching provided by the Wise brings life. The life giving teaching of the Wise doesn't only give life, it also turns one away from the places and things which are "snares of death." The statement declaring the teaching of the Wise to be "fountain" of life gives us the image of something springing forth so that many can partake of it. It implies a continuous supply. A fountain is also freely coming forth. We don't have to draw it out.

Read Proverbs 16:14 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 29:8 and make notes:

The Wise person knows what to do and what to say to calm the anger of leaders. The wrath of an upset leader can mean death for many people and great suffering. What the Wise provide by appeasing the wrath of a leader is of benefit not only to themselves but to many others as well.

The mocker and the fool don't see the end and destruction of their foolishness and often appear to take delight in stirring up dissension among a people. The Wise are the ones who work to maintain an environment of peace and harmony. The mockers frequently make a problem situation become a serious situation and they cause serious situations to become even worse as one who is increasing a flame by blowing additional air into it. The Wise seeks ways to reduce the fuel to the fire and to block the winds of adversity which cause the flame to blaze and consume. The mocker cost others assets and lives. The Wise save others assets and lives.

Proverbs – 05 Wisdom (2)

Read Proverbs 16:15 and make notes:

Almost everyone can understand the benefits of having the king who rules over you to be happy. In the days when these Proverbs were written, the people had a very real understanding that they were much better off when the king was pleased with their activities. It should be easy to understand that our lives will be much better and pleasant if we make our Heavenly King pleased with our actions such as working to acquire Wisdom.

Do others consider your words as - bring healing, restoring, and comfort?

How do others respond to your words of rebuke or correction?

Can you honestly say that words of wisdom come from you as though you are a fountain?

When controversy or anger comes on the scene, do you tend to stir it up or do you tend to calm the storm?

Proverbs – 05 Wisdom (2)

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have - regarding the Proverbs in this lesson, so that you can share them when we meet:

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding the “Benefits of Having Wisdom” so that you can share them when we meet:

To Obtain Wisdom:

Read Proverbs 11:2 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 13:20 and make notes:

The New Testament tells us “tribulation” brings patience into our lives. This saying of the wise reveals two better ways to obtain "Wisdom": One is to be humble, the other is to spend time with the Wise, observe and learn. Humility not only avoids the experience of disgrace but leads one to Wisdom. Humility speaks of a person who knows or recognizes their place.

We will become like those with whom we spend much time. The person who spends most of their time with fools will become more and more like a fool. The person who spends most of their time with the Wise will obtain Wisdom. It might help to visualize the obtaining of Wisdom as a two step process; the first step is to truly and honestly become humble. The second step is to spend as much time as possible in this humble state of mind with those who are Wise.

Read Proverbs 9:11 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Wisdom is a conduit or pathway (through me) through which we obtain long life.

Read Proverbs 24:7 and make notes:

Wisdom cannot be obtained by a fool! When in the gathering of those of Wisdom, the fool has nothing to say. This doesn't necessarily mean a fool won't try to say something, it just means that everyone will recognize that the fool may have many words, but nothing worth hearing.

Wisdom is God's Way:

Read Proverbs 3:19 and make notes:

Wisdom is seen to be so valuable to God that He used Wisdom to lay the foundations of the earth. An interesting connection to contemplate is the thought that the Wisdom by which our life could be directed is the same Wisdom by which the earth was created. The possibility of this surely eclipses anything the "new age" folks could offer in the way of finding harmony with the earth. To surrender to God's Wisdom is to place yourself in complete harmony with creation.

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 1:20-21 and make notes:

Wisdom is seen as standing in the public places, in full view and hearing of everyone, calling for the ignorant and simple to listen to the words of Wisdom.

Read Proverbs 8:1-3 and make notes:

Who will be able to stand before God and offer as a defense for their ignorance that they didn't know we were expected to obtain Wisdom or that they didn't know where to get Wisdom? For Wisdom "calls out" to everyone. Wisdom doesn't call out to people from the back streets and secret places within the community. Wisdom calls out from the high places where everything is out in the open; even at the places of authority (gates) of the community where it is available to everyone.

Read Proverbs 8:4 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Wisdom calls out and offers her embrace to all classes of people. The word "all" indicates no one regardless of social status, financial status, educational status, or physical status, or family heritage will be refused wisdom. The word "mankind" serves to make sure we don't make any distinction between male and female, thus no one will be excluded.

Read Proverbs 8:6-9 and make notes:

Wisdom makes a declaration of the kinds of things she is about to share. Not boasting like the proud braggart but giving a summary of what is going to be made available to all. The word translated "worthy" in verse 6 is literally "noble" or "princely"; which means very excellent things are going to be offered. Things which are true and can be trusted (v7). Things which are fair and just (v8). No hidden agenda and nothing to harm anyone or to take advantage of them (v8). Things which the discerning will be able to validate as right (v9). Things which will be recognized as pure by those who have knowledge (v9).

Read Proverbs 8:14-17 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 8:19 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 8:21 and make notes:

Counsel, sound judgment, understanding, and power belong to Wisdom. This is an important declaration when we consider the great number of people who work feverishly to obtain one or more of these but refuse to apply themselves to the obtain of Wisdom. Should they become one of the "wise", then these things would be theirs, but they want to take possession of things such as power on their own terms.

Wisdom makes herself available to those who rule and make laws and to those who govern and make judgments. Wisdom expresses a love for those who seek her. Wisdom also declares her fruits to be better than anything the world can produce.

Read Proverbs 9:4-5 and make notes:

Wisdom openly invites all those who lack wisdom (simple) to come and partake. What are some steps we should consider taking in an effort to receive this Wisdom ?

Read Proverbs 4:7 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 16:16 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 8:11 and make notes:

Wisdom is clearly declared as the best way to live our lives. Proverbs 4:7 states Wisdom is "supreme." Wisdom is more valuable than money (gold). Wisdom and wealth are not incompatible. But, if the choice is to have either Wisdom or wealth, then the clear and better choice is to have Wisdom. Wealth cannot bring Wisdom, but Wisdom can bring wealth. To have wealth without Wisdom would put one in the place of probably losing the wealth. Anytime one must choose between having wisdom or wealth; Wisdom is the better choice. The choice is so clear as to be comparing how much better light is than darkness. This is a great place to be reminded of the power which comes from having Wisdom. With these considerations it is easy to understand how the Wise would declare Wisdom to be more precious than earthly valuables.

Read Proverbs 3:14-16 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 3:18 and make notes:

It may be difficult for some to even entertain the possibility of something they cannot hold in their hands as being better than precious metals or gemstones. When we look at the benefits and results of having Wisdom in our life, it is easy to see why God declares Wisdom to be more profitable than the greatest riches upon this earth. Wisdom being a "tree of life" refers to Wisdom being a major support and strength. A tree provides something stable to which we can secure things, it provides wood for a fire to keep us warm, provides fruit to meet our hunger, and provides shade from the heat of the sun.

Read Proverbs 24:13-14 and make notes:

Not only is Wisdom profitable to us in the area of wealth, but wisdom also provides relief and refreshment for the soul of man. As the physical body enjoys the sweet taste of honey from the honeycomb, so does the soul of man enjoy the sweet refreshment of Wisdom. To those in the ancient world, honey was not only looked upon as something sweet to eat, but it was considered to bring healing to the body. This is a good analogy; just like honey is pleasant and profitable to the body, Wisdom is pleasant and profitable to our life.

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 21:30 and make notes:

The wisest words of the wisdom of man, the most profound insight according to the understanding of man, and the most magnificent plans of man will all crash and fall short if they are in any way against the Wisdom of the Lord. Nothing can compare to the Lord's Wisdom. Nothing can conquer the Lord's Wisdom. Nothing will succeed which opposes the Lord's Wisdom.

Read Proverbs 30:1-4 and make notes:

The confession of one who is wise in the eyes of men but recognizes the extraordinary difference between man's Wisdom and God's. The most wise of men when compared to God's Wisdom might as well be the most ignorant of men. The scale of "least to most" Wisdom of man is so small when compared to the immeasurable Wisdom of God. These five rhetorical questions serve to show how absurd it would be for one to think their Wisdom could possibly be compared to that of God's.

Read Proverbs 8:22-26 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 8:27-31 and make notes:

Wisdom makes a very bold claim to seniority. God possessed Wisdom before He created the earth, even before the heavens were set in place. Wisdom was in God's possession during the creation of this world and was used by God in the creation process.

What actions should you be taking in an effort to "get" Wisdom ?

Read Proverbs 9:1-3 and make notes:

Wisdom, once working alongside God in the creation of this world, now portrays herself as working with mankind (building a house). The "pillars" are recognized by most as referring to the things which support the house. "Seven" speaks of the perfection of the house built by Wisdom.

Wisdom doesn't only claim to make a perfect and safe place in which mankind can dwell, she also provides suitable and adequate provision (sets the table). The sending out of "her maids" speaks of the abundant help Wisdom has assisting her in all her endeavors. She makes her invitation in public view where all can hear.

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Considering the value God places upon Wisdom - and considering the fact that it is pure when it is given to man - what should our attitude be toward protecting the "purity" of the Wisdom we have?

Read Proverbs 6:6-8 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 8:33 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 22:17 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:19 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 27:11 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 4:5 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 7:4 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:23 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:25 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

The ant is no doubt considered to be one of the most lowly creatures by the majority of people. While the ant appears to have no leader, there is still obvious organization and cooperation with all others of its community. It should be degrading to the sluggard to realize that when he is compared to a lowly ant, the ant outshines him. Perhaps the average person would feel degraded to think they could learn from "the lowly." One thing the ant appears to have is "diligence". God's instructions to us include such things as "listen", "pay attention", "be wise", "get wisdom", "consider wisdom as a close and dear relative."

The short of this is God has not made the obtaining of Wisdom an option for His children. If we are going to be obedient children, then we will need to be busy about the process of obtaining Wisdom. One reason given for instructing us to obtain Wisdom (v25) is to bring gladness and rejoicing to our family and loved ones.

Read Proverbs 8:12 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 8:34-36 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 22:18 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 10:14 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 15:2 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 15:7 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 18:15 and make notes:

To consider yourself as having Wisdom as a sister - also means you have some other rather interesting family members such as; "prudence", "knowledge", and "discretion". Wisdom reveals an incentive to listen - and a warning for those who do not listen.

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

The Lord is pleased when we keep His words of Wisdom and keep them ready to be shared with others (on your lips). Knowledge was discussed separately this series, but it is important to see the place the Wise give to "knowledge." The Wise store up knowledge instead of talking too much.

The Wise commend knowledge or recommend knowledge as a good thing for others to acquire. The Wise actually take an active role in trying to spread knowledge to others. The Wise are also busy searching out knowledge while at the same time they are busy storing that which they have received as well as spreading it to others.

The Wise don't ever get to the place where they consider themselves as a "know it all!"

How should the idea of you being a close relative to "wisdom" affect the way you live your life?

Read Proverbs 3:7 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 26:5 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 26:12 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 28:11 and make notes:

There is a danger for those who are wise "in their own eyes." True Wisdom comes from our Heavenly Father. Human Wisdom, or the Wisdom of man, is not even in the same league with God's Wisdom.

We are instructed to help prevent others from seeing themselves as wise in their own eyes. One reason for this may be the person who is Wise in their own eyes is almost impossible to help, regardless of how much they may need help. The person who is wise in their own eyes is actually in a place of no hope while the fool is only in a place of very little hope.

Perhaps every generation of man's history contains accounts of the wealthy taking advantage of the poor. Many of the poor feel they are at the mercy of the rich. We are told in this passage of Wisdom that a poor person with discernment will not be taken advantage of by the rich who are only Wise in their own eyes.

Read Proverbs 20:1 and make notes:

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

It probably is not necessary to explain the use of intoxicating substances as causing many people to act foolishly. The excessive consumption of intoxicating substances excites the person to boisterous behavior, sometimes aggressive, or even belligerent in their attitude. The senses are out of control and therefore the person is not able to act in any way other than foolish. It can honestly be stated, the Bible does not prohibit the use of alcoholic drinks; but this proverb of Wisdom clearly states the "Wise" will not allow themselves to become intoxicated.

What is the practical problem for the person who is wise in their own eyes ?

Read Proverbs 19:8 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 11:30 and make notes:

The Wise have a good self-worth attitude. The Wise are also bringing others to Christ Jesus. The Wise want others to find this life they have found where there is profit for the body as well as the soul.

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Read Proverbs 30:24-28 and make notes:

These verses focus on four creatures who are lowly and yet they are called "extremely wise."

The extreme wisdom of the ant is seen in their forethought to make provision for food. The extreme wisdom of the coney is seen in their determination to "make" a home in a place with some security; or to make a place of refuge. The extreme wisdom of the locust is seen in their cooperation with others and the order they maintain among themselves. The extreme wisdom of the lizard is seen in its determination not to be dissuaded from finding a way into the places where the people in leadership reside. They may be easily caught and cast aside, but they will seek a way to enter into the places of leadership again.

What changes do you think you might need to make in your daily life as it relates to these verses on extreme wisdom?

Proverbs – 06 Wisdom (3)

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Proverbs on Wisdom” in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet:

Characteristics of those who have Understanding:

#1:

Read Proverbs 14:29 and make notes:

Patience is the first evidence to indicate a person has Understanding. It appears from observing people in various situations; the greater the Understanding, the greater the patience. Previous lessons revealed Wisdom as one way of acquiring patience. Here we are given another, Understanding. Doesn't this sound better than acquiring patience through tribulation? Think about yourself or others in situations where you or they showed little or no patience. How much Understanding did you or they have in that matter?

#1 - Patient!

#2:

Read Proverbs 11:12 and make notes:

Control of our conversation is the second evidence pointing to a person of Understanding. The more we Understand in a matter or situation, the more patience we have concerning it and the easier it is to hold back on the deriding comments to others involved.

#2 - Have Control Of What They Say!

#3:

Read Proverbs 17:27 and make notes:

The third evidence of one having Understanding is the ability to control their actions. This text literally speaks of one who is "sparing" of words and has a "cool spirit." Our temper seems to follow closely on the heels of what we say. Many things can make us angry. We seldom lose control of our temper until we begin to say negative, caustic, and argumentative things. The more negative our own personal conversation the more our temper flares. The person who is able to control their speech is just naturally better able to control their actions.

#3 - Control Their Actions!

#4:

Read Proverbs 10:23 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 18:2 and make notes:

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

The true character of an individual is quickly revealed by the things in which they find enjoyment. Taking delight in wisdom is the fourth evidence of a person having Understanding. A person who is of an evil character sees evil conduct as a sport, something to laugh at, and something of child's play. This is a notable contrast to the person of good character. The fool, having no understanding, does not find pleasure in understanding. Instead of making any effort to obtain understanding, the fool takes pleasure in saying what is on his or her mind. This is the kind of person who asks questions to show just how clever they are instead of trying to learn new information.

#4 - Delight In Wisdom!

#5:

Read Proverbs 28:2 and make notes:

Just as with the individual, the stability of a nation depends greatly upon the level of Understanding found within. The less Understanding one has, the greater the turmoil and chaos. The greater the Understanding one has, the greater the degree of order.

#5 - Maintain Order!

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Review the 5 characteristics of a person with Understanding. Write a brief evaluation of how you are doing in that area.

#1 - Patient

#2 - Have Control Of What They Say

#3 - Controls Their Actions

#4 - Delights In Wisdom

#5 - Maintain Order

Benefits of having Understanding:

#1:

Read Proverbs 20:5 and make notes:

There is another passage in the Bible which laments "who can know the heart?" It seems to be more often the case than not that after we state our purpose for doing something we then discover the real purpose of our heart was something different. Sometimes we, as individuals, are not able to discern the real intent of our own heart. We struggle as to the real reason we strive toward a certain goal or fight against another.

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

The person of Understanding has a distinct advantage over the non-understanding person. The person of Understanding has the divine ability to "draw out" what is in their own heart as well as what is in the heart of others. Perhaps this would be a primary key to look for in a counselor the next time you need one.

#1 - Draws Things Out Of The Heart!

#2:

Read Proverbs 13:15 and make notes:

The literal translation of the above text might be more accurate to say the way of the unfaithful will not last. People or things upon which you cannot depend do not find favor with the community. The person of Understanding will find favor with those whom they live, work, or minister. The person who does not have Understanding will continually lose favor with those they try to maintain contact with because their way simply does not last.

#2 - Receives Favor!

#3:

Read Proverbs 24:3 and make notes:

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Wisdom can built a house, but it is Understanding which establishes it as a place to live. A carpenter can built a house. It takes something more to establish that house as a home.

#3 - Has A Secure Place To Live!

#4:

Read Proverbs 16:22 and make notes:

As long as an individual remains a fool, punishment does not end their foolish actions. In a very similar way, a person of Understanding doesn't just have a substance of life, they have a fountain of life. The concept of a fountain is that of a continuous coming forth.

#4 - A Continuing Source Of Life!

#5:

Read Proverbs 15:21 and make notes:

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

The person who lacks Understanding may put in many miles to accomplish the most simple task or to cover a short distance. Understanding keeps us on a straight course toward our goals. Understanding allows us to use much less energy and resources to accomplish our goals. It is Understanding which makes it possible for us to arrive at our destinations in a much shorter time.

#5 - A Straight Path!

#6:

Read Proverbs 3:13 and make notes:

Being blessed includes but is more than experiencing bliss. Blessed involves having reasons to be happy. Blessed includes the condition where things go well. Blessed means not having to fight so many enemies, roadblocks, or hurdles.

#6- Is Blessed!

#7:

Read Proverbs 19:8 and make notes:

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

In our generation there seems to be a great majority of people who are striving toward finding prosperity. This has made, and is currently making, many people subject to scams and deceptive ploys which take from them the little they have. It is comforting to see it is part of God's plan to provide an avenue to prosperity. His path to prosperity avoids the dangers of scam artists, fake investments, and get rich quick programs.

#7 - Prosperity!

#8:

Read Proverbs 2:11 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 21:16 and make notes:

God has a plan and a design in which His people are protected and kept safe. Understanding is stated clearly as a part of that which God intended to stand guard over us. The contrast is sharp. Those who do not have Understanding will come to ruin and wind up in the company of the dead. Those who go about their lives without Understanding usually don't just bring ruin to themselves. They almost always bring ruin to the others around them as well. Regardless of the momentary excitement, the apparent success of one scheme or idea after another, they all wind up in the same place; in the company of the dead.

#8 - Safety!

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Review the benefits of having Understanding. Beside each one write your evaluation of how much of this particular benefit is being realized in your life. Scale of "1" very little, - "5" about half the time, - "10" most of the time.

	1	5	10
Draws Things Out of the Heart. . . .			
Receives Favor.			
Has A Secure Place To Live.			
A Continuous Source of Life.			
A Straight Path.			
Is Blessed.			
Prosperity.			
Safety.			

How we obtain Understanding:

Read Proverbs 2:6 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 9:10 and make notes:

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Read Proverbs 3:5 and make notes:

True Understanding comes from God. Those who refuse to listen to or to hear God's Word are not going to find real Understanding. There are many who claim to have Understanding about a great variety of subjects. When we evaluate the Understanding being offered by man, does it provide the benefits as described above? Does the Understanding being offered bring about the characteristics listed above? If it does not, then it is a poor, fake, substitute for the real Understanding God desires for His children to have. There is a way that seems right to man - but the end of it is destruction. To lean on your own Understanding is much like leaning on a post only to discover nothing is holding the post in place. If we want Understanding, we need to get to "know God."

Read Proverbs 15:32 and make notes:

While it seems to be our human nature to resist all discipline, it appears to be God's plan for us to receive Understanding through correction and discipline. God's people should be the most disciplined people on earth. We should gladly, even eagerly, receive correction. Then we could have the Understanding He has provided for us and could begin to enjoy the benefits which Understanding provides those who have it.

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Read Proverbs 3:19 and make notes:

Making use of Understanding is "God's way of doing things." Compare this with the proverb which stated "wisdom" can build a house but "understanding" establishes it. God set the example for us. He used wisdom to set the foundation but He used Understanding to establish and set in place.

Give yourself an honest critique.

How much effort have you put forth in the area of listening to God's Word?

How well have you received correction?

How often have you preferred to lean on your own understanding?

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Read Proverbs 7:4 and make notes:

God expects us to draw near to Understanding. He expects us to see Understanding as a close relative. This is not speaking of simply acknowledging someone as a relative by bloodline and yet have no personal relationship with them or to have no feelings of affection toward them. This is speaking of the "kinsman" for whom you hold a tender and dear place in your heart. This is the attitude God expects us to have toward Understanding.

Read Proverbs 4:1 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 4:3-4 and make notes:

The teacher shares personal experience and testimony of the affect Understanding has played in his life. The exhortation to "lay hold" of the words of Understanding are not something new this particular teacher is asking of his disciples (or children). It was the same encouragement he received in his youth.

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Read Proverbs 2:2-3 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 4:5 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 4:7 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 8:5 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:23 and make notes:

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

God actually instructs His children to make an effort to get Understanding (apply, pay attention, get) - even if it should cost us all we have - make an effort to obtain Understanding.

Read Proverbs 25:1-3 and make notes:

This is one of those proverbs that many struggle with its intended meaning. I believe the best view is to see this referring to God's revelation of His Word. It is God's "glory" to conceal His Word in parables, allegories, metaphors, and proverbs. It isn't that He does not want us to understand. It is that He desires for us to "search them out" because we learn so much and acquire a deeper and more useful understanding in the "search." It is the glory of the leader to search these things out. To the ancient mind, to speak of the height of the heaven or the depth of the earth was to speak of things that man was unable to measure. One person simply cannot know what is in the heart of another (the king).

Read Proverbs 9:6 and make notes:

Once we have obtained Understanding, God's instructions are that we should live our life in such a way as to make use of the Understanding we have obtained.

Proverbs – 07 Understanding

Read Proverbs 16:16 and make notes:

The real value of Understanding is overlooked by the average person, especially the unbeliever. Having Understanding is better than having great earthly riches. One who has riches without having Understanding can easily lose the riches. One who has Understanding also has the benefits listed above, making it possible to accomplish more with less.

Compare Proverbs 24:3 and Proverbs 3:19. What does this say to you about changes you need to make in your life (lifestyle) ?

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Proverbs “ so that you can share them when we meet:

Benefits of Discipline:

#1:

Read Proverbs 22:15 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 26:3 and make notes:

Using the text of 22:15 as a reference for corporal punishment is a correct application to be sure. However, there is a more complete application we should not overlook. Placing the emphasis upon "discipline" rather than "rod" helps to bring this to the front. It is discipline which drives folly from a child more so than the rod.

The dictionary defines "rod" as any stick, bar, or staff which is straight or almost straight. The "straightness" of discipline will drive folly from a child. Discipline provides a consistency, a continuing in the same direction, a straight way of doing things.

The very fact that it takes physical force to control a fool is the point of the 26:3. It requires a whip to control a horse while a halter to jerk and pull the head is required to control a donkey. The fool responds to reason no better than a horse or donkey.

#1 - Drives Away Folly!

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

#2:

Read Proverbs 1:7 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 12:1 and make notes:

The fool sees Discipline as worthless and often as something contemptible. The person who hates correction (discipline) is declared to be "stupid." Those who desire to improve themselves will have a love for discipline. While they may not find correction pleasurable at some given point, they will not hate correction.

#2 - Leads To Knowledge!

#3:

Read Proverbs 29:15 and make notes:

The "straightness" of correction (or discipline) brings us to wisdom. The child who does not have the benefit of the "straightness" of correction (or discipline) is sure to bring disgrace to their whole family.

#3 - Leads To Wisdom!

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

#4:

Read Proverbs 15:32 and make notes:

Discipline brings us understanding. The person who accepts Discipline takes an important step toward their personal positive development. The person who ignores discipline has a low self-esteem or sees themselves as having no value. If we are to grow spiritually, emotionally, or intellectually, then we must acquire understanding. Discipline is an important key to this end.

#4 - Leads To Understanding!

#5:

Read Proverbs 15:5 and make notes:

The way in which we respond to Discipline reveals a great deal about our character. The fool will "spurn" or drive back contemptuously the Discipline being offered. The prudent person will "heed" or pay careful attention to the Discipline being offered.

#5 - Leads To Prudence

#6:

Read Proverbs 13:18 and make notes:

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

Read Proverbs 25:28 and make notes:

Paying careful attention to the Discipline being given to us is a powerful protection against poverty and shame. The language of the original text seems to indicate commercial success. There is every reason to apply this to our career and investments and to expect physical success and honor.

The person without self-control is very vulnerable. The comparison is to the city whose walls are no longer able to protect it from intruders.

#6 - Protection From Poverty!

#7:

Read Proverbs 10:17 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 15:10 and make notes:

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

Read Proverbs 5:23 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:14 and make notes:

Discipline actually "shows" the way to life or points to the pathway which leads to life. Those who ignore Discipline are led astray. If Discipline seems harsh for those who go astray, consider the end result of their straying; they "will die." One may feel at times they will surely die from the "stern Discipline." While that is a possibility, the alternative is a sure thing; without the pathway of Discipline they will surely die.

Proverbs 5:20-23 is addressing specifically the area of sexual gratification. Our generation knows all too well of the destructive nature of this kind of sin. The person who lacks Discipline will be led captive by their own foolishness. 23:14 says the discipline, including punishment, will save the person from death; moral, social, and physical.

#7 - Leads To Life!

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

Write a brief summary of a practical experience you have had where these benefits came into your life as a result of Discipline.

God's View Of Discipline:

Read Proverbs 13:24 and make notes:

God sees Discipline as an "act of love" and goes so far as to declare a person an illegitimate child who is not Disciplined in Hebrews 12:8. Two powerful verbs are used in reference to the person who does not Discipline their child in contrast to those who Discipline their children; "love" and "hate."

Read Proverbs 29:21 and make notes:

A "pampered" servant refers to one who has not been disciplined. An undisciplined person causes nothing but grief for himself and those around them.

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

Read Proverbs 23:23 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 3:11-12 and make notes:

God instructs His children to "get" Discipline and be sure not to despise it. (refer to Hebrews 12:5-7) The father-son relationship is the best analogy to help us understand why God disciplines believers. Instead of despising the Lord's Discipline we should recognize this as evidence of His love for us. It is His Word which says the one who does not Discipline his child does not love him. As we will see in the next few verses, God is actually setting the example for us to follow.

Read Proverbs 22:6 and make notes:

Proper training will endure throughout a person's life. The instruction to train "a child" definitely gives us today the image of referring to a very young person. In the Old Testament era when these words were recorded, a person could be referred to as a "child" up to the age of twenty-four. With this in mind, the training could easily span some twenty years of the person's life.

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

In more recent times it has been a favorite interpretation of many to claim this text is referring to training a child according to their personal abilities and talents. The wise parent would certainly make an effort to discern the natural gifts of a child and train them accordingly and this can prove to be a very practical thing to do. The training mentioned throughout the Book of Proverbs only speaks of one of two ways in which we can be trained and would hardly support this application. We can be trained in the way of the wise and the righteous or we can be trained in the way of the fool and the wicked. Training a child in the way "he should go" is speaking of training a child in the only right way - the way of life.

Read Proverbs 19:18 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 23:13 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 29:17 and make notes:

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

God also instructs His children to "give" Discipline and "do not withhold" it. Withholding Discipline from our children could make us a party to their premature death. To withhold Discipline from your child is to willingly allow them to grow up stupid, wicked, or both. There seems to be few guarantees in life; but this text says there is at least some "hope" in Discipline.

This gives a good enough reason to keep up the Discipline until they are grown. A Disciplined child brings delight to their parents. The Disciplined child will bring "peace" which is surely a delight to the soul.

Read Proverbs 23:1-3 and make notes:

This is instructing us to apply self-discipline. The example given is that of being at a table for a meal; but the principle fits well into all areas of our lives. When put in a situation where we could be tempted to act (eat) in excess, be careful. Craving (or coveting) the delicacies of another can lead us to act or say things without giving them careful thought. Acting (or eating) to excess can expose our weakness and vulnerabilities to others. This can make us easy prey for those who wish to harm us. A person of low estate, or even average, being invited to take part in the banquet of the rich, can have ulterior motives. They may see us as now owing them a favor which can lead us to do things we would prefer not to do. We need to exercise self-discipline in all areas of our lives in an effort to not make ourselves vulnerable to being taken advantage of, or being led away from the path of righteousness and integrity.

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

The Chart below compares Punishment and Discipline.

Considering the Scriptures we have read, what does this chart say to you?

	Punishment	Discipline
Purpose	Retribution & penalty	To train and mature
Attitude	Frustration, hostility, rejection	loving concern
Emphasis	Past wrongs	Future - improved behavior and attitude
Recipient's Emotional Response	Anger, Condemnation, Fear	Security and gratitude; Positive sense of worth
Recipient's Concept of God	God seeks to punish and is therefore to be avoided	God loves and protects through discipline; He is available and worth knowing intimately

Benefits of Instruction:

#1:

Read Proverbs 19:27 and make notes:

The rejection of instruction always leads to disobedience to some degree. The rejecting of instruction is an act of disobedience in itself. It shouldn't surprise us to find the rejecting of instruction leading to further disobedience.

#1 - Keeps Us From Straying!

#2:

Read Proverbs 13:1 and make notes:

The wise "heed" or pay close attention to instruction while the mocker doesn't even listen to correction. The mocker being the highest level of a fool, doesn't respect authority, thinks he knows what is best, and is not teachable. That is why the stronger word "rebuke" is necessary in the second line of this proverb over the gentle word "instruction" in regards to the wise person.

#2 - Leads To Wisdom!

#3:

Read Proverbs 13:13 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 16:20 and make notes:

The word translated "instruction" in 13:13, speaks of teaching in general while the word translated "command" speaks of a forceful demanding instruction. The person who despises or scorns instruction will as surely pay for this as will the debtor who is forced into court and handed over to the authorities. Those who hold instruction in an attitude of respect will be rewarded as surely as the person who has made wise investments receives a dividend. Those who "heed" or pay careful attention to instruction will prosper.

#3 - Brings Reward!

Read Proverbs 4:20-22 and make notes:

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

The teacher wants so much for the student to understand the importance of paying attention to these words of wisdom. The teacher says pay attention with your ears (listen), pay attention with your eyes (sight), and pay attention with your the core of who we are (heart). This is pretty much saying we should pay attention with our whole being. The reason given for us to pay attention isn't some mystical or high religious purpose. These words of wisdom help bring health to our physical being, our emotional being, and our spiritual being; basically the whole person.

Read Proverbs 23:12 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 8:10 and make notes:

God instructs us to get Instruction ("apply your heart to"). He sees Instruction as being of much greater value and worth than earthly riches.

Read Proverbs 19:20 and make notes:

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

Read Proverbs 1:8 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 4:1 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 8:33 and make notes:

God clearly Instructs us to "accept" Instruction, "listen" to it, and take care not to "ignore" it. It is helpful at this point to refer back to the study on Wisdom and its benefits. Listening to and accepting Instruction results in one being wise. God clearly desires for His children to enjoy the benefits of the wise. His command to listen to and accept Instruction has more to do with His desire for His children to be blessed than it does with a desire to have obedient robots.

"Listen" to your parent's instruction for they have the primary responsibility to train, Instruct, and prepare you for life. This proverbial insight applies equally well to those who fulfill the role of a spiritual father or mother. God is our Heavenly Father but He gives us spiritual "dads" and "moms" to help us in our daily growth and walk. Don't only listen, but "pay attention." Don't "ignore" the Instruction of your parents; earthly or spiritual.

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

Read Proverbs 4:13 and make notes:

After we listen, accept, and receive instruction, we are to "hold on to it." Surely anything so key to success in life as Instruction should be enthusiastically held.

Read Proverbs 16:21 and make notes:

God expects His children to "promote" or to give out the Instruction we have received and held on to. Listen to Instruction, receive it, hold onto it, then give it to others. "Pleasant words" promote, or cause Instruction to advance, contribute to the growth of Instruction, actively stir up an interest for Instruction, and move Instruction ahead to the next level.

Write in your own words God's view of Instruction.

Proverbs – 08 Discipline

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Discipline & Instruction” so that you can share them when we meet:

What does it mean to say someone is Prudent?

Webster's dictionary defines "prudent:"

1. capable of exercising sound judgment in practical matters
2. cautious or discreet in conduct

In the Book of Proverbs, the word translated "prudent" is the Hebrew word "*aruwm*", pronounced "aw-room" - it means "subtle, shrewd, crafty, sly, sensible, prudent."

The current English usage of the word "prudent" is in complete alignment with the original thought being expressed in the Proverbs. In this lesson, we are looking at the person who is "capable of exercising sound judgment in practical matters and is cautious in their conduct."

Benefit:

Read Proverbs 14:18 and make notes:

Such a significant contrast is drawn between the inheritance of the simple and the crown received by the prudent. The original word used in this text for "crowned" may be a little difficult to translate into our present day language. It appears to mean something different from placing a crown upon the head. The more precise translation would be to "encircle or embrace." It says the Prudent person will be "encircled" with knowledge or the Prudent person will be "embraced" with knowledge.

If our choice of lifestyle will result in either "inheriting folly" or being "encircled or embraced with knowledge", which would you rather look forward to?

**The Primary Benefit Of Being Prudent:
Being Crowned With Knowledge !**

A Great Gift:

Read Proverbs 19:14 and make notes:

This works just as well to say "a prudent husband is from the Lord." Houses, wealth, and other earthly physical property can be inherited from our family members, it can be earned or it can be acquired by investing and trading. However, a Prudent spouse is a special gift from God! The world or anyone in the world CAN NOT give you a prudent husband or wife.

Referring back to the primary benefit of the Prudent person, one can begin to see the value in having a spouse who is Prudent and begin to appreciate what a wonderful gift God has given. The other side of this might be, if we would like to become a wonderful gift from God to our spouse, then we should make some effort to live a Prudent lifestyle.

Take time to evaluate yourself in regards to being Prudent. Do you have the Benefit of being a Prudent person evident in your life? If so, what is the evidence?

Characteristics of the Prudent Person:

#1:

Read Proverbs 12:16 and make notes:

Exercising "Prudence" is a sign of maturity. It is the Prudent person who exercises sound judgment in these practical matters or at least they use caution and discretion in their conduct. We find it is a mature person who is able to handle insults without the immediate irrational response of some type of retaliation.

The Prudent person denies the enemy the satisfaction of having caused them to behave in anger or rage. The important point here is the Prudent person doesn't necessarily repress their feelings or deny they have them; they simply are shrewd in the way they deal with their feelings and the insults.

Read Proverbs 18:16 and make notes:

This text was used in ancient times to help prepare one for social interaction. It doesn't encourage the bribing of a judge. It is simply explaining how the giving of gifts opens doors to opportunities and influence.

Proverbs - 09 Prudent / Discernment

This certainly is not different in our society. The people who are continually giving of themselves by helping others will find many invitations (open doors). The person who is always taking from others instead of giving, rarely has an invitation (closed doors).

#1 - Overlooks Insults!

#2:

Read Proverbs 22:3 and make notes:

It is the Prudent person who recognizes something as dangerous, or as a pitfall or life, and they exercise sound judgment to avoid it. It should be apparent to most that this "Prudence" is a likely result of the training which comes about from knowledge, wisdom, and discipline. The contrast expressed here is too painfully clear to require additional explanation. The Prudent person avoids danger while the "simple" don't even see the danger and march face first into it.

Read Proverbs 27:12 and make notes:

Proverbs - 09 Prudent / Discernment

For those who lack experience and for those who are naive, these two verses should serve as motivation to seek training. This should help us desire to become knowledgeable, to obtain wisdom, and to develop a lifestyle of discipline. The "Prudent", or the mature, person has developed a wariness which helps them avoid sudden pitfalls while the "simple", or immature person, just stumbles headlong into them.

Read Proverbs 19:12 and make notes:

A king has the ability and power to terrify or to refresh. The "roar of a lion" speaks of the king's most dangerous attitude. The "favor is like dew" speaks of his most benevolent attitude. The advice here is to use tact when dealing with those in authority and to cultivate within them a kind attitude toward yourself.

#2 - Recognizes Danger!

#3:

Read Proverbs 12:11 and make notes:

The prudent person is diligent to perform their job and doesn't continually chase after every dream of getting rich quick.

Read Proverbs 14:8 and make notes:

Those who have tried living their life without wisdom and have also tried living their life with wisdom would certainly agree that Biblical wisdom is practical theology. The "Prudent" person takes time to give careful consideration to their conduct. The contrast is more distinct than it appears at first. The way of the "fool" is deception; not only deception for others but it is deception for the "fool." This is the primary reason the "fool" is unable to see danger. Perhaps the most damaging deception is Self-deception.

Read Proverbs 14:15 and make notes:

Here again it is pointed out that the maturity of the "Prudent" person prevents them from rushing into the quicksand of "gullibility." The simple, with little or no discretion, believes anything and is easily taken advantage of; and this is probably the result of the simple hearing what they want to hear. The Prudent person "looks before they step - not to mention before they leap."

#3 - Thinks Before They Act!

#4:

Read Proverbs 12:23 and make notes:

The "keeps...to himself" does not say the Prudent person never speaks; but it means they use discretion in their speaking. The "fool" is quick to tell everything they know, or usually it is what they think they know. The one who speaks the least is likely to speak the most effectively. It has been observed that the person who seldom speaks is the one most likely to be listened to when they do speak.

Read Proverbs 20:25 and make notes:

This Proverb is teaching against getting caught in a rash and hasty vow. This has been a common problem no doubt since the fall of Adam and Eve. In ancient times, when a person dedicated something as sacred, they could buy it back by paying several times its value. It should be easy to see how someone who makes too many hasty decisions to dedicate things as sacred and then wishes to continue to use them would spend a considerable amount of money in redeeming these items.

Today, just as it was in ancient times, it can be very expensive to fulfill a promise (or vow). It happens far too often that a person will make a vow in the excitement or inspiration of the moment, only later to discover they have burdened themselves with a heavy financial load. This is the situation where people attempt to go back on their word. In our society these people experience foreclosures, law suits, and the loss of ability to borrow again. It is a trap to make a hasty (or rash) vow.

#4 - Controls What They Say!

#5:

Read Proverbs 13:16 and make notes:

Everything we do, DISPLAYS to those around us either our knowledge or our lack of knowledge. The Prudent person observes the circumstances and recognizes where the dangers are in a particular issue. Then, using caution, the Prudent person makes a decision which shows their knowledge in the matter. Even when the fool takes care and uses elaborate schemes to disguise their ignorance, it is only a matter of time until the fool is exposed for what they are.

Read Proverbs 14:4 and make notes:

The Prudent person keeps a close watch on the necessary balance of producing and consuming. To the unknowing person, the manger might appear to be a place and object of consumption since the oxen eat. A person who allows tunnel vision to set in might decide to get rid of the oxen and reduce the consuming that takes place in the manger. After the oxen are gone they usually discover rather quickly their harvest is declining. To enjoy an abundant harvest, it was necessary for the farmer of that day to have an ox; maybe several. The oxen do eat and thus require something in the manger. The Prudent person makes sure the ox produces more than the ox consumes. There is an old adage that says, "you must spend money to make money." If this is true, then it is equally true that one must use Prudence in how to spend the money so that you make more than you spend.

#5 - The Prudent Person Controls Their Actions !

Evaluate yourself concerning the Characteristics of a Prudent Person:
How many of the characteristics are evident in your lifestyle?

Overlooks Insults

Recognizes Danger

Thinks Before Acting

Controls What They Say

Controls Their Actions

Benefits of having Discernment:

#1:

Read Proverbs 14:6 and make notes:

The mocker comes across to others as intellectually arrogant. The mocker is not likely to have any serious interest in obtaining real knowledge, making any real contributions, or lifestyle adjustments in regards to religion. The statements or gestures of the mocker might make in regards to pursuing wisdom are only a superficial masquerade. The sometimes exhausting efforts of the mocker to make others think they are wise are contrasted to how easily knowledge comes to those who are discerning.

#1 - Receives Knowledge Easily!

#2:

Read Proverbs 10:13 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 14:33 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 16:21 and make notes:

The words which come forth from the Discerning person are found to be words of wisdom. Wisdom has a special affect upon the Discerning person. Proverbs 14:33 says "wisdom reposes in the heart of the discerning." Repose as a verb means "to pose again", "to lay to rest", "to put at rest", "to rest in confidence", "to lie quiet and calm." Repose as a noun means "rest", "calm", "peace of mind." People who speak with words of wisdom earn a reputation for being a person who can discern things and usually finds themselves being given a place of influence in the community.

#2 - Receives Wisdom!

Characteristics Of A Discerning Person:

#1:

Read Proverbs 3:21-22 and make notes:

To the wise, discernment is as necessary for sustaining life as is oxygen. We need to insure we have discernment as surely as we need to make sure we have air to breath.

Read Proverbs 19:25 and make notes:

Once again we look at three different types of people; the mocker who has a closed mind, a simple person who has an empty mind, and the Discerning person who has a receptive mind. The punishment of a mocker for their actions will probably have little, if any, affect upon the mocker but at least the simple person learns from observing the consequences of the mocker's actions. The interesting contrast is seen with the Discerning person; they learn from a verbal correction. It isn't necessary to punish the Discerning person in order for them to learn from their actions. If the choice is receiving a beating or observing a beating as opposed to a verbal rebuke, I'll choose the verbal rebuke.

#1 - Receives Rebukes!

#2:

Read Proverbs 17:28 and make notes:

Even a "fool" appears wise if they can keep from speaking. At least they manage to conceal their foolishness. The fool who keeps silent doesn't actually cease to be a fool by not talking; but they do continue to hide their foolishness. This is one means of the fool starting down the path to becoming a "Discerning" person.

#2 - Controls What They Say!

#3:

Read Proverbs 18:15 and make notes:

Those who are wise are always on the lookout for knowledge. Their ear is always tuned toward that purpose. They are always listening for the opportunity to find knowledge. The Discerning person "acquires" knowledge. This verse speaks of the depth and completeness of this acquisition by the fact the Discerning person takes the knowledge "to heart."

Read Proverbs 15:14 and make notes:

The point to be made here is simple. The Discerning person acquires knowledge because they find it; and they find knowledge because they are looking for it. Sure, people do sometimes find things when they "are not looking" for them; but this is sporadic at best and doesn't always work out that way. Do you find something significant every time you are not looking for anything? Do you find something significant most of the times you are not looking for something? Those who seek - find !

#3 - Acquires Knowledge !

#4:

Read Proverbs 17:24 and make notes:

A previous verse spoke of the depth of the acquisition of knowledge by the Discerning person. It shouldn't be a surprise to find the Discerning person also keeps wisdom where they can get to it (in view). This is sadly contrasted with the fool who can't seem to keep their attention on anything and continues to drift along through life. The main problem with "drifting" is you don't have any idea where you will end up. You could drift into troubled waters. The continuous anxiety of the uncertainty from drifting destroys the body even if the outward circumstances do not.

#4 - Keeps Wisdom In View!

#5:

Read Proverbs 28:7 and make notes:

The word translated "law" in the original text probably would be better translated "instruction." Those who are not Discerning persons, don't "discern" the need to follow instructions, and don't discern the outcome of failing to follow instructions. The inevitable calamity of failing to follow instructions, in many areas of life, becomes a shameful thing for the parents of such a person.

Read Proverbs 18:1 and make notes:

This text doesn't just speak of a person who is shy but of one who is actually unfriendly toward society. This is the person who is self-centered, unreasonable, and doesn't take advice from others. In ancient times, this Proverb was used to help teach the necessity of being part of a community. People are social beings as created by God and as such we have social responsibilities. The word translated "defies" literally means to "burst out in contention" or to "show the teeth." This is speaking of the person who is in strong opposition to society and its decisions.

#5 - Follows Instructions !

How are you doing in regards to the Characteristics of a Discerning Person? Which of these Characteristics are evident in your life “most of the time?”

Receives Rebuke.

Controls what they say.

Acquires knowledge.

Keeps wisdom in view.

Follows instructions.

Read Proverbs 20:8 and make notes:

The ability to discern (see evil) is imperative for those who are to sit in judgment. Imagine a ruler who is unable to discern what is right or wrong making decisions that lead to life or death. Surely we would want those making rulings or judgments that concern us or our loved ones, to have discernment. Discernment should be sought after and developed at every level in the land; from the highest judge to the parent of a child.

Read Proverbs 27:4-5 and make notes:

It is “prudent” that we “discern” this important message. No one is able to continue stand under the heavy load of anger or jealousy. Eventually it will wear us down mentally, emotionally, and physically. It may not be as obvious at first, but love that is kept hidden and not shared, will wear us down also. Trying to keep our love hidden causes stress and makes us weak. Sharing our love actually strengthens every fiber of our being.

Proverbs - 09 Prudent / Discernment

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Being Prudent & Having Discernment” so that you can share them when we meet:

Results of being a Mocker:

#1:

Read Proverbs 24:9 and make notes:

The concept of a person devising schemes points out the simple fact that the "fool" is not necessarily a person with a dull mind. To scheme requires a certain amount of mental activity or exercise. The intense mental activity of the fool results in indifferent calculating plans to take advantage of others or to cause them harm. The schemes of a fool are stated clearly to be sin. It is only a matter of time until the community at large has had enough of this person and their repeated harm to others. The clever fool may be able to keep their schemes inside the boundaries of the law and remain free to move about in society; however the community will despise this person to say the least. The Mocker not only DOESN'T have favor with their fellow man, they are detestable to others.

#1 - Is Detested!

#2:

Read Proverbs 14:6 and make notes:

The Mocker is often intellectually arrogant and experiencing the first result of being a Mocker (detested by others). When we consider the aspects of knowledge and wisdom it is apparent as to why one who is detested by the community will have a difficult time obtaining wisdom. The Mocker may want wisdom, may even try hard to find wisdom; but it will continue to be an evasive object for the Mocker.

#2 - Is Unable To Find Wisdom!

#3:

Read Proverbs 22:10 and make notes:

This verse tells us to expel the Mocker from our company. The Mocker seldom wishes to actually accomplish any particular objective. They are not like the person who feels passionately for some cause and as a result is willing to fight and argue to achieve their goal. The Mocker is just as likely to change sides in mid-argument in an effort to keep the argument going. The Mocker is one who will say things to people just to get them in an adverse attitude towards others. Strife is the cause of "quarrels and insults." When the Mocker is expelled, strife is gone and so are quarrels and insults.

#3 - Causes Strife, Quarrels, And Insults!

#4:

Read Proverbs 9:12 and make notes:

Wisdom brings its own reward; but just as surely so does Mockery. The Book of James in the New Testament sheds some light on the affect our words can have. The words of the Mocker are only of a negative and destructive nature. A sure result of the Mocker is "suffering." The Mocker certainly does cause harm to others, so it isn't saying the Mocker doesn't hurt anyone but himself. The Mocker will frequently find themselves not only suffering; but suffering "alone" with no one there to comfort them. If you have ever hurt and been alone while you were hurting, then you will probably agree that the greatest suffering is that which is endured all alone.

#4 - Will Suffer!

Characteristics of the Mocker:

#1:

Read Proverbs 21:24 and make notes:

The foremost characteristic of a Mocker is their proud and arrogant attitude. The proud heart of the Mocker is a reference to the refusal to submit to God. It is very difficult to submit to another human being if we are unable to at least submit to God. The arrogant attitude of the Mocker makes it difficult for them to receive any real help.

#1 - Can Be Recognized By Their Pride And Arrogance!

#2:

Read Proverbs 13:1 and make notes:

The Mocker is a high level of fool. They have no real respect for authority, no reverence for God or the things of God, and because they think they know best about everything - they are unteachable. The Mocker doesn't even listen to rebuke, not to mention respond to it.

Read Proverbs 15:12 and make notes:

The Mocker seems to resist any and every effort to reform them. While the Mocker usually doesn't listen to rebuke, if they get the idea someone is trying to correct them, they greatly resent it.

Read Proverbs 9:7-8 and make notes:

The Mocker does not like correction and will not accept correction; regardless of how much they really need help. They not only resent someone trying to correct them; but they will give back insults to those who earnestly try to help them. The warning is clear; if you try to correct or rebuke a Mocker, you are going to be hated by them.

#2 - Can Be Recognized By The Refusal To Accept Correction!

#3:

Read Proverbs 20:1 and make notes:

Neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament actually prohibit the intake of substances which can intoxicate. There is, however, a clear command not to "get drunk." Becoming intoxicated is clearly shown to be a sin in the New Testament. This very old proverb of wisdom simply states "wine is a mocker." The message is not all that subtle. If you spend an excessive amount of time and exposure to the "mocker" then that is what you will become. If you spend too much time with "beer" then you will become a brawler.

The Mocker is very fond of intoxicating substances. When we consider the "results" of being a Mocker, it is easy to see why one would seek a means of escape. The use of intoxicating substances can, and usually does, lead to foolish behavior and words. Intoxicants confuse the senses of the body. The intoxicated person "thinks" they are feeling something or experiencing something that isn't there.

#3 - Can Be Recognized By Their Desire To Be Intoxicated!

Folly:

Read Proverbs 17:12 and make notes:

The Folly of a fool is dangerous for all who come into contact with them. It is not a pretty picture which comes to mind when we think of the rage a bear would have when her cubs have been taken from her. And yet, this proverb says this would be safer than hanging around a fool.

Read Proverbs 27:22 and make notes:

Proverbs - 10 Mocker / Folly

Folly is also dangerous for the individual who allows it to come into their life because it is very hard to get rid of once it has taken up residence in your life. This proverb tells us "folly" cannot be removed by force. Grinding grain with a mortar and pestle completely pulverizes the grain. The idea is that even harsh punishment will fail to remove the "folly" from the fool. The contemporary comparison might be like contracting the AIDS or herpes virus. As it stands today, if you get it, you will have it as long as you live because we have no cure for these virus. It appears some medicines can control the virus for a time, but nothing can cure it. That's how difficult it is to remove Folly from your life once it becomes a part of it.

Read Mark 7:21-22 and make notes:

A short detour from the Book of Proverbs to Mark's gospel account reveals something significant about Folly. It originates from within "our heart." This leave us without the excuse of someone or something else having given us Folly when it is found in our life. What is really scary about this is to take note of the rest of the items on this list. The Folly of the fool is certainly not held in any level of high regard by our Heavenly Father.

Read Proverbs 9:14-18 and make notes:

Folly can be seen to take a prominent place in our cities or communities. Folly is continually looking for those who "go straight on their way" and calls out to them. Folly literally targets those who are trying to do the right thing. The invitation of Folly tries to imitate the invitation of wisdom. Folly claims to be calling out for those who lack knowledge (the simple) for she desires to give them knowledge but Folly actually desires those who are going straight. Folly offers "stolen water" rather than the mixed wine offered by wisdom.

To those lacking judgment, the sweetness of Folly's water may be more appealing than the wine offered by wisdom. It does appear the idea of getting away with something appeals to our baser instincts. The contrasts to the banquet offered by wisdom is considerable. The end result of each is drastically different. The naive ones entering the banqueting hall of Folly don't realize this is a passage way to death and the grave.

Read Proverbs 19:10 and make notes:

Two things are presented as things which are just not right (not fitting); the fool who lives in luxury and the slave who rules. This text isn't addressing the person who has changed and possibly earned the right to be in either of these circumstances. This is speaking of the misfit who is trying to be something they are not and are not equipped to be. The ancient wise observed when a fool began to live in luxury they made things worse by their bad qualities and the slave became arrogant and cruel.

Read Proverbs 26:1 and make notes:

Honor is as much out of place on a fool as snow is in the summer. Honor placed upon a fool is as damaging as rain during the harvest. It can be very costly and make life difficult in the months ahead. The fool is a person who is stupid, worthless, and vain. The warning is clear, don't elevate a fool to a place of honor.

Read Psalms 69:5 and make notes:

Not only does God not find Folly acceptable, He KNOWS our Folly! We ridiculously waste our time when we try to pretend we don't have Folly in our life.

Folly is Dangerous! God does not like Folly! God knows our Folly!

Read Proverbs 26:6-10 and make notes:

The fool is recognized by the ancient wise as being so completely useless and worthless. These verses make an effort to describe the worthlessness of a fool. The fool is worthless as a messenger, as an instructor, as a producer, or even as an employee.

In ancient times if one were to cut off their feet, they would be unable to deliver anything to anyone. You have the same ability to deliver something when you choose a fool to be the messenger. Basically it would be better not to send the message at all than to send it by way of the fool. At least you wouldn't be wondering if it arrived or what the recipients response might be.

Wise sayings, knowledge, and instruction are all completely useless to the fool. They don't comprehend it, can't make use of it, and can't pass it along to anyone else. Wisdom to the fool can accomplish no more than dysfunctional legs.

Honor placed upon a fool is absurd. It is like tying a stone in a sling. If the stone is tied to the sling, you may have vigorous physical activity, but you will never be able to deliver the stone to it's intended target. Neither can you use the sling to deliver another stone as long as the first one remains tied to the sling. Honoring a fool is no different. It won't accomplish anything and will hinder and further productive actions as well.

Just like a thorn causes pain and a drunkard will wail loudly and in a disturbing manner, so it is with a fool trying to share a wise saying. The drunkard who encounters a thorn bush, may react in a crazed manner making it difficult for anyone to help them by removing the thorn. The wild thrashing of a drunkard in pain may injure others and damage property. So it is with the fool trying to explain a wise saying.

It is easy to see how dangerous it would be for an archer to shoot arrows at random giving no care as to who they might wound. Many people can be hurt and some perhaps fatally. It is no less dangerous to hire a fool. The undisciplined person who is hired will cause much harm and damage and it will be as difficult to predict as the random shooting of the archer.

Fools Are Worthless !

Characteristics of Folly:

#1:

Read Proverbs 15:2 and make notes:

Folly doesn't just slip out at the least opportune time; it "gushes" out of the mouth of the fool. Compare this "gushing" with the fountain that is found in those who have God's knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. There is an abundance of their foolish words and they come out of the fool with some force (they gush).

Read Proverbs 15:14 and make notes:

If ever there was a Scripture verse which supports the idea that "you are what you eat," this would be one. The previous verse (15:2) just told us the fool's mouth "gushes" forth with Folly. This verse says "Folly" is the thing the fool "feeds" on. What goes in is what comes out!

Read Proverbs 18:13 and make notes:

Speaking too hastily, or speaking before we think things through, leads to shame. The failure to listen to what others are saying may indicate how little regard the fool has for what others say. The premature answer is "Folly."

Read Proverbs 18:7 and make notes:

It isn't necessary for someone to try and "undo" the fool. The things the fool says will be the thing that brings them to ruin and destruction.

#1 - The Fool Can Be Recognized By Their Lack Of Control Over What They Say!

#2:

Read Proverbs 9:13 and make notes:

The less sure the fool is of their position, the louder they seem to become. There appears to be some subconscious idea that the loudest point made is the correct one, or maybe it is just the idea that others will submit to the loudest point. The lack of discipline in the life of the fool is more the lack of self-discipline than it is a lack of being disciplined by others. The fool is often one who has experienced much punishment, if not discipline, at the hands of others but has refused to learn from it. The fool has no self-discipline and is unable to make themselves do the things which need to be done in life.

#2 - The Fool Can Be Recognized By Their Lack Of Discipline!

#3:

Read Proverbs 15:21 and make notes:

The Fool, lacking judgment and discernment, enjoys the way of the fool and the Folly of life, even in the serious and important life determining choices or situations. The Fool follows after the way of "fun" instead of responsibility. As a result of this one characteristic, it is the usual to see a fool's life following the path which "zigs and zags" all over the place and never really goes anywhere.

Read Proverbs 26:4 and make notes:

This does not say the Fool is not to be answered! The instruction is to refrain from descending to the level of the fool in an effort to answer their foolishness. Before you engage in any argument with a fool, be sure to refresh yourself on the section of the Mocker in this study. When you get involved in an argument with the fool, you have become just like them and you have made them a winner just by getting you to argue with them. Remember, this is the only real objective of the Mocker (fool).

Read Proverbs 23:9 and make notes:

Since the fool despises wisdom, it is a waste of time and effort to try to share instruction or correction with them. The fool doesn't just ignore and reject the discipline and the instruction, but the fool scorns the teacher who tries to help and change them.

#3 - The Fool Can Be Recognized By The Inability To Reason With Them!

#4:

Read Proverbs 14:29 and make notes:

The "quick temper" referred to in this verse is describing the passionate violent excitement which is never really satisfied. This is the person who is already at the temperature of combustion and it only takes a spark to set them off. Regardless of how many explanations and words of justification a person uses to rationalize their explosive heated response; the simple fact remains, this is a "display" of being a Fool.

#4 - The Fool Can Be Recognized By Their Quick Temper!

Results of Folly:

#1:

Read Proverbs 14:8 and make notes:

From the very onset, the way and method of the Fool is "deception." The Fool is certainly out to deceive others, but the sad part of this is it becomes "self-deception" before it is deception to others.

Read Proverbs 5:23 and make notes:

While this verse is in a section teaching of the danger of adultery, it says something significant about "folly." Folly leads the fool astray. Common sense would dictate one thing, but the Fool does not respond in common sense or rational judgment. The Fool is led into captivity by the very schemes and snares they set out to entrap and take advantage of others.

Read Proverbs 24:9 and make notes:

It is too plain to require commentary. The Foolish schemes of the Fool - IS SIN!

#1 - Deceived, Led Astray, And Into Sin!

#2:

Read Proverbs 12:23 and make notes:

From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. The Fool can't help but "blurt" out their foolishness. It simply cannot be contained.

Read Proverbs 13:16 and make notes:

The concept of "exposes" his Folly is that of a traveling salesman spreading out their samples or product in clear view for everyone to be sure and see.

Read Proverbs 26:11 and make notes:

Anyone can make a mistake. The interesting thing pointed out by this proverb is the fact the Fool continues to "repeat" their mistakes again and again. No matter how much they have suffered for their mistakes in the past, regardless of the warnings by others, the Fool will make the same mistake over and over. Go ahead, try to teach a dog not to lap up it's own vomit. That's the same chance you have of trying to get the Fool to stop repeating the same mistakes.

Read Proverbs 14:7 and make notes:

You do not find knowledge by associating with fools. This wisdom saying is simple and straight forward, stay out of the presence of fools.

#2 - Becomes Unable To Learn From Mistakes!

#3:

Read Proverbs 16:22 and make notes:

While the wise person receives correction, rebuke, and discipline; the Fool receives punishment. There is so little that can be done for them by the community, the only thing left is to punish the Fool for their sin.

Read Proverbs 19:29 and make notes:

Retribution is certain for the mocker and for the fool. This text can be seen as a parallel or as an equation. Either way, the mocker is sure to be penalized and the fool is sure to be punished.

#3 - Certain To Receive Punishment!

#4:

Read Proverbs 14:18 and make notes:

The simple are those with empty minds. The danger in not learning and remaining "simple" is the inheritance. Those who remain "simple" will inherit, or will have transferred to them, "folly." They will become a Fool.

Read Proverbs 14:24 and make notes:

Proverbs - 10 Mocker / Folly

Like begets like! The Folly of the Fool WILL REPRODUCE more Folly in the life of the Fool. The Folly of a Fool is much like a plant which is very prolific. It produces a great deal of seed which in turn brings forth much more Folly.

Read Proverbs 19:3 and make notes:

When ruin begins to become apparent in the life of a Fool, they usually blame others and especially God. The Fool often "rages" against God, blaming Him as though He took things from them and now they are having a difficult time. The very first part of this verse is so clear, it is our own Folly which ruins our life. Others don't ruin our life and certainly God doesn't ruin our life. God loves the world so much that He sent His one and only Son so we could all have eternal life. Jesus came so that we could have life and have it more abundantly.

The Fool is not willing to accept responsibility for their mistakes, bad decisions, and foolish ways. It is easier to blame someone and the Fool shows just how much a Fool they are when they begin to blame God.

Read Proverbs 1:31-33 and make notes:

The punishment for indifference, antagonism, and despising knowledge and ethical principles for life comes in the form of retribution. The term "fruit" is used to indicate the consequence of the actions of the fool. The concept is one of growth which eventually produces a result. The "waywardness" in verse 32 literally means a "turning away" and this is what leads them to ruin and destruction.

One could at least say the way of the Fool is a downward spiral. First they are deceived, then they deceive others, next they are themselves led astray and into sin. They are then unable to learn from their mistakes. They are sure to receive punishment. Their life is ruined. It might be more accurate to say the way of the Fool is a steep slope into ruin.

#4 - Having Their Life Ruined!

#5:

Read Proverbs 17:25 and make notes:

The child who turns out to be a fool in life brings bitter grief to their parents and family.

#5 - Bitter Grief To Those Who Love Them!

Things We Need To Know:

Read Proverbs 22:15 and make notes:

In the immature years of a child, there is in each of us what some refer to as original folly. It is nothing more than the foolishness that comes from ignorance. Ignorance is simply not knowing. This is not to be a matter of grave concern but it must not be ignored. It is important for a child to receive "discipline" beginning at an early age to help prevent "folly" from taking root in their life.

Read Proverbs 20:30 and make notes:

This ancient word of wisdom actually does teach that physical punishment may prove to be spiritually valuable. There are other Proverbs which explain there are certain kinds of people that even a beating will not help them learn. This is addressing the person who is perhaps slow of conscious, but somewhere inside of them there is a desire to do the right thing. The physical punishment "jump starts" the conscious and the inner desire to do what is right.

Folly Can Be Removed From Our Life While We Are Young !

Read Proverbs 27:3 and make notes:

Anyone who has ever tried to carry stones or sand know how tiring and exhausting this can be. The provocation brought on by a fool is more of an exhausting burden than either of these physically demanding tasks. The emotional effort and spiritual effort it takes to deal with a fool is exhausting to the whole person. It wearies the heart and soul.

Read Proverbs 26:5 and make notes:

If the Fool is not challenged, they will become "wise in their own eyes" and become even more the problem. The challenge must be to the same degree as the level of foolishness. If it is really a negligible issue then just ignore the person. If it is an issue of importance, then it must be addressed to the level of importance it carries.

So we **MUST NOT** lower ourselves to the level of the Fool in an effort to address their foolishness. This is not what is meant by "according to his folly." The idea is more of the level to which you push the point of correction and challenge. There are times when it would probably create more harm to say something than it would to simply remain silent. There are other times when their foolishness needs to be challenged but could best be handled by going to them quietly in private and challenging their words or actions. There are other times when the severity of their foolishness is causing, or will cause, great harm and it must be corrected openly.

The only real effective way to challenge the foolishness of a Fool is with the Word of God. Make sure it is applied in love, with mercy and grace, and not used as some rod of iron.

Folly Needs To Be Challenged !

Read Proverbs 23:6-8 and make notes:

It is foolish on our part to continue to accept food, gifts, etc. from the stingy person. When we come to realize that a person gives to us grudgingly, we should decline any future offers from them. Regardless of words from them encouraging us to “eat”, if they are counting the cost of each thing we accept, then we need to say, “thanks for the offer, but I will pass.” To continue to partake of whatever it is that they offering, when we know they are resentful of our taking and using it, will cause us to become ill. As we reflect on their stingy attitude, it will interfere with our digestion as surely as if we have eaten bad food. Even our kind words of “thanks” or “appreciation” will become distasteful to us more so than to the stingy person. Our compliments will have been wasted.

Write a short summary of what God has revealed to you about any changes in lifestyle or attitude you need to make after this lesson:

Proverbs - 10 Mocker / Folly

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding “Mockers & Folly” so that you can share them when we meet:

Pride:

Read Proverbs 12:9 and make notes:

This is certainly a contemporary issue. Most of us probably meet people everyday who are living beyond their means in an effort (conscious or unconscious) to pretend to be something or someone which they are not. The wisdom of this Proverb is simply that if we would live modestly we would have more finances available to provide ourselves more of the comforts of life. The person living beyond their means usually spends money on "show" and "interest" which could provide living necessities or comfort if they would give up the pretentious lifestyle and attitude. The original language of this verse is difficult to translate and one of the possible translations says, "Better is the lowly that serves himself" than someone who pretends and is in need of food.

Read Proverbs 16:19 and make notes:

The person who is oppressed will ultimately be better off than the person who oppresses. The lowly in spirit and the proud are at opposite ends of the righteousness spectrum. This saying is not declaring it better to be poor or in need. It is declaring the importance of being humble or lowly in spirit. Each of us should work to cultivate a humble heart regardless of our economic or social status. It would indeed be better to be poor and humble than to be wealthy and proud.

Read Proverbs 17:7 and make notes:

This is an interesting Proverb. We have already seen God's assessment of a fool is they are worthless. Here we are told that a dishonest leader is even worse than that. This means a dishonest leader is worse than worthless! The words translated "arrogant lips" literally means "lofty speech." Excellent and lofty words are simply not suited for the fool's mouth; they seem very out of place there. If a fool should not attempt to use lofty speech, then even more so; a leader should not tell lies.

Read Proverbs 25:27 and make notes:

Honey is good and so is glory. Honey taken in excess brings discomfort and unpleasant results and so does seeking one's own glory.

Read Proverbs 27:21 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

A crucible and a furnace bring great stress upon that which is supposed to be precious metals. If it isn't truly silver or gold, it is destroyed in the crushing and grinding of the crucible or burned away in the furnace. Only the real silver and gold survive such testing and proving. The public praise a person receives, acts much like a crucible and furnace. If they are not in reality a humble person they are likely to be destroyed by the process.

Public praise may be a good measure of how one is perceived in the community and how well their good works are received, but the real measuring that takes place is what happens in the heart of the person being praised.

Read Proverbs 30:32 and make notes:

If you have bragged on yourself or planned to do evil, the instruction is short and to the point. Stop this immediately and begin to control what you say and think. Verse 33 explains this can only lead to strife which will be studied separately in this series.

Results of Pride:

#1:

Read Proverbs 13:10 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

Fleshly Pride causes one to have (or at least on a sub-conscious level) contempt for the opinion of others. Pride causes one to be conceited. Instead of accepting advice, Pride causes a person to argue and make excuses and try to justify what they have done or said. Pride causes one to have an unyielding personality which inevitably leads to strife and quarrels.

#1 - Breeding Of Quarrels!

#2:

Read Proverbs 11:2 and make notes:

The word translated "pride" in this verse actually refers to a "boiling up." Pride almost always causes one to over-step proper boundaries and various degrees of insubordination. Pride causes us to have over-inflated egos and eventually leads many to develop a self-bestowed attitude of divinity. Those who continually cause quarrels always find disgrace, not only in the eyes of others but in their own eyes as well.

#2 - Disgrace!

#3:

Read Proverbs 29:23 and make notes:

Pride always leads to abasement to some degree. Pride is a guaranteed way of descent. It leads us to a place of feeling "low"; alone, unappreciated, not respected, etc.

#3 – Being Brought Low!

#4:

Read Proverbs 16:18 and make notes:

Pride, which leads to quarrels, disgrace, and being low, leads most assuredly to a person's downfall. Pride is connected to "haughty spirit" just as destruction and fall are connected. When you consider the first 3 results of Pride, it is clear how Pride brings destruction to a career, marriage, business, friendship, church, etc.

Read Proverbs 15:25 and make notes:

What possible defense could one hope to find or have that would withstand the Lord. The proud man is hopeless because the Lord has said He will tear down the proud man's house. This refers to the life the proud man establishes for himself. The widows, orphans, and needy have often been the victims of the proud. The same Lord who promises to tear the life of the proud promises to champion the cause of the needy.

Read Proverbs 29:1 and make notes:

Destruction is sure and will come quickly to those who refuse to change, be disciplined, or learn from the rebukes. The "stiff-neck" is that of the proud and describes a lack of submission. This is the opposite of the "bent neck" of the humble who walk in submission. The large trees are always the ones who have their limbs broken off during an ice or snow storm because they refuse to bend and try to "hold up" under the stress of the storm. The little trees bend in submission to the wind, ice, and snow and are not broken.

#4 - Destruction!

A Couple of Things to know about Pride:

Read Proverbs 8:13 and make notes:

God hates Pride just like He does evil behavior and perverse speech. The parallel is made too clear to ignore. God hates evil and God hates Pride. If this is something God hates (and it is), then we need to give it some attention and make some effort to rid our life of Pride and to maintain our life in such a way as to avoid Pride in the future.

First - God Hates Pride!

Read Proverbs 17:6 and make notes:

This wisdom saying comes from a culture where great importance is placed upon family. The elder members of the family provide the reputation and respect the family has in the community. They are the ones the community has observed walk in integrity and honesty during all kinds of situations. The children take pride in who their parents and grandparents are. The grandchildren are displayed and shown off much like a crown. The elder members of the family love to talk about and show the potential and possibilities their grandchildren hold for the family's future contribution to society.

Second - There Is A Healthy Pride!

Humility:

Results of Humility:

#1:

Read Proverbs 25:6-7 and make notes:

It is better to be promoted because others recognized your ability than to promote one's self. The person who tells others of their greatness stands the risk of having the civil leader humiliate them in public.

Read Proverbs 27:1 and make notes:

The future is very uncertain. Those who speculate and make presumptions about the future are discouraged and disappointed more often than not. This does not say don't make wise plans for the future. It says clearly that we should not boast or make overly confident statements about the future. The truth is that we don't even know what this day holds until it unfolds, so predicting the future isn't even reasonable.

Read Proverbs 27:2 and make notes:

Praising one's self is a form of self pride even if it is only in regards to small things. It is always better to allow others to praise you than it is to praise yourself. The "someone else" in a literal translation says "a stranger." Who would be more objective in observing you and assessing your praiseworthiness than someone who does not know you?

Read Proverbs 3:34 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

While the proud are busy receiving disgrace, the Humble person is busy receiving Grace. The contrast is made striking when we realize God "mocks the proud" while He "give grace" to the Humble.

#1 - Receives Grace!

#2:

Read Proverbs 11:2 and make notes:

Humility speaks of the person who knows their place and does not overstep their boundaries. Contrast this with the person of pride mentioned earlier. This IS NOT speaking of a person who has low self-esteem and thinks they are unworthy. This is speaking of a person who does not think more highly of themselves than they ought to think (find the Scripture in the N.T. that says we should not think more highly). The person with a balanced attitude and assessment of themselves has wisdom come to them.

#2 - Receives Wisdom!

#3:

Read Proverbs 15:33 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 18:12 and make notes:

The pathway to receiving Honor is the road of Humility. Jesus is a classic example of Biblical Humility. He wasn't a coward, did not have low self-esteem, did not have a poor self-image, but he did know who He was, and lived a life of Humility.

#3 - Receives Honor!

#4:

Read Proverbs 22:4 and make notes:

Humility connected with reverence (fear) of the Lord brings a significant reward from God. Those who live their life of Humility while at the same time reverencing God, receive three things that almost everyone is working to acquire; wealth, honor, and life. It is somewhat ironic that most of the things we do in an effort to acquire these three precious jewels almost always lead us away from them. Isn't it exciting to have a "map" to where these three precious jewels can be found and acquired ?

#4 - Wealth And Long Life With Honor!

Read Proverbs 24:17-18 and make notes:

This text presents a significant problem to many Believers. For some, it is taken to mean that we can never celebrate or rejoice when any enemy falls (or is defeated). For others, it is taken to mean that we should not rejoice when a personal enemy is defeated, but we can rejoice when an enemy to the state is defeated. It is probably impossible for us refrain from feeling relief when an enemy is defeated, whether it is a personal enemy or one of the state. Maybe it is also impossible for us not to feel “happy” for the enemy to no longer be a threat or worry to us. I am convinced the focus of this text is that we should not “gloat” over their fall.

To gloat over the fall of an enemy is to show a lack of humility. We can be glad for our release from threat – we can be glad for our release from war – maybe even celebrate these aspects of our situation or circumstance. But let us retain humility in our celebration. God did not rejoice over the destruction of people in the flood of Noah's time and several Scriptures tells us He does not delight in death or destruction.

Rebuke:

Read Proverbs 1:23-30 and make notes:

In the introductory Proverb to this Book of Wisdom is the warning and the need for learning from it. "If only you had responded to me"..."But since you did not"! There is serious danger in refusing or ignoring the Rebuke of God. For those who continually refuse to take heed of the Rebuke of God, when "all hell breaks loose in their life", they may call to Him and hear nothing in return. God is long suffering and makes many attempts to get our attention. But there comes a time when He will allow us to eat the crop produced by our choices in life.

There Is Danger In Refusing God's Rebuke !

Read Proverbs 3:11 and make notes:

Do not rebel against the Lord's discipline. Do not despise the Lord's discipline. Whatever you do, don't despise the Lord's rebuke. It may be unpleasant, may even be disappointing to be Rebuked, but consider the long term result of ignoring God's Rebuke which is mentioned above.

Don't Resent God's Rebuke !

Read Proverbs 9:8 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

To Rebuke or Not To Rebuke; ah, that is the question. If the person is a mocker (person of pride), DON'T Rebuke. If the person is wise (person of humility), DO Rebuke them when it is needed. We tend to think the "wise" don't need to be Rebuked; but remember we are all human and we do make mistakes. The Apostle Paul Rebuked the Apostle Peter when he needed it. We should do the same if we love the other person. If they are a person of humility, then they will appreciate it.

We Are To Rebuke !

Read Proverbs 15:31 and make notes:

A teachable person receives a place among the wise. Those who are humble and are willing to receive (listen to) Rebuke will not feel out of place among the wise.

Receiving A Rebuke Gives Us A Place Among The Wise !

Read Proverbs 17:10 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

The humble person (one of discernment) not only listens to, or receives, a Rebuke; but they are impressed by the fact you cared enough to Rebuke them. The average person is not so impressed by the fact Paul Rebuked Peter when he messed up; they are impressed that there wasn't some kind of "knock-down-drag-out" following the Rebuke. How often does the average person in our society lash out in revenge toward the person who Rebuked them? From reading the N.T. there is evidence Peter respected Paul very highly.

Rebuke Impresses The Humble !

Read Proverbs 19:25 and make notes:

Rebuke is a major step along the pathway to gaining knowledge. The discerning person truly wants to acquire knowledge. This helps one understand why the humble are willing to accept Rebuke.

Rebuke Brings Us To Knowledge !

Read Proverbs 25:12 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 27:5 and make notes:

The Rebuke of a wise person has long lasting value. The humble person will no more be ashamed of the wise person's rebuke than someone would be ashamed of wearing a beautiful piece of jewelry.

Rebuke can hurt. Open (or public) Rebuke can be embarrassing. But this is still better than love which is hidden and not made known. If you are having trouble making the connection, consider the simple fact that if you love someone, you cannot allow them to make mistakes without trying to help them, correct them, Rebuke them.

The humble, or wise, person understands this and is convinced of your real love when you do so. Open Rebuke speaks of that frank, honest, and direct word of correction. When we are too timid to say anything to a person, perhaps we are not trusting enough or perhaps we simply don't care enough about what happens to them. Of what value is a love which never expresses or manifests a rebuke?

Rebuke Is Precious !

Advice:

Read Proverbs 20:18 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

The very best plans and the most successful plans surely come from sound advice. God actually instructs us to "seek" advice before we make plans and during the planning process. The fact that war is used in the illustration doesn't mean this only applies to those who are about to wage war. The illustration uses war because no one in their right mind would want to lose a war. This is one area where we all understand it is extremely important to win. So, for all those areas in your life where you would like to be successful, seek out advice before completing your plans and certainly before activating your plan.

God Instructs His People To Seek Advice As We Make Plans !

Read Proverbs 15:22 and make notes:

Are you aware the majority of business which are started in the United States of America fail? Many "ministries" are started by very caring and well meaning people which fail each year. The plans for the personal life of many individuals fail every week. What does this verse say to you?

Read Proverbs 11:14 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

Many Advisers, or much counsel, is needed to insure the success and victory of a nation. Again, this illustration speaks of a nation because when a nation fails it affects the lives of the number of people who are a part of that nation. Isn't it important for your family to succeed and be victorious? Isn't it important for you as an individual to be successful and victorious?

Advice Brings Success !

Read Proverbs 12:5 and make notes:

Advice is definitely a thing to be sought. However, it makes a great deal of difference where this advice comes from. The Advice of the wicked CAN NOT be trusted.

It Does Matter Where Advice Comes From !

Learning:

Read Proverbs 1:5 and make notes:

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

God actually instructs His people to Learn and to get guidance. This means we have to be humble enough to receive. The Proud are not teachable. If we are going to be able to "add to our learning", then we are going to have to be Humble people.

God Expects Us To Add To Our Learning !

Read Proverbs 3:1-3 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 4:2 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 1:8-9 and make notes:

Read Proverbs 6:20-22 and make notes:

A major reason for remembering the words of wisdom is the prolonging of life and another major reason is it will bring you prosperity so that you can enjoy those additional years. For those who follow the way of wisdom and knowledge there is the promise of being made attractive. A metaphor is used to describe a beautiful wreath about the head and lovely necklace about the neck.

Don't refuse teaching and don't forsake teaching. It isn't enough to accept good teaching. God actually expects us to "keep" it. Don't memorize and forget the good things of God's Word. Learn and Retain! Most of us have observed in life how each generation of young people seems to have to learn the same lessons their parents had to learn. Most of these are learned the hard way. It would be such a wonderful thing if we could learn from this example of life and decide we would learn from God's Word and Wisdom and not forsake or forget what we learn from it so that we don't have to learn the spiritual lessons the hard way.

Proverbs 6:20-22 goes further than simply saying we should keep or hold onto the teachings of the wise; it says we should "bind" and "fasten" them to us. This is a purposeful effort on our part to make sure we don't lose or forget them. What will it take to prevent us from forgetting or losing the words of wisdom we have received? Are we willing to take the necessary actions to prevent this from happening?

The promise of benefit is made simple and clear. A guide when you are traveling, a guard while you are sleeping, and a companion when you awaken.

Don't Refuse Teaching And Don't Forget Teaching !

Read Proverbs 9:9 and make notes:

We are instructed by God to Teach others what we have learned. The righteous (humble) will certainly accept it and be able to add to their learning. Having increased in their learning, they will in turn be better able to teach the next person. If each one of the righteous teaches the other righteous what they have learned, as a whole, the righteous will greatly increase in their learning. If you refer to the lesson on “knowledge”, in this series, it begins to boggle the mind as to the infinite benefits of this process God has established.

Teach The Righteous !

Read Proverbs 6:23 and make notes:

Light is a marvelous thing. When we are near the light we can confidently and safely make our way along the path of life. When we are away from the light, it shines through the darkness and gives us a point of reference as to the direction we need to go. When we have a light, we can place it so that it will help illuminate the way for one who is in the darkness.

The Teachings Of God Are a Light !

Proverbs - 11 Pride / Humility

Read Proverbs 13:14 and make notes:

It does matter what Teaching we accept. The Teachings of the wise are a fountain of life. A fountain continues to spring forth.

Read Proverbs 14:28 and make notes:

It is fairly common to find someone who takes great pride in their ability or talent (even if it is only in their opinion). This Proverb is rather blunt. The glory, or the ruin, of a leader is found in the number of people who are following. Should a prince inherit the throne of a kingdom, and now one is willing to follow him, the kingdom (and the prince) will cease to exist. Even with a larger following, humility will serve us better than pride.

Please write down the questions you would like to ask the group – and any insights you have regarding the Proverbs in this lesson so that you can share them when we meet: