

WEEK 34.

Proverbs 1 – 11 (Solomon et al Share God's Wisdom, Part 1 of 2)

Sunday ([Proverbs 1](#))

Introduction to the Book

1:1 The Proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

1:2 To learn wisdom and moral instruction, and to discern wise counsel.

1:3 To receive moral instruction in skillful living, in righteousness, justice, and equity.

1:4 To impart shrewdness to the morally naive, and a discerning plan to the young person.

1:5 (Let the wise also hear and gain instruction, and let the discerning acquire guidance!)

1:6 To discern the meaning of a proverb and a parable, the sayings of the wise and their riddles.

Introduction to the Theme of the Book

1:7 Fearing the Lord is the beginning of moral knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

1:8 Listen, my child, to the instruction from your father, and do not forsake the teaching from your mother.

1:9 For they will be like an elegant garland on your head, and like pendants around your neck.

Admonition to Avoid Easy but Unjust Riches

1:10 My child, if sinners try to entice you, do not consent!

1:11 If they say, "Come with us! We will lie in wait to shed blood; we will ambush an innocent person capriciously.

1:12 We will swallow them alive like Sheol, those full of vigor like those going down to the Pit.

1:13 We will seize all kinds of precious wealth; we will fill our houses with plunder.

1:14 Join with us! We will all share equally in what we steal.”

1:15 My child, do not go down their way, withhold yourself from their path;

1:16 for they are eager to inflict harm, and they hasten to shed blood.

1:17 Surely it is futile to spread a net in plain sight of any bird,

1:18 but these men lie in wait for their own blood, they ambush their own lives!

1:19 Such are the ways of all who gain profit unjustly; it takes away the life of those who obtain it!

Warning Against Disregarding Wisdom

1:20 Wisdom calls out in the street, she shouts loudly in the plazas;

1:21 at the head of the noisy streets she calls, in the entrances of the gates in the city she utters her words:

1:22 “How long will you simpletons love naiveté? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge?

1:23 If only you will respond to my rebuke, then I will pour out my thoughts to you and I will make my words known to you.

1:24 However, because I called but you refused to listen, because I stretched out my hand but no one paid attention,

1:25 because you neglected all my advice, and did not comply with my rebuke,

1:26 so I myself will laugh when disaster strikes you, I will mock when what you dread comes,

1:27 when what you dread comes like a whirlwind, and disaster strikes you like a devastating storm, when distressing trouble comes on you.

1:28 Then they will call to me, but I will not answer; they will diligently seek me, but they will not find me.

1:29 Because they hated moral knowledge, and did not choose to fear the Lord,

1:30 they did not comply with my advice, they spurned all my rebuke.

1:31 Therefore they will eat from the fruit of their way, and they will be stuffed full of their own counsel.

1:32 For the waywardness of the simpletons will kill them, and the careless ease of fools will destroy them.

1:33 But the one who listens to me will live in security, and will be at ease from the dread of harm.

PRAYER

Lord, You offer to us Your perfect wisdom, and we ignore You to our own peril. May I be attentive to Your leading and make good use of Your wisdom.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon's clearly-stated purpose, as the recipient of the gift of wisdom to rule, was to share what he had learned with others.

"To learn wisdom and moral instruction, and to discern wise counsel."

"To receive moral instruction in skillful living, in righteousness, justice, and equity."

"To impart shrewdness to the morally naive, and a discerning plan to the young person."

And to teach others how "To discern the meaning of a proverb and a parable, the sayings of the wise and their riddles."

It often takes a process, rather than a momentary event, to lead a person to a true appreciation of wisdom – thus a riddle slows and engages the mind as it guides it through steps to the answer.

"Fearing the Lord is the beginning of moral knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Fear of the Lord God may be understood as a nexus of respect for His absolute power and of His uniquely-perfect wisdom.

"Admonition to Avoid Easy but Unjust Riches" because such conduct ultimately harms the one doing so.

"Because they hated moral knowledge, and did not choose to fear the Lord ... they did not comply with my advice, they spurned all my rebuke ... Therefore they will eat from the fruit of their way, and they will be stuffed full of their own counsel."

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

A “riddle” is used to motivate one to engage in a deep process of partnership with the Holy Spirit in order to acquire wisdom rather than simple awareness/knowledge of facts. e.g. The demons have knowledge of Who Jesus is, but they lacked the wisdom to choose His Lordship and instead followed Satan in rebellion.

DISCUSS

Why are both awe and fear necessary for a right response to the Lord God?

REFLECT

The consequence of ignoring the wisdom that is offered, not imposed, by the Lord God is that you will suffer the collateral consequences of living in the absence of wisdom.

SHARE

When have you experienced or observed someone deliberately ignoring the wisdom of the Lord God and suffering the consequences?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your walk where you are ignoring the wisdom of the Lord God.

ACT

Today I will confess and repent, seek and receive the Lord God's forgiveness, and act decisively to more fully integrate the Lord's wisdom into my life.

Be Specific _____

Monday ([Proverbs 2](#))

Benefits of Seeking Wisdom

2:1 My child, if you receive my words, and store up my commands within you,

2:2 by making your ear attentive to wisdom, and by turning your heart to understanding,

2:3 indeed, if you call out for discernment – raise your voice for understanding –

2:4 if you seek it like silver, and search for it like hidden treasure,

2:5 then you will understand how to fear the Lord, and you will discover knowledge about God.

2:6 For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

2:7 He stores up effective counsel for the upright, and is like a shield for those who live with integrity,

2:8 to guard the paths of the righteous and to protect the way of his pious ones.

2:9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity – every good way.

2:10 For wisdom will enter your heart, and moral knowledge will be attractive to you.

2:11 Discretion will protect you, understanding will guard you,

2:12 to deliver you from the way of the wicked, from those speaking perversity,

2:13 who leave the upright paths to walk on the dark ways,

2:14 who delight in doing evil, they rejoice in perverse evil;

2:15 whose paths are morally crooked, and who are devious in their ways;

2:16 to deliver you from the adulteress, from the sexually loose woman who speaks flattering words;

2:17 who leaves the husband from her younger days, and forgets her marriage covenant made before God.

2:18 For her house sinks down to death, and her paths lead to the place of the departed spirits.

2:19 None who go in to her will return, nor will they reach the paths of life.

2:20 So you will walk in the way of good people, and will keep on the paths of the righteous.

2:21 For the upright will reside in the land, and those with integrity will remain in it,

2:22 but the wicked will be removed from the land, and the treacherous will be torn away from it.

PRAYER

Lord, You lead us to knowledge and understanding and if we allow Your Holy Spirit to bring them together we will gain the wisdom that You desire for us. May I be attentive to Your teaching and seek-after Your wisdom.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

King Solomon, having been blessed with the gift of exceptional wisdom from the Lord God, decided to keep a record of what he learned through that gift. In [Proverbs 2](#) he broke-out the elements of how others might seek and acquire the Lord's wisdom through him.

The learner had to be willing "... if you receive my words, and store up my commands within you, by making your ear attentive to wisdom, and by turning your heart to understanding, indeed, if you call out for discernment – raise your voice for understanding – if you seek it like silver, and search for it like hidden treasure ..."

The Lord God would reward him "... then you will understand how to fear the Lord, and you will discover knowledge about God."

Wisdom is knowledge plus understanding "For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding."

The wisdom of God transforms a person "Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity – every good way. For wisdom will enter your heart, and moral knowledge will be attractive to you."

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The primary goal is "... you will discover knowledge about God."

DISCUSS

Could it be that the Lord told Solomon that he needed to both appeal to people to seek wisdom for its own sake and to keep them out of trouble? "... deliver you from the way of the wicked, from those speaking perversity ..."

REFLECT

What a shame that Solomon forgot much of the wisdom that he communicated from the Lord God to others and rather practiced the un-wise ways against which he himself wisely-warned.

SHARE

When have you experienced or observed the benefits of seeking wisdom and the negative consequences of refusing wisdom?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the path to wisdom that you need to handle an especially difficult challenge in your life.

ACT

Today I will humble myself, pray, and reflect as I make myself available to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. As is appropriate I will ask a fellow believer to pray in-agreement with me for this.

Be Specific _____

Tuesday ([Proverbs 3](#))

Exhortations to Seek Wisdom and Walk with the Lord

3:1 My child, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments,

3:2 for they will provide a long and full life, and they will add well-being to you.

3:3 Do not let truth and mercy leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

3:4 Then you will find favor and good understanding, in the sight of God and people.

3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding.

3:6 Acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will make your paths straight.

3:7 Do not be wise in your own estimation; fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

3:8 This will bring healing to your body, and refreshment to your inner self.

3:9 Honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first fruits of all your crops;

3:10 then your barns will be filled completely, and your vats will overflow with new wine.

3:11 My child, do not despise discipline from the Lord, and do not loathe his rebuke.

3:12 For the Lord disciplines those he loves, just as a father disciplines the son in whom he delights.

Blessings of Obtaining Wisdom

3:13 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who obtains understanding.

3:14 For her benefit is more profitable than silver, and her gain is better than gold.

3:15 She is more precious than rubies, and none of the things you desire can compare with her.

3:16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.

3:17 Her ways are very pleasant, and all her paths are peaceful.

3:18 She is like a tree of life to those who obtain her, and everyone who grasps hold of her will be blessed.

3:19 By wisdom the Lord laid the foundation of the earth; he established the heavens by understanding.

3:20 By his knowledge the primordial sea was broken open, and the clouds drip down dew.

3:21 My child, do not let them escape from your sight; safeguard sound wisdom and discretion.

3:22 So they will give life to you, and grace to adorn your neck.

3:23 Then you will walk on your way with security, and you will not stumble.

3:24 When you lie down you will not be filled with fear; when you lie down your sleep will be pleasant.

3:25 You will not be afraid of sudden disaster, or when destruction overtakes the wicked;

3:26 for the Lord will be the source of your confidence, and he will guard your foot from being caught in a trap.

Wisdom Demonstrated in Relationships with People

3:27 Do not withhold good from those who need it, when you have the ability to help.

3:28 Do not say to your neighbor, "Go! Return tomorrow and I will give it," when you have it with you at the time.

3:29 Do not plot evil against your neighbor when he dwells by you unsuspectingly.

3:30 Do not accuse anyone without legitimate cause, if he has not treated you wrongly.

3:31 Do not envy a violent man, and do not choose to imitate any of his ways;

3:32 for one who goes astray is an abomination to the Lord, but he reveals his intimate counsel to the upright.

3:33 The Lord's curse is on the household of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous.

3:34 Although he is scornful to arrogant scoffers, yet he shows favor to the humble.

3:35 The wise inherit honor, but he holds fools up to public contempt.

PRAYER

Lord, Your wisdom blesses us as it blesses others through us, but we have to be willing recipients of the gift – even when it makes us uncomfortable. May I accept Your wisdom even when it means discipline, inconvenience, and/or sacrifice for me.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon continued to emphasize the link between receiving wisdom and blessing “Do not let truth and mercy leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will find favor and good understanding, in the sight of God and people. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. Acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will make your paths straight.”

He also warned that we must accept the wisdom that disciplines together with the wisdom that brings blessing “My child, do not despise discipline from the Lord, and do not loathe his rebuke. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, just as a father disciplines the son in whom he delights.”

The blessings of wisdom include discernment “Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who obtains understanding ... the Lord will be the source of your confidence, and he will guard your foot from being caught in a trap.”

Wisdom means that we are without excuse because we will know what is right in the eyes of the Lord God and we must not be selfish “Do not withhold good from those who need it, when you have the ability to help.”

One who lives according to the wisdom of the Lord will be respected among their peers and the opposite for those who reject wisdom “The wise inherit honor, but he holds fools up to public contempt.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Wisdom is a characteristic of the Lord God which He offers to share with humankind.

DISCUSS

Might Solomon have thought it necessary to warn people to accept the wisdom that disciplines because they historically may have thought that all difficulties were punishment?

REFLECT

Solomon encouraged people to seek wisdom from God and not from man.

SHARE

When have you experienced God's discipleship through His wisdom shared with you by others and you benefited from it?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where you need to seek wisdom from God, rather than flawed human sources.

ACT

Today I will humbly acknowledge that I have been seeking wisdom in all of the wrong places and will instead invest regular time in prayer and study of the wisdom that the Lord God has provided in His Bible.

Be Specific _____

Wednesday ([Proverbs 4-5](#))

Admonition to Follow Righteousness and Avoid Wickedness

4:1 Listen, children, to a father's instruction, and pay attention so that you may gain discernment.

4:2 Because I give you good instruction, do not forsake my teaching.

4:3 When I was a son to my father, a tender only child before my mother,

4:4 he taught me, and he said to me: "Let your heart lay hold of my words; keep my commands so that you will live.

4:5 Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding; do not forget and do not turn aside from the words I speak.

4:6 Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will guard you.

4:7 Wisdom is supreme – so acquire wisdom, and whatever you acquire, acquire understanding!

4:8 Esteem her highly and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her.

4:9 She will place a fair garland on your head; she will bestow a beautiful crown on you.”

4:10 Listen, my child, and accept my words, so that the years of your life will be many.

4:11 I will guide you in the way of wisdom and I will lead you in upright paths.

4:12 When you walk, your steps will not be hampered, and when you run, you will not stumble.

4:13 Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; protect it, because it is your life.

4:14 Do not enter the path of the wicked or walk in the way of those who are evil.

4:15 Avoid it, do not go on it; turn away from it, and go on.

4:16 For they cannot sleep unless they cause harm; they are robbed of sleep until they make someone stumble.

4:17 For they eat bread gained from wickedness and drink wine obtained from violence.

4:18 But the path of the righteous is like the bright morning light, growing brighter and brighter until full day.

4:19 The way of the wicked is like gloomy darkness; they do not know what causes them to stumble.

4:20 My child, pay attention to my words; listen attentively to my sayings.

4:21 Do not let them depart from your sight, guard them within your heart;

4:22 for they are life to those who find them and healing to one’s entire body.

4:23 Guard your heart with all vigilance, for from it are the sources of life.

4:24 Remove perverse speech from your mouth; keep devious talk far from your lips.

4:25 Let your eyes look directly in front of you and let your gaze look straight before you.

4:26 Make the path for your feet level, so that all your ways may be established.

4:27 Do not turn to the right or to the left; turn yourself away from evil.

Admonition to Avoid Seduction to Evil

5:1 My child, be attentive to my wisdom, pay close attention to my understanding,

5:2 in order to safeguard discretion, and that your lips may guard knowledge.

5:3 For the lips of the adulterous woman drip honey, and her seductive words are smoother than olive oil,

5:4 but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

5:5 Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.

5:6 Lest she should make level the path leading to life, her paths are unstable but she does not know it.

5:7 So now, children, listen to me; do not turn aside from the words I speak.

5:8 Keep yourself far from her, and do not go near the door of her house,

5:9 lest you give your vigor to others and your years to a cruel person,

5:10 lest strangers devour your strength, and your labor benefit another man's house.

5:11 And at the end of your life you will groan when your flesh and your body are wasted away.

5:12 And you will say, "How I hated discipline!

My heart spurned reproof!

5:13 For I did not obey my teachers and I did not heed my instructors.

5:14 I almost came to complete ruin in the midst of the whole congregation!"

5:15 Drink water from your own cistern and running water from your own well.

5:16 Should your springs be dispersed outside, your streams of water in the wide plazas?

5:17 Let them be for yourself alone, and not for strangers with you.

5:18 May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in your young wife –

5:19 a loving doe, a graceful deer; may her breasts satisfy you at all times, may you be captivated by her love always.

5:20 But why should you be captivated, my son, by an adulteress, and embrace the bosom of a different woman?

5:21 For the ways of a person are in front of the Lord's eyes, and the Lord weighs all that person's paths.

5:22 The wicked will be captured by his own iniquities, and he will be held by the cords of his own sin.

5:23 He will die because there was no discipline; because of the greatness of his folly he will reel.

PRAYER

Lord, Your wisdom is beautiful and like a guiding angel. May I seek Your wisdom more than any pretty or valuable thing this imperfect world has to offer. You are the beauty of perfect righteousness and everything else is something less. May I always seek after Your righteousness rather than testing the boundaries of sin.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon again repeated the reason one should value the Proverbs "Listen, children, to a father's instruction, and pay attention so that you may gain discernment.

He then gave a human characteristic to wisdom "Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will guard you."

He warned that one should obey the leading of wisdom and listed some of the negative paths that one might take if not "Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; protect it, because it is your life. Do not enter the path of the wicked or walk in the way of those who are evil."

Then he returned to the positive "... for they are life to those who find them and healing to one's entire body."

Solomon included a traveling word-picture "Do not turn to the right or to the left; turn yourself away from evil."

Solomon used the word-picture of a seductive and adulterous woman to warn of the temptation of sin. His point was that sin does not always look ugly, though it is, and it does not always feel bad – at first – but it is destructive.

He postulated that once one allowed oneself near to sin it was common to be drawn in, so to not even go near. He also postulated that once one was ensnared by sin that one's life could be consumed by it, ending sadly as one reflected upon a wasted life.

He concluded with a word-picture of the attractiveness of one's young wife, that one should remain faithful and nurture affection for her; this as an illustration of the way one should think of wisdom – which he had previously conceptualized as "she".

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Seeking and living according to wisdom is a choice. The enemy is like a seductive adulteress, or a seductive adulterer, pretending to care and 'costumed' to appeal to your fantasies – but in the end he/she/it is like poison.

DISCUSS

Is it because we sometimes respond to the fear of negative consequences and sometimes to the appeal of positive consequences that Solomon uses both? How could Solomon have been so clear in the wisdom of the Lord God yet done precisely what he knew and taught was wrong?

REFLECT

Solomon's word-picture about life as a journey is visualized well in the book 'Pilgrim's Progress'. A healthy relationship with the Lord God is like a healthy relationship with a mate, it requires commitment, investment, and a right-perspective – all are choices that must be made and kept daily.

SHARE

When have you known what wisdom said but chosen another way? When have you been tested by the temptation of a sin and discovered that you have allowed yourself to be where you should not be and that it was then very difficult to break away?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your life where you need to make a more-intentional effort to seek His wisdom and to then follow it, and to reveal to you a place where you have been allowing yourself to drift-astray to where you may be more-easily tempted by sin. It may be about adultery, money, power, food, sloth, etc.

ACT

Today I will humbly accept the challenge of the Holy Spirit to submit to His wisdom, I will make the time to study His word which is relevant to that area, I will invite one who is Biblically-qualified as an elder to assist and pray in-agreement with me, and I will allow my walk to be transformed by wisdom. I will confess and repent, request and accept the Lord's forgiveness, then alter my ways to keep myself far from the threshold of sin. I will ask a fellow believer to be my accountability partner and to pray in-agreement with me.

Be Specific _____

Thursday (**Proverbs 6-7**)

Admonitions and Warnings against Dangerous and Destructive Acts

6:1 My child, if you have made a pledge for your neighbor, and have become a guarantor for a stranger,

6:2 if you have been ensnared by the words you have uttered, and have been caught by the words you have spoken,

6:3 then, my child, do this in order to deliver yourself, because you have fallen into your neighbor's power: go, humble yourself, and appeal firmly to your neighbor.

6:4 Permit no sleep to your eyes or slumber to your eyelids.

6:5 Deliver yourself like a gazelle from a snare, and like a bird from the trap of the fowler.

6:6 Go to the ant, you sluggard; observe its ways and be wise!

6:7 It has no commander, overseer, or ruler,

6:8 yet it prepares its food in the summer; it gathers at the harvest what it will eat.

6:9 How long, you sluggard, will you lie there?

When will you rise from your sleep?

6:10 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to relax,

6:11 and your poverty will come like a robber, and your need like an armed man.

6:12 A worthless and wicked person walks around saying perverse things;

6:13 he winks with his eyes, signals with his feet, and points with his fingers;

6:14 he plots evil with perverse thoughts in his heart, he spreads contention at all times.

6:15 Therefore, his disaster will come suddenly; in an instant he will be broken, and there will be no remedy.

6:16 There are six things that the Lord hates, even seven things that are an abomination to him:

6:17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

6:18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift to run to evil,

6:19 a false witness who pours out lies, and a person who spreads discord among family members.

6:20 My child, guard the commands of your father and do not forsake the instruction of your mother.

6:21 Bind them on your heart continually; fasten them around your neck.

6:22 When you walk about, they will guide you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; when you wake up, they will talk to you.

6:23 For the commandments are like a lamp, instruction is like a light, and rebukes of discipline are like the road leading to life,

6:24 by keeping you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the loose woman.

6:25 Do not lust in your heart for her beauty, and do not let her captivate you with her alluring eyes;

6:26 for on account of a prostitute one is brought down to a loaf of bread, but the wife of another man preys on your precious life.

6:27 Can a man hold fire against his chest without burning his clothes?

6:28 Can a man walk on hot coals without scorching his feet?

6:29 So it is with the one who has sex with his neighbor's wife; no one who touches her will escape punishment.

6:30 People do not despise a thief when he steals to fulfill his need when he is hungry.

6:31 Yet if he is caught he must repay seven times over, he might even have to give all the wealth of his house.

6:32 A man who commits adultery with a woman lacks wisdom, whoever does it destroys his own life.

6:33 He will be beaten and despised, and his reproach will not be wiped away;

6:34 for jealousy kindles a husband's rage, and he will not show mercy when he takes revenge.

6:35 He will not consider any compensation; he will not be willing, even if you multiply the compensation.

Admonition to Avoid the Wiles of the Adulteress

7:1 My child, keep my words and treasure up my commands in your own keeping.

7:2 Keep my commands so that you may live, and obey my instruction as your most prized possession.

7:3 Bind them on your forearm; write them on the tablet of your heart.

7:4 Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding a close relative,

7:5 so that they may keep you from the adulterous woman, from the loose woman who flatters you with her words.

7:6 For at the window of my house through my window lattice I looked out

7:7 and I saw among the naive – I discerned among the youths – a young man who lacked wisdom.

7:8 He was passing by the street near her corner, making his way along the road to her house

7:9 in the twilight, the evening, in the dark of the night.

7:10 Suddenly a woman came out to meet him!

She was dressed like a prostitute and with secret intent.

7:11 (She is loud and rebellious, she does not remain at home –

7:12 at one time outside, at another in the wide plazas, and by every corner she lies in wait.)

7:13 So she grabbed him and kissed him, and with a bold expression she said to him,

7:14 "I have fresh meat at home; today I have fulfilled my vows!

7:15 That is why I came out to meet you, to look for you, and I found you!

7:16 I have spread my bed with elegant coverings, with richly colored fabric from Egypt.

7:17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

7:18 Come, let's drink deeply of lovemaking until morning, let's delight ourselves with sexual intercourse.

7:19 For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a journey of some distance.

7:20 He has taken a bag of money with him; he will not return until the end of the month."

7:21 She persuaded him with persuasive words; with her smooth talk she compelled him.

7:22 Suddenly he went after her like an ox that goes to the slaughter, like a stag prancing into a trapper's snare

7:23 till an arrow pierces his liver – like a bird hurrying into a trap, and he does not know that it will cost him his life.

7:24 So now, sons, listen to me, and pay attention to the words I speak.

7:25 Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways – do not wander into her pathways;

7:26 for she has brought down many fatally wounded, and all those she has slain are many.

7:27 Her house is the way to the grave, going down to the chambers of death.

PRAYER

Lord, You are the Righteous One, all sin offends You. May I learn from the wisdom You shared with Solomon and pursue righteousness rather than the destructive and temporary sinful pleasures of the world. You have used every example and illustration to teach us, but our flesh is both weak as to the ease of temptation and strong in resistance against movement toward righteousness. May I “bind” Your wisdom “on my forearm” - keep it close and visible – so that I will make the choices You desire for me to make.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon began with an instruction to break-free of obligations which indebted one to a neighbor who did not honor the Lord God.

He then moved on to challenge the “sluggard” to earn their way or be left without.

Solomon then shared a list of destructive character defects and behaviors:

“Haughty eyes” – an unteachable, proud, and superior attitude.

“A lying tongue”

“Hands that shed innocent blood” – murder is for personal gain, incl. abortion

“A heart that devises wicked plans”

“Feet that are swift to run to evil” – people who always live at the edge of sin

“A false witness who pours out lies”

“A person who spreads discord among family members.”

Solomon’s illustrated using common imagery; “... commandments are like a lamp, instruction is like a light, and rebukes of discipline are like the road leading to life ...”

Solomon concluded with two negative illustrations, adultery and thievery. He showed how adultery violates two homes, and everyone in them, and may generate a rage in the uninvolved spouse(s) that leads to destruction. He also showed how people may have compassion for a person who steals to feed his/her starving family yet the law – upon which civilization is dependent – would still require the thief to pay dearly if caught.

Solomon reminded his readers of the importance of wisdom “My child, keep my words and treasure up my commands in your own keeping. Keep my commands so that you may live, and obey my instruction as your most prized possession. Bind them on your forearm; write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to wisdom, “You are my sister,” and call understanding a close relative, so that they may keep you from ...”

What he wanted fellow children of the Lord God to be “kept ... from” was sin.

Solomon continued with his illustration of temptation to sin via the word-picture of an adulteress and a young man. He told the story of the many ways that she appealed to his flesh and how she made excuses, like any salesman, to overcome his objections.

He concluded that once one begins along the path of the unrighteous person it always becomes more difficult to resist and that the end of such a path would be death to ones relationship with the Lord God.

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Obligations to non-believers are not merely financial and can be ‘the tail that wags the dog’ of ones life. It is important to “count the cost” of associations, commitments, and debts of any sort prior to making them – and to endeavor to escape them if already made. Both wisdom and foolishness (surrendering to worldly temptations) are illustrated using feminine word-pictures, thus demonstrating the Lord God’s high-view of the influence of women in society.

DISCUSS

Why would Solomon have committed so many sins when he so clearly understood and communicated the wisdom of the Lord God? Would teaching through stories like this be as effective today as in his time?

REFLECT

All of the sins described involved a selfish heart-condition. The young man had to choose to fail the ‘test’ (thus making an agreement with the enemy to be tempted) by choosing to go where he knew that he should not. He then had to choose not to flee the temptress; thus he twice acted to intentionally make his own temptation, and sin, possible.

SHARE

When have you avoided trouble because you were reminded by the Holy Spirit of Solomon's warnings in Proverbs? When have you failed the test by knowingly remaining where you knew you'd be tempted?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place in your walk where you would benefit from the application of Solomon's God-inspired wisdom to your choices and to reveal to you a place where you fail the test by repeatedly placing yourself in a situation where you know that you are vulnerable to temptation.

ACT

Today I will humbly and prayerfully reflect upon a day and a week in my life and look for moments and patterns of choices which may reveal a conflict with the wisdom of this Psalm. I will confess and repent, request and receive the Lord's forgiveness, and immediately act to alter my ways to stop the unrighteous choices. I may choose to ask one who is Biblically-qualified as an "elder" to hold me accountable and to pray in-agreement with me.

Be Specific _____

Friday ([Proverbs 8-9](#))

The Appeal of Wisdom

8:1 Does not wisdom call out?

Does not understanding raise her voice?

8:2 At the top of the elevated places along the way, at the intersection of the paths she takes her stand;

8:3 beside the gates opening into the city, at the entrance of the doorways she cries out:

8:4 "To you, O people, I call out, and my voice calls to all mankind.

8:5 You who are naive, discern wisdom!

And you fools, understand discernment!

8:6 Listen, for I will speak excellent things, and my lips will utter what is right.

8:7 For my mouth speaks truth, and my lips hate wickedness.

8:8 All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them twisted or crooked.

8:9 All of them are clear to the discerning and upright to those who find knowledge.

8:10 Receive my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold.

8:11 For wisdom is better than rubies, and desirable things cannot be compared to her.

8:12 "I, wisdom, live with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.

8:13 The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; I hate arrogant pride and the evil way and perverse utterances.

8:14 Counsel and sound wisdom belong to me; I possess understanding and might.

8:15 Kings reign by means of me, and potentates decree righteousness;

8:16 by me princes rule, as well as nobles and all righteous judges.

8:17 I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.

8:18 Riches and honor are with me, long-lasting wealth and righteousness.

8:19 My fruit is better than the purest gold, and what I produce is better than choice silver.

8:20 I walk in the path of righteousness, in the pathway of justice,

8:21 that I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, and that I may fill their treasuries.

8:22 The Lord created me as the beginning of his works, before his deeds of long ago.

8:23 From eternity I was appointed, from the beginning, from before the world existed.

8:24 When there were no deep oceans I was born, when there were no springs overflowing with water;

8:25 before the mountains were set in place – before the hills – I was born,

8:26 before he made the earth and its fields, or the beginning of the dust of the world.

8:27 When he established the heavens, I was there; when he marked out the horizon over the face of the deep,

8:28 when he established the clouds above, when the fountains of the deep grew strong,

8:29 when he gave the sea his decree that the waters should not pass over his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth,

8:30 then I was beside him as a master craftsman, and I was his delight day by day, rejoicing before him at all times,

8:31 rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and delighting in its people.

8:32 “So now, children, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways.

8:33 Listen to my instruction so that you may be wise, and do not neglect it.

8:34 Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching at my doors day by day, waiting beside my doorway.

8:35 For the one who finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord.

8:36 But the one who does not find me brings harm to himself; all who hate me love death.”

The Consequences of Accepting Wisdom or Folly

9:1 Wisdom has built her house; she has carved out its seven pillars.

9:2 She has prepared her meat, she has mixed her wine; she also has arranged her table.

9:3 She has sent out her female servants; she calls out on the highest places of the city.

9:4 “Whoever is naive, let him turn in here,” she says to those who lack understanding.

9:5 “Come, eat some of my food, and drink some of the wine I have mixed.

9:6 Abandon your foolish ways so that you may live, and proceed in the way of understanding.”

9:7 Whoever corrects a mocker is asking for insult; whoever reproves a wicked person receives abuse.

9:8 Do not reprove a mocker or he will hate you; reprove a wise person and he will love you.

9:9 Give instruction to a wise person, and he will become wiser still; teach a righteous person and he will add to his learning.

9:10 The beginning of wisdom is to fear the Lord, and acknowledging the Holy One is understanding.

9:11 For because of me your days will be many, and years will be added to your life.

9:12 If you are wise, you are wise to your own advantage, but if you are a mocker, you alone must bear it.

9:13 The woman called Folly is brash, she is naive and does not know anything.

9:14 So she sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the highest point of the city,

9:15 calling out to those who are passing by her in the way, who go straight on their way.

9:16 “Whoever is simple, let him turn in here,” she says to those who lack understanding.

9:17 “Stolen waters are sweet, and food obtained in secret is pleasant!”

9:18 But they do not realize that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of the grave.

PRAYER

Lord, Your wisdom has a long history – embedded in everything that You have done and said is perfect wisdom. May I seek the peace and safety of Your wisdom so that I am not seduced by the pretty-appearing but genuinely crass, shallow, and temporary temptations of folly.

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

Solomon began with a proclamation from the personified-wisdom “To you, O people, I call out, and my voice calls to all mankind ... Listen, for I will speak excellent things, and my lips will utter what is right ... All of them are clear to the discerning and upright to those who find knowledge ... wisdom is better than rubies, and desirable things cannot be compared to her.”

He quoted wisdom “The Lord created me [wisdom] as the beginning of his works, before his deeds of long ago. From eternity I was appointed, from the beginning, from before the world existed.”

He continued with the pleas of wisdom “So now, children, listen to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen to my instruction so that you may be wise, and do not neglect it. Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching at my doors day by day, waiting beside my doorway. For the one who finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord.”

And a warning “But the one who does not find me brings harm to himself; all who hate me love death.”

Solomon then contrasted the personified characters Wisdom and Folly.

He began with a description of Wisdom “Wisdom has built her house; she has carved out its seven pillars. She has prepared her meat, she has mixed her wine; she also has arranged her table.” and once thoughtfully-prepared she sends out invitations.

Then he contrasted the approach of Wisdom to people with different ‘hearts’ “Do not reprove a mocker or he will hate you; reprove a wise person and he will love you. Give instruction to a wise person, and he will become wiser still; teach a righteous person and he will add to his learning.”

Solomon then described Folly “The woman called Folly is brash, she is naive and does not know anything. So she sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the highest point of the city, calling out to those who are passing by her in the way ...”

He presented her clearly as shallow and crass ““Whoever is simple, let him turn in here,” she says to those who lack understanding. “Stolen waters are sweet, and food obtained in secret is pleasant!”“

And his conclusion of the consequences of trusting Folly was “But they do not realize that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of the grave.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

Wisdom was created by the Lord God, flowing from the essence of Himself, a gift for His creation. Just as humankind was created in the partial image of God, by design humankind was capable of receiving gifts such as wisdom, but as with all gifts it must be willingly accepted.

DISCUSS

Does Solomon’s use of personified characters and common images help make clear his teaching?

REFLECT

The choice we make between wisdom and folly is a reflection of the condition of our hearts.

SHARE

When have you observed the different responses to wisdom from a wise person and a mocker?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a place where He wants to add to your wisdom, a place where your lust and/or pride may be causing you to resist.

ACT

Today I will prayerfully reflect upon my past week to discern the places where the Holy Spirit desires to inject wisdom into my life. I will humbly confess and repent of my past resistance and surrender to His blessing of wisdom, no matter how difficult or inconvenient.

Be Specific _____

Saturday ([Proverbs 10-11](#))

The First Collection of Solomonic Proverbs

10:1 The Proverbs of Solomon: A wise child makes a father rejoice, but a foolish child is a grief to his mother.

10:2 Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from mortal danger.

10:3 The Lord satisfies the appetite of the righteous, but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.

10:4 The one who is lazy becomes poor, but the one who works diligently becomes wealthy.

10:5 The one who gathers crops in the summer is a wise son, but the one who sleeps during the harvest is a son who brings shame to himself.

10:6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, but the speech of the wicked conceals violence.

10:7 The memory of the righteous is a blessing, but the reputation of the wicked will rot.

10:8 The wise person accepts instructions, but the one who speaks foolishness will come to ruin.

10:9 The one who conducts himself in integrity will live securely, but the one who behaves perversely will be found out.

10:10 The one who winks his eye causes trouble, and the one who speaks foolishness will come to ruin.

10:11 The teaching of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the speech of the wicked conceals violence.

10:12 Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers all transgressions.

10:13 Wisdom is found in the words of the discerning person, but the one who lacks wisdom will be disciplined.

10:14 Those who are wise store up knowledge, but foolish speech leads to imminent destruction.

10:15 The wealth of a rich person is like a fortified city, but the poor are brought to ruin by their poverty.

10:16 The reward which the righteous receive is life; the recompense which the wicked receive is judgment.

10:17 The one who heeds instruction is on the way to life, but the one who rejects rebuke goes astray.

10:18 The one who conceals hatred utters lies, and the one who spreads slander is certainly a fool.

10:19 When words abound, transgression is inevitable, but the one who restrains his words is wise.

10:20 What the righteous say is like the best silver, but what the wicked think is of little value.

10:21 The teaching of the righteous feeds many, but fools die for lack of wisdom.

10:22 The blessing from the Lord makes a person rich, and he adds no sorrow to it.

10:23 Carrying out a wicked scheme is enjoyable to a fool, and so is wisdom for the one who has discernment.

10:24 What the wicked fears will come on him; what the righteous desire will be granted.

10:25 When the storm passes through, the wicked are swept away, but the righteous are an everlasting foundation.

10:26 Like vinegar to the teeth and like smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to those who send him.

10:27 Fearing the Lord prolongs life, but the life span of the wicked will be shortened.

10:28 The hope of the righteous is joy, but the expectation of the wicked will remain unfulfilled.

10:29 The way of the Lord is like a stronghold for the upright, but it is destruction to evildoers.

10:30 The righteous will never be moved, but the wicked will not inhabit the land.

10:31 The speech of the righteous bears the fruit of wisdom, but the one who speaks perversion will be destroyed.

10:32 The lips of the righteous know what is pleasing, but the speech of the wicked is perverse.

11:1 The Lord abhors dishonest scales, but an accurate weight is his delight.

11:2 When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

11:3 The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the unfaithful destroys them.

11:4 Wealth does not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from mortal danger.

11:5 The righteousness of the blameless will make straight their way, but the wicked person will fall by his own wickedness.

11:6 The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the faithless will be captured by their own desires.

11:7 When a wicked person dies, his expectation perishes, and the hope of his strength perishes.

11:8 The righteous person is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked turns up in his stead.

11:9 With his speech the godless person destroys his neighbor, but by knowledge the righteous will be delivered.

11:10 When the righteous do well, the city rejoices; when the wicked perish, there is joy.

11:11 A city is exalted by the blessing provided from the upright, but it is destroyed by the counsel of the wicked.

11:12 The one who denounces his neighbor lacks wisdom, but the one who has discernment keeps silent.

11:13 The one who goes about slandering others reveals secrets, but the one who is trustworthy conceals a matter.

11:14 When there is no guidance a nation falls, but there is success in the abundance of counselors.

11:15 The one who puts up security for a stranger will surely have trouble, but whoever avoids shaking hands will be secure.

11:16 A generous woman gains honor, and ruthless men seize wealth.

11:17 A kind person benefits himself, but a cruel person brings himself trouble.

11:18 The wicked person earns deceitful wages, but the one who sows righteousness reaps a genuine reward.

11:19 True righteousness leads to life, but the one who pursues evil pursues it to his own death.

11:20 The Lord abhors those who are perverse in heart, but those who are blameless in their ways are his delight.

11:21 Be assured that the evil person will certainly be punished, but the descendants of the righteous will not suffer unjust judgment.

11:22 Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who rejects discretion.

11:23 What the righteous desire leads only to good, but what the wicked hope for leads to wrath.

11:24 One person is generous and yet grows more wealthy, but another withholds more than he should and comes to poverty.

11:25 A generous person will be enriched, and the one who provides water for others will himself be satisfied.

11:26 People will curse the one who withholds grain, but they will praise the one who sells it.

11:27 The one who diligently seeks good seeks favor, but the one who searches for evil – it will come to him.

11:28 The one who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.

11:29 The one who troubles his family will inherit nothing, and the fool will be a servant to the wise person.

11:30 The fruit of the righteous is like a tree producing life, and the one who wins souls is wise.

11:31 If the righteous are recompensed on earth, how much more the wicked sinner!

PRAYER

Lord, You have made the difference between those who listen to You and those who do not as plain as can be – choices have consequences. May I be careful to make the choice for You!

SCRIPTURE IN PERSPECTIVE

In what is labeled “The First Collection of Solomonic Proverbs” he presented a list of wise choices followed by the corollary, e.g. “The one who is lazy becomes poor, but the one who works diligently becomes wealthy.”

He continued this format though practical daily living, ones reputation, ones relationships, and ones relationship with the Lord God.

He continued the format into Chapter Eleven, addressing ones heart condition “When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the unfaithful destroys them.”

Solomon also addressed the relationship between the wisdom that benefits a community versus the corollary when Godly wisdom is absent “A city is exalted by the blessing provided from the upright, but it is destroyed by the counsel of the wicked.”

He does not condemn capitalism but does condemn hoarding “People will curse the one who withholds grain, but they will praise the one who sells it.”

INTERACT WITH THE TEXT

CONSIDER

The Lord God allows us to make choices, He stands ready to forgive and to restore and to teach, but eventually there is an end to all of that - consequences.

DISCUSS

Why would it be important for Solomon to not only provide lots of practical-life examples but to also challenge people to recognize their heart-condition?

REFLECT

There are consequence for everyone in a community which flows from the decisions made by leaders when they also must choose between wisdom and folly.

SHARE

When have you observed the different outcomes of leaders, one who obeys the Lord God, and one who dies not?

FAITH IN ACTION

PRAY

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you a leader, or a potential leader, for whom He wants you to pray as their decision to follow or to reject the Lord God’s wisdom could have a profound impact on you, people about whom you care, and your entire community.

ACT

Today I will stop and listen to the Holy Spirit, and then I will make the time today, and every day the rest of the week, to pray for the leader or leaders of whom He has made me aware.

Be Specific _____

All Bible text is from the NET unless otherwise indicated - <http://bible.org>

Note 1: These Studies often rely upon the guidance of the NET Translators from their associated notes. Careful attention has been given to cite that source where it has been quoted directly or closely paraphrased. Feedback is encouraged where credit has not been sufficiently assigned.

Note 2: When NET text is quoted in commentary and discussion all pronouns referring to God are capitalized, though they are lower-case in the original NET text.

Commentary text is from David M. Colburn, D.Min. unless otherwise noted.

Copyright © 2012 by David M. Colburn. This is a BibleSeven Study. Prepared by David M. Colburn and edited for bible.org in August of 2012. This text may be used for non-profit educational purposes only, with credit