


PROVERBS

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 **LIVING WAY**
BIBLE STUDY



Living Way Bible Study, Inc. (LWBS) is an auxiliary of the Pacific Southwest District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS). All studies are written and/or edited by LCMS pastors. We have been providing studies to churches throughout the U. S. and Canada since 1982.

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Welcome!

WELCOME TO LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY (LWBS)

LWBS is a practical course of study with a special emphasis on the application of God's Word to the life of the individual. While emphasizing practical application, LWBS presents each book of the Bible as the holy, inspired Word of God, the confessional position of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Our purpose is to help equip believers to live joyfully in God's redeeming love and to share with others God's plan of salvation.

It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit will use this study to help you grow in your knowledge and appreciation of our God and His Word.

*But grow in the grace and
knowledge of our Lord and Savior
Jesus Christ.*

2 PETER 3:18

STUDY STRUCTURE



Personal Study



Small Group Study



Leader's Overview



Author's Commentary

LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY SUGGESTS THIS FOUR-STEP METHOD

1. **PERSONAL** – The student prays for guidance from the Holy Spirit and answers the Personal Application (P. A.) questions at home using only the Bible (no commentaries).
2. **SMALL GROUPS** – The class meets for an opening and divides into small groups of 8–10 people. The small group leader guides the group through the P. A. questions, encouraging each to share their answers and discuss further as time allows.
3. **THE MESSAGE** – The lecture or message is given by a pastor or layperson who has researched the material and presents the study, giving personal insight and augmenting, but not duplicating, the author's comments.
4. **THE NARRATIVE** – The author's comments or narrative, along with the P. A. questions for the next lesson, are given out at the end of the class. At the next class meeting, before answering the P. A. questions, the small groups may choose to review the author's comments of the last lesson and share what each has highlighted as meaningful or important.


With this four-step method the student has the opportunity to study the particular section of Scripture covered by the lesson from four different approaches. This emphasizes the Bible text and gives the student an understanding and ownership for each section studied.

Each lesson should be stapled together according to the number of the lesson in the right-hand corner of the page. The P. A. questions for the next week should be attached after the author's narrative for the current week, as they will be the home study for the next class session.

The first meeting of the class is an introduction to the study. Since the members of the small groups have no P. A. questions to discuss at the first meeting, they may use the time to get acquainted or to tell what they hope to receive by studying this course. At the first meeting, the lecturer presents background information about the course, using the Introduction lesson as a guide.

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Romans – 2016

Acts – 2017

Matthew – 2018

Jeremiah – 2023

The Parables of Jesus – 2023

Hosea – 2023

Author, “*Into the Valley of Shadows: Our Journey Through Alzheimer’s Disease*”,
Lutheran Witness, February 2023. <https://witness.lcms.org>

Graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis – 1972

Forty-three years of ministry with LCMS serving the following congregations:

Memorial, Vancouver, WA

Concordia, Akron, OH

Faith, Sequim, WA

Trinity, Oregon City, OR

Trinity, Casey, IL

Served as vicar supervisor, circuit counselor, spiritual growth workshop leader, and writer for several publications.

Authored and published several books:

Time and Grace – A Pastor’s Story, 2012

Blood and Life – Sermons on the Old Testament, 2013

Through the Needle’s Eye: Sermons on the Gospels, 2016

Singing Heaven’s Song Now: Sermons on the Epistles, 2021


Into the Valley of Shadows: Our Journey Through Alzheimer’s Disease, 2023

Short-term mission in Kyrgyzstan, 2006

Retired from ministry in 2015

LWBS editor for several courses

Married Sue (Rodebaugh) in 1968. They have three adult children and seven grandchildren. Pastor enjoys traveling, gardening, hiking, reading, singing in church choir.



Reverend Dr. Erwin Kurth

Gospel of Mark (updated 2016)

Gospel of Luke (co-author) updated 2017

Ezra

Esther

Job

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Solomon

Graduated from Concordia Seminary – 1922

Sixty-five years in the ministry with the LCMS

Areas of particular interest: Christian Stewardship and Bible Study. Conducted seminars and workshops in the U.S. and Canada on How to Run a Successful Every-member Canvas

Attended Biblical Seminary in New York City, NY

Fostered intensive Bible study and taught Bible study classes wherever he served as Pastor. These include LCMS churches in Montana, Nebraska, Minnesota, Brooklyn, NY, Ft. Wayne, IN, Detroit, MI and California

Conferred the Doctor of Divinity Degree from Concordia Seminary – 1960 guest speaker on the International Lutheran Hour

Served as part-time Bible instructor at Christ College Irvine, in Irvine, CA

Author of Catechetical Helps (Concordia Publishing House)

His life companion, Esther Pfothauer Kurth, supported his ministry by typing much of his longhand script.

Our beloved author, Dr. Kurth, was called home to be with the Lord on October 22, 1989 at the age of 91 years.



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Henry, Carl F. H. The Biblical Expositor. London: Pickering and Inglis, 1960.
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INTRODUCTION AND THEME

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A Thrilling Experience Awaits You!

The Book of Proverbs, though about 3,000 years old, is wondrously up to date. It furnishes pragmatic, ethical, and religious counsel for everyday living. Its pithy sayings are permeated with elegant advice, sound judgment, the distillation of experience, and Spirit-given directives for right living.

Here and there in these lessons, everyday proverbs (some familiar, others not), have been added. As one generation succeeds another, the meanings may grow opaque, and the proverbs themselves be forgotten. In the old TV program CANDID CAMERA, Allen Funt sought to find out whether his contemporaries knew the familiar proverbs with which their elders grew up. He quoted the opening words and asked them to complete the maxims. They failed miserably. Can you do better? See if you can complete these.

A stitch in time ...

Make hay while ...

Waste not ...

Spare the rod and ...

If you can't help ...

God never closes a door ...

Eternal vigilance is ...

Proverbial Sayings are Scattered through the Scriptures

Old Testament Samples:

"Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1 Samuel 10:12)

"Like mother, like daughter" (Ezekiel 16:44).

"Like people, like priests" (Hosea 4:9).

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

"The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (Ezekiel 18:2).

New Testament Samples:

“Man does not live on bread alone” (Matthew 4:4).

“A city on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14).

“No one can serve two masters” (Matthew 6:24).

“Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:34).

“A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough” (Galatians 5:9).

“The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil” (1 Timothy 6:10).

“Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6).

Wisdom Literature

The Book of Proverbs belongs to what is called the Wisdom Literature of the Bible, consisting of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. It is a compilation of moral and religious sayings, prescriptions for right living which proceed out of “the fear of the Lord” -- a phrase which occurs fifteen times: 1:7, 29; 2:5; 3:7; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:26-27; 15:16, 33; 16:6; 19:23; 23:17; and 24:21.

The key verse of this inspired book is 1:7 -- “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”

Faith and Good Works

Proverbs is a highly practical book. Martin Luther wrote that in Proverbs God teaches how to live a good life. That kind of life springs from faith. Creed and deeds go together. Justification and sanctification constitute one operation on the part of the Holy Spirit. Faith and the good works which follow are inseparable. “As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead” (James 2:26). Jesus is both Savior and Lord. The believers who know Jesus clearly and love Him dearly will certainly want to follow Him more nearly! They earnestly desire to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only (James 1:22). As it is the property of the sun to shine, of fire to warm, of water to cleanse, so it is the property of faith to manifest itself in good works. Not that we are saved BY good works but rather FOR good works. Jesus is both Redeemer and Exemplar. By His Holy Spirit He enables believers to will and to do those things which are good and acceptable unto divine majesty.

Rules to live by are set forth in the Book of Proverbs. Similar guidance for living is recorded in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-21), the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), in the Epistles and in Micah’s directive, “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8).

Authorship

Most of the wise sayings in the Book of Proverbs were written or dictated by “Solomon son of David, king of Israel” (Proverbs 1:1). He was a prolific writer. All told, he composed 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five (1 Kings 4:29-34). We wish more of his wise sayings had come down to us, but we are grateful that we have what we find in the Book of Proverbs to help us gain “wisdom and discipline” and apply it to everyday life situations (1:2-4).

*Proverbs
is a highly
practical
book.*



Other sages also contributed maxims and precepts. They include the unidentified wise men whose sayings are recorded in 22:17 - 24:34; Agur the son of Jakeh in Chapter 30, and King Lemuel's mother who supplied the content of 31:1-8. The acrostic poem extolling the ideal wife and mother, 31:10-31, was fashioned by an unknown inspired wise person.

Structure of the Book of Proverbs

Chapters 1-9, Introduction by Solomon (14 discourses on wisdom).

Chapters 10-22:16, Proverbs of Solomon.

Chapters 22:17-24:34, Unidentified wise men speak in proverbs.

Chapters 25-29, Solomon's proverbs copied by the men of Hezekiah.

Chapter 30, The words of Agur.

Chapter 31:1-9, The words of Lemuel's mother.

Chapter 31:10-31, Acrostic poem describing an ideal wife and mother.

True Wisdom

The wisdom discussed in the Book of Proverbs is more than good judgment, more than uncommon common sense, more than right action in conformity with worldly prudence, more than intellectual acumen. True wisdom is moral excellence. The fiber of this wisdom is righteousness and holiness.

“In Proverbs wisdom is the attitude of the heart which puts God first as man's rightful guide. The centrality of God as a person and the theology stemming from this are taken for granted. To the stipulations of the Law and the clarion call of the Prophets, Proverbs adds principles for right living and observations on life as lived with and without godly wisdom in many spheres” (*The Biblical Expositor*).

This superlative wisdom comes from above for, as Solomon says, “The Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding” (2:6). If a man would be truly wise, it must be with the wisdom that is in God before it is in him; and that if he would be righteous, it must be with the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. Christ is “the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24). “Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3).

If we would “win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man” (3:4), we must follow Solomon's direction: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (3:5-6).

Clearly, the profundity of wisdom is rooted and grounded in obedience to God's will. The most sensible thing a person can do is to learn what the absolute will of the Creator is and live according to it.

*In Proverbs
wisdom is the
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rightful guide.*



Samplings from Proverbs with Brief Comments

A proverb is a short saying about a practical truth of everyday life.

On one occasion, William Jennings Bryan, U.S. politician and orator, was confronted with a trick question by an adversary. Bryan retorted with a quote from the Book of Proverbs: “How useless to spread a net in full view of all the birds!” (1:17) -- much to the confusion of his heckler.

“A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal” (12:10). The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals loves this saying!

“He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD” (18:22); which brings to mind Schiller’s estimate of a woman: “woman is God’s compensation to man for the loss of paradise.”

“The borrower is servant to the lender” (22:7b). Will Rogers said in effect, “The surest way to make enemies is to loan money to friends.”

“There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother” (18:24). The hymn writer proclaims: “What a Friend we have in Jesus.”

A Further Sampling of Everyday Proverbs

“A friend in need is a friend indeed.”

“As the twig is bent, so grows the tree.”

“Every cloud has a silver lining.”

“Necessity is the mother of invention.”

“All that glitters is not gold.”

“Don’t cross a bridge until you come to it.”

A proverb is a short saying about a practical truth of everyday life. Here are some synonyms from *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, with additions by this author.

A saying is the simple, direct term for any pithy expression of wisdom or truth.

A saw is an old, homely saying that is well worn by repetition.

A maxim is a general principle drawn from practical experience and serving as a rule of conduct.

An adage is a saying that has been popularly accepted over a long period of time. (Example: “Where there’s smoke, there’s fire”).

An aphorism is a terse saying embodying a general, more or less profound, truth or principle. (Example: “He is a fool that cannot conceal his wisdom”).

An epigram is a terse, witty, pointed statement that gains its effect by ingenious antitheses. (“My mind is made up; don’t confuse me with facts”).



Personal Application

O holy, blessed Trinity, who has enabled me by the Holy Spirit to know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent, empower me, I pray, to find wisdom for my life in the Holy Scripture, to the praise and honor of Your holy Name; through Jesus Christ who is the Power and Wisdom of God. Amen.

Proverbs

1. The Lord appeared to young Solomon in a dream, and said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." What did Solomon request? (1 Kings 3:5-9)

2. In what manner did Solomon display his wisdom in 1 Kings 3:16-28?

3. How many proverbs and songs did Solomon compose, according to 1 Kings 4:32?

4. The first nine chapters of the Book of Proverbs consist not so much in individual wise sayings or proverbs, but in discourses, explanations, and expansions on a given subject. In perusing the first three chapters, which six letter word occurs with marked regularity? (Proverbs 1:2, 20; 2:2, 6, 10, 12; 3:13, 19)

5. Consult verses 1:1-6. To whom is the instruction in the Book of Proverbs directed?
 - a. Children?
 - b. Old people?
 - c. The wise?
 - d. The simple?
 - e. Everybody?

6. Using 1:7 compose a title which would serve as the theme for the entire Book of Proverbs.

7. Which of the following proverbs reflect the first discourse: "My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them" (1:10)?
 - a. Tell me with whom you associate and I will tell you who you are - Emerson.
 - b. Watch the beginning.
 - c. Birds of a feather flock together.
 - d. Silence gives consent.

8. Relate an experience from your family life that fits one of these proverbs.

9. In verses 1:20-33, Wisdom appears as a person. She cries out and urges everyone to turn from folly.
 - a. What does she promise?

 - b. What will happen to those who reject her counsel and despise her admonition to fear the Lord?

Proverbs 2

10. What is a young person to do in order to “understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God?”

11. In the last analysis, who imparts spiritual and, through man’s reasoning power, practical wisdom?

12. From which evils will discretion and understanding deliver a person?

13. What benefits accrue to those who walk in the paths of uprightness?

Proverbs 3

14. The third discourse (3:1-10) enumerates benefits that come to persons guided in their lifestyle by God's standard of right and wrong and not their own. What benefits are promised?
15. The fourth discourse (3:11-20) begins with a gentle reminder to "bear patiently the cross of grief or pain" because of a loving relationship existing between God and His chosen ones.
- a. To what sweet relationship can this be compared? (3:11-12)

 - b. List the benefits available to the person who finds wisdom. (3:13-20)
16. The fifth discourse (3:21-35) assures the possessors of wisdom and discretion that they will enjoy the favor of the Lord, provided they exercise restraint towards their fellow humans.
- a. What favors are listed in verses 21-26?

 - b. Give the FIVE DON'TS from verses 27-31.
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 - c. State the summary of the fifth discourse as found in verses of 33-35 in Chapter 3.

Lesson 2

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A Bird's-Eye View

Prologue - Proverbs 1:1-9

5 Discourses on Wisdom:

1. 1:10-33
2. Chapter 2
3. 3:1-10
4. 3:11-20
5. 3:21-35

Prologue - Proverbs 1:1-9

Solomon makes plain in the prologue or introduction that the form of instruction in these discourses will benefit not only the “simple” (the immature and the inexperienced), but prove of value also to the elderly, the mature and the wise. No one is ever too old to learn. In fact, the wise can add to the sum total of human knowledge by discovering deeper truths in proverbial sayings and passing their interpretation on to posterity (1:2-6).

First Exhortation:
Obey God. That's the starting point for courageous action. The most important part of knowledge is fearing the LORD! “The Fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools [the stupid, the self-opinionated, the morally deficient] despise wisdom and discipline” (1:7). Respect for and acceptance of the will of God, plus a follow-through in righteous living, express “The fear of the Lord” in a concrete way. “To fear the LORD is to hate evil” (8:13).

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Second Exhortation: Heed Your Parents. Listen not only to what the Lord has to say but pay attention to the instruction of your parents (1:8-9) who are instruments of His teaching. They have your welfare at heart. Moreover, they have accumulated experience. They know, for instance, that so-called disasters can be weathered. These include disappointment in love, failure in school, rejection by the peer group, bewilderment due to the imperfections of government and society, spiritual difficulties, and so forth.

For the young these are first-time experiences. Not so in the case of parents. They have learned that such frustrations can be surmounted. Survival is possible. No need to contemplate self-destruction, as so many young people do. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among 15-24-year-olds. During the year 2022, fully 20% of high school students seriously contemplated suicide! Instead, listen to your parents and live.

Five Discourses on Wisdom – Proverbs 1:10-3:35

First Discourse - Proverbs 1:10-33

Warning Against Enticement (1:10-19)

The discourse begins with a warning against enticements that will surely come. “My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them” (1:10). The hook of temptation is baited with the offer of “valuable things” (1:13). This easy money may necessitate bloodshed, even murder of some “harmless soul” (1:11), but the payoff is certain. Come and share our plunder, say the tempters!

One of the hardest words to articulate in the English language is “No!” When invited to join this gang with its evil intent, better say “No!” Say it fast. Shout it out aloud. The gang member may sneeringly inquire, “What did you say?” By that time, you will have mustered enough courage to retort, “You heard me the first time. I said No!”

In other words, watch the beginning. If you let the nose of a camel thrust itself into your tent, the bulky part is sure to follow. Like that tent, your life will be messed up, if you walk in the way of wickedness. It’s downhill from there on unless the Holy Spirit performs a miracle of grace and turns you around.

Wisdom’s Call (1:20-33)

Wisdom now appears in personified form. She makes her voice heard in the streets, in the marketplace, at the gates where people come and go, in fact, throughout the city. Read 1:20-21. Her persistent message can be summarized this way: “Come, you inexperienced ones, listen and learn. Get some sense into your head. Master the basic rule of life: put God first. He is supreme in the moral world, even as He is in the physical. He determines what is right and wrong. Don’t flout His authority.

*Master the basic rule
of life: put God first.
He is supreme in the
moral world, even as
He is in the physical.*

Don't scorn His mandates. You'll be better off if you conform to His will. The simple (the soft-headed and hard-hearted) imagine they will not be penalized if they ignore the counsel of heavenly wisdom. But they are in error. They will live to regret their lawlessness."

Laws, rules, and regulations surround us. They are inescapable in sports, society, government, and business. The universe itself is held together and kept functioning with mathematical precision by the universal law of gravitation. Laws are also inescapable realities in the moral realm. Whoever violates laws in any area of activity will be penalized.

Wisdom continues, saying in essence, "If you hate knowledge and do not choose the fear of the LORD, don't come back to me whining. You made your bed, now lie in it!" Wisdom herself will join in laughing at such folly and mocking it when calamity comes (1:26-27). The discourse concludes with a pointed warning and a bracing promise: "Since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes (1:30-31) ... but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm" (1:33).

Second Discourse - Proverbs Chapter 2

"My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you...then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God" (2:1, 5).

In this discourse the wise are set in contrast with the obstinate. The wise - they who fear God - will prosper (2:1-11). The wicked - they who rejoice in the perverseness of evil - shall perish (2:12-19). The summary or end result in either case is found in 2:20-22.

The wise are those who draw knowledge, understanding, and insight from the Lord. The upright are those who measure their doings according to God's absolutes. The righteous are those whose hearts have been made right with God. We, with the New Testament in hand, know how this is accomplished, by grace through faith in the Messiah, the world's Redeemer -- under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

The obstinate ones, on the contrary, are turned away from God. They discount him as a primal factor in their lives. They are stubbornly willful. They prize their own opinions above His revealed truths; for instance, they hold their personal values above "Thus says the Lord." If inclined to follow their own perverse drives, they "leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways," even to the extent of following "the adulteress" (2:13, 16).

*The wise are
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Third Discourse - Proverbs 3:1-10

In this discourse, the teacher bids his “son” to consider what a wise life looks like.

REMEMBER GOD’S WORD. The wise life begins by storing the Word of God in one’s heart to remember it. The words of God that mediate His “love and faithfulness” (3:1-3) are so important that one ought to “bind them” around his neck and “write them” on the tablet of the heart. Jewish men did this literally when they tied phylacteries (tiny containers containing words of Scripture) around their foreheads or arms during weekday morning prayers. The more recent practice of tying a string around one’s finger is simply another way of saying, “I need to remember this!”

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE. That stored word needs to be lived out. The shape that daily life takes is, positively, to “trust in the LORD” with one’s whole heart, and, negatively, “lean not on your own understanding.” Every area of life is included: “in all your ways” (3:6)! Even one’s “economic” or financial life is under the purview of God’s wisdom: “Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops” (3:9). Later St. Paul would restate the all-encompassing extent of a godly life: “Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

SHUN EVIL. This brief reminder comes with no examples, but we could remember the description of Job as an upright man who “feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1).

This brief discourse is laced with promises for those who obey (3:2-10):

1. Long life and prosperity
2. A good reputation
3. Direction for daily life
4. Health
5. “Your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine” (3:10).

Fourth Discourse - Proverbs 3:11-20

“Into each life some rain must fall.”

When trials come, be wise and identify their source. They come from the Lord. Perceive their purpose; they are meant to chasten, to make “chaste,” to purify, to refine, to improve us. Afflictions come accompanied with God’s love which is the love of a father for his children: “The LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in” (3:12).

Wisdom consists in recognizing the Father-child relationship. Knowing that God in Christ is for us, with us, around us, in us, over us, and underneath us with the everlasting arms (Deuteronomy 33:27) constitutes wisdom of the first magnitude. Such wisdom is more precious than silver, fine gold, and rubies, more to be desired than riches and honor (3:14-16). “Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace” (3:17). She is “a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed” (3:18). The same God who displays His peerless wisdom in creating and preserving the worlds without end is purposeful in dealing with His beloved in Christ (3:19-20).

*The wise life
begins by
storing the
Word of God in
one’s heart to
remember it.*



Fifth Discourse - Proverbs 3:21-35

Wisdom, though of heavenly origin, is practical for everyday life on earth. The person who knows right from wrong and consistently chooses good over evil will have no trouble living with himself. His conscience is clear. He is at peace with himself and with God.

He is also at peace with others. He makes it an aim in life to avoid giving offense. He is discreet in what he does and says. He listens with an open mind to the other fellow's viewpoint. If better than his own, he readily concedes, "I think you're right." When his opinion is sought, he gives a well-balanced evaluation. He shows good judgment and common sense. His ideas are workable.

As a result, he enjoys the respect of his peers, which is like life to his soul and an ornament to grace his neck (3:22). His world is a pleasant, safe place to live in. At night he has no trouble sleeping soundly (3:24). His confidence is in the Lord (3:26).

Wisdom Teaches Five Don'ts (3:27-3:31)

1. Don't hoard your resources. Whether it is money, food, or other goods, share your abundance with those who have little (3:27).
2. Don't postpone a kindly act. If your neighbor is in need today, don't tell him, "Come back tomorrow" (3:28).
3. Don't return a neighbor's trust with spiteful behavior (3:29).
4. Don't go out of your way to pick a fight. Follow the maxim: "Let live! Help live!" (3:30).
5. Don't follow the example of those who make life oppressive for others. If you are the foreman in a workplace, don't be hypercritical of your subordinates. Compliments get better results than criticism. Everybody appreciates a word of encouragement (3:31).

In contrast to these "don'ts," DO cultivate fair dealing, humility, and pragmatic wisdom! You'll be better off in the long run than if you are arrogant and rude (3:22-35).

This is not the end of the series of discourses on the subject of Wisdom. Nine more will follow -- right on down to the end of Chapter 9. Thereafter, with Chapter 10, the Proverbs of Solomon will begin.

Popular Proverbs – to what extent do these reinforce the discourses on wisdom?

- What's good for the goose is good for the gander.
- One man's meat is another man's poison.
- Half a loaf is better than none.
- Two wrongs don't make a right.
- Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today.
- What goes around comes around.

