



**COLLEGE HEIGHTS
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Selections from Proverbs

Daily Scripture Readings for
February 10-23

WEEK 1 - SPIRITUAL WISDOM

Monday, February 10 - Proverbs 1:7

“Without God, the best human wisdom becomes folly, because God alone holds the world and all outcomes in God’s hands” (*New Interpreter’s Bible*, Vol. V).

The book of Proverbs is written in order to teach wisdom to those who fear God (i.e God’s followers). Proverbs 1:7 can be read as the theme of the entire book. It will be the theme of our passages this week. It is spiritually wise to fear the Lord. It is the basis of our relationship with Him. Proverbs 8:23 says that to fear God is to hate evil and turn from it. Being able to put this statement and Proverbs 1:7 together similar to a math problem, we can learn that the beginning of knowledge is hating evil and turning from it. When we fear God, we turn from evil and God can protect and provide for us every day. When we fear God, we choose to pursue good. Fearing God, then, can lead to a happy life.

This view of knowledge is contrary to the ways of the world today. It seems there is competition between knowledge and faith, disagreement between science and religion, and debate between “objective” reason and “subjective” faith. Proverbs 1:7 clearly says that is incorrect. God is in all knowledge. All knowledge begins with God. We can only know the truth of life through fear (reverence) of the Lord and turning from evil.

Where have you been gaining your wisdom and instruction? Is it from the Bible? Is it from God? Or is it from the newspaper and cable news? Pray to God asking for forgiveness for not seeking knowledge from him. Pray that you can shun the evils of this world and only rely on God.

Tuesday, February 11 - Proverbs 8:12-14

Prudence, knowledge, discretion. These are the ways of Wisdom. These are the ways Wisdom gives order to society. These are ways we live out our “fear of the Lord.” We remain disciplined, steadfast, loyal to God. We continue to seek knowledge and learn about who God is. We discern the difference between right and wrong.

Evil, however, personifies itself in the world today with pride, arrogance, and perverted speech. The way evil can end up controlling lives is by us making excuses. We don't call it pride or arrogance; we call it confidence. We don't call it perverted speech; we call it a harmless joke or a little white lie.

Of the characteristics of Wisdom and Evil, which do you see more of in the world today? Which characterizes your actions in a given day?

Wednesday, February 12 - Proverbs 3:13-20

Have you ever heard the phrase “he has more dollars than sense (cents)?” Admittedly, the phrase works better when spoken. In these verses, we see the importance of wisdom. Wisdom is worth more than any jewel or amount of money you can have. True wealth is found in God, not finances. We are to reject all types of materialism and pursue Wisdom through God instead of monetary wealth.

In verse 18, it calls Wisdom “a tree of life.” Proverbs is the only place other than Genesis and Revelation where reference to the Tree of Life exists. When God allows one to eat from the tree of life, they are able to live forever. With Wisdom being metaphorically like “a tree of life,” then having true wisdom allows one to have eternal life. This makes sense given what we have already read this week. The fear of the Lord, living in that reverent relationship with God, is the

only way to be given eternal life. And it is only through God where we can receive Wisdom. “Happy are those who find wisdom...”

Thursday, February 13 - Proverbs 24:3-6

The 21st Century version of these verses would probably be “work smarter, not harder.” It also reminds me of the story Jesus tells in Matthew 7:24-27 at the end of his Sermon on the Mount. The one who listens to God, follows God, founds his life on the promises of God will stand firm when the storms come. Wise warriors are mightier than strong warriors. Wisdom is a firm foundation to build your life upon. What have you been building your life on? The firm foundation of Wisdom and the fear of the Lord? Or the sands of human will power?

Friday, February 14 - Proverbs 4:10-15

God’s Wisdom through human authorship is an important principle for us to understand. Our passage today concerns parents teaching their children the difference between right and wrong. How did we learn it? Our parents. How did they learn it? Their parents. And so on and so forth. The point is we all learn from our parents what is correct and what is not. We use the Bible as our guide as well. Our children will read the Bible and be taught by us similar to how we were raised. We are not alone in our relationship with God. It is not just the two of us. It is all of us learning from each other. “Iron sharpens iron and one person sharpens the wits of another” (Prov. 27:17). It is teaching the next generation, so that when our generation has passed, the knowledge of the Lord continues. How are you helping others grow in their faith? How are you allowing others to help you grow in your faith?

Saturday, February 15 - Psalm 16; Acts 2:24-28

Tomorrow night, we continue our study of Psalms by looking at Psalm 16, and we will recognize why we can rejoice in the Lord. As you prepare for that study, start thinking and writing down reasons you can rejoice in the Lord.

Sunday, February 16 - Psalm 33:1-3

Let us come together and Praise God this morning!

WEEK 2 - PRACTICAL WISDOM

Monday, February 17 - Proverbs 11:1

Last week, we read several proverbs relating to what I would call Spiritual Wisdom. Wisdom that relates to our relationship with God. Most of this wisdom centers around “fear of the Lord.” This week, we will read proverbs relating more to our relationship with other people. This is what I am calling Practical Wisdom. Proverbs 11:1 tells us how to be honest in our business dealings. Usually being honest in your business dealings costs you more money. Would you like an example? Recently, a person who was trying to do business with me told me that I could receive a “cash discount” if I paid in cash instead of check. The savings would be between 7%-8% if I went this route. I understood what he was really saying. He was not going to claim this as income on his taxes. A check has a paper trail and was necessary to claim. Cash was not. I chose to not do business in this way. God cares about the way we do business and deal with our finances because as Proverbs 16:11 would tell you, God created commerce, and all the money in the world is his. Being honest in our dealings with money is part of the righteousness that God expects from you. To sum this up: do the right thing, even when it costs you more money.

Tuesday, February 18 - Proverbs 14:31

This proverb impresses upon us something even the most benevolent people sometimes forget: the poor are people too. Sometimes we see those who are less fortunate than us as projects to complete instead of people to love. As Dr. Seuss writes in *Horton Hears A Who*, “a person’s a person, no matter how small.” Our reading today makes it clear that all people have the same maker. To take that a step further, we are all made in the image of God. It’s important we remember this as we serve the poor. We mustn't look down upon people in hardship because we are all equal in the eyes of God. We must treat all people with respect and dignity. Oppressing the poor for our benefit is unacceptable in the eyes of God. Those who treat the poor with respect and look after them honor God. “Whatever you do for the least of my people, you do it for me” (Matt. 25:40).

Wednesday, February 19 - Hebrews 10:19-25

If there is ever pressure on our lives to not be allowed the Religious Liberty we have enjoyed over our lifetime, verses like this passage in Hebrews will be important for encouragement. Even if our beliefs are contrary to what earthly powers are telling us, we can have confidence and perseverance in our faith in Jesus. We hold onto our hope without wavering and we provoke one another to good deeds. And we must certainly not become secret, hidden Christians, but we continue to boldly share our faith and boldly worship the true God in public, no matter the consequences.

Thursday, February 20 - Proverbs 19:15

The current day version of this proverb is probably “the early bird gets the worm.” The phrase “deep sleep” reminds us of the deep sleep God forced upon Adam in order to create Eve. In the Genesis 2 story, deep sleep is appropriate because it is God-ordained. In our passage, it is clearly inappropriate from the context of the verse. In both, this deep sleep causes the person to be completely inactive and unresponsive. Not even hunger can shake the slumber from the lazy. Let’s be clear: don’t confuse laziness with rest. Rest is wholly appropriate. Rest is necessary. Deep sleep caused by God is profitable. Laziness, on the other hand, will only bring about suffering. The application of this proverb is clear for your life. Laziness is not acceptable.

Friday, February 21 - Proverbs 22:6-9

We close out our time reading Proverbs with a section of verses which don’t seem to be united in any way. The question for us to explore is what is the connection. Verse 6 is clearly the more famous verse of the four. It is my interpretation that the verses which follow (along with all of Proverbs more than likely) are what we can define as “the right way.” “The right way” in verse 6 is ambiguous without context. The right way in a family could be anything from the serious (do not murder) to the silly (in this house, we are Dallas Cowboys fans). Verses 7-9 give us this context. The right way is not going into debt because of borrowing money with interest (practical wisdom for finances). The right way is being just in our actions with others (practical wisdom for relationships). The right way is being generous and going above and beyond what is necessary to share with the poor (practical wisdom for serving others).

If you want to know how we should be training our children, it is with these types of eternal truths. We are to be teaching them when you are young, so that

they will know right and wrong when they are old. Proverbs 22:6 is not just a generic verse that doesn't dive into what is right. It has context. Biblical truth is not only about "churchy" stuff. It applies to our everyday life. These spiritual and practical truths are how we can train children in the right way.

I know my audience, so I know that most of you reading this do not have little ones at home anymore to teach "the right way." Can I ask you to pray for God to reveal someone you can "adopt" and be a spiritual parent to a child? We have many children and youth that come to our church on Wednesday nights without any Christian role model to teach them "the right way." Where parents fail, it is the church's responsibility to pick up the slack. Would you commit to helping teach kids the right way? Teaching them practical and spiritual wisdom they can use forever in their lives? If so, tell me (Pastor Josh). I will connect you with a child and family who could use guidance.

Saturday, February 22 - Psalm 22; Matthew 27:45-46

We have all gone through suffering. We have all wondered "why God, why?" How can we trust God in the darkest hours of our life? Pray for God to give you the strength to stand firm in your faith when times are tough.

Sunday, February 23 - Psalm 34:17-19

Our trust in victory does not come from might and the sword, but from meekness and sacrifice of Jesus. He is our hope! He is our victory! Come and worship the Lord today!