

Study Guide on Proverbs 16

“Wisdom, Humility, and Trusting God’s Direction”

Overview of Proverbs 16

Book of Proverbs Proverbs 16 teaches that true wisdom begins with surrendering our lives, plans, and hearts to God. The chapter emphasizes God’s sovereignty, the dangers of pride, the importance of wise speech, righteous living, and trusting God’s guidance over human understanding.

This chapter reminds believers that while people make plans, God ultimately directs their steps. Wisdom is demonstrated through humility, integrity, self-control, gracious speech, and dependence on the Lord.

Key Theme

True wisdom comes from trusting God’s direction, walking in humility, and living with integrity and self-control.

Historical Context

The Proverbs were primarily written and compiled during the reign of King Solomon, who received extraordinary

wisdom from God (1 Kings 3:9–12). Proverbs 16 reflects practical wisdom for leaders, families, workers, and individuals seeking to live faithfully before God.

In Hebrew wisdom literature, wisdom was not merely knowledge—it was skillful living rooted in reverence for God and obedience to His truth.

Five Major Lessons from Proverbs 16

1. Commit Your Plans to God

Key Scripture

“Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.” — Proverbs 16:3

Explanation

People naturally make plans and pursue goals, but wisdom teaches believers to surrender their plans to God. When we trust God with our decisions, motives, and direction, He establishes and guides our path according to His will.

True success comes not from self-reliance, but from dependence on God.

Supporting Scriptures

- Psalm 37:5
- Jeremiah 29:11
- James 4:13–15

Application

- Pray before making major decisions.
- Surrender your goals and ambitions to God.
- Trust God even when plans change unexpectedly.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do people struggle to surrender plans to God?
2. How does trusting God bring peace?
3. What areas of life are hardest to surrender?

Sticky Quote

“Peace comes when God guides the plans instead of pride.”

2. Pride Leads to Destruction

Key Scripture

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” — Proverbs 16:18

Explanation

Pride causes people to rely on themselves rather than God. It blinds individuals to their weaknesses, resists correction, and leads to spiritual downfall.

Humility, however, opens the door for wisdom, grace, and growth.

Supporting Scriptures

- James 4:6
- Philippians 2:3
- 1 Peter 5:5–6

Application

- Guard against self-centered pride.
- Remain teachable and humble.
- Give God credit for blessings and success.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is pride spiritually dangerous?
2. What are common signs of pride?
3. How does humility strengthen faith?

Sticky Quote

“Pride pushes God away while humility draws His grace near.”

3. Wise Words Bring Life and Healing

Key Scripture

“Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.” — Proverbs 16:24

Explanation

Words carry tremendous power. Wise speech encourages, heals, strengthens, and guides others. Careless or harsh words can deeply wound relationships and hearts.

Wisdom teaches believers to speak with grace, truth, patience, and kindness.

Supporting Scriptures

- Ephesians 4:29
- Colossians 4:6
- James 1:19

Application

- Speak words that encourage and strengthen others.
- Think carefully before reacting emotionally.
- Use speech to bring peace rather than conflict.

Discussion Questions

1. Why are words so influential?
2. How can believers improve communication?
3. What kind of speech reflects godly wisdom?

Sticky Quote

“Words shaped by wisdom leave healing where anger leaves wounds.”

4. Self-Control Is Greater Than Power

Key Scripture

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.” —
Proverbs 16:32

Explanation

The world often admires power, strength, and dominance, but Proverbs teaches that self-control is a greater victory. Controlling emotions, anger, and reactions requires spiritual maturity and discipline.

Wisdom values restraint over impulsiveness.

Supporting Scriptures

- Galatians 5:22–23
- James 1:19–20

- Proverbs 15:1

Application

- Practice patience during conflict.
- Ask God to help control anger and emotions.
- Develop habits of prayer and reflection before responding.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is self-control difficult?
2. How does anger damage relationships?
3. What practices help develop emotional discipline?

Sticky Quote

“Conquering your spirit is a greater victory than conquering a city.”

5. God Directs the Steps of the Righteous

Key Scripture

“A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.” — Proverbs 16:9

Explanation

People make plans and choices, but God ultimately guides and directs life according to His purpose. Sometimes God redirects paths unexpectedly, but His guidance is always wiser than human understanding.

Wisdom trusts God even when the future is unclear.

Supporting Scriptures

- Psalm 119:105
- Romans 8:28
- Isaiah 55:8–9

Application

- Trust God when life changes unexpectedly.
- Seek God daily for guidance.
- Walk by faith rather than fear.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is trusting God difficult at times?
2. How have unexpected changes strengthened faith?
3. What does daily dependence on God look like?

Sticky Quote

“God sees the road ahead long before we take the next step.”

Major Themes in Proverbs 16

Theme	Meaning
Trust in God	God directs the path of the faithful
Humility	Pride leads to downfall
Speech	Wise words bring healing and peace
Self-Control	Emotional restraint reflects wisdom
Sovereignty	God's plans are higher than human plans
Wisdom	True wisdom shapes daily living

Life Application

Proverbs 16 challenges believers to examine:

- Whether they trust God fully with their plans
- Their attitude toward pride and humility
- The way they speak to others
- Their emotional self-control
- Their willingness to follow God's direction

Wisdom is not just knowing truth—it is living daily with humility, discipline, and dependence on God.

Final Reflection

Proverbs 16 teaches that wise living flows from humility, trust in God, gracious speech, and self-control. It reminds

believers that God is sovereign over every plan and that true peace comes from surrendering life fully to His direction.

Final Challenge

Ask yourself:

- Am I trusting God with my future?
- Is pride affecting my relationship with God or others?
- Are my words healing or harmful?
- Do I practice self-control in difficult moments?
- Am I following God's direction daily?

Closing Prayer

“Lord, teach me to trust You with every plan and decision. Guard my heart from pride and help me walk in humility and wisdom. Let my words bring healing, my actions reflect self-control, and my life follow Your direction each day. Guide my steps according to Your will and help me honor You in all I do. Amen.”