



## CREW LEADER GUIDE: BUILDING A LIFE ON THE RIGHT FOUNDATION - PROVERBS PART 2

### Message Summary:

This sermon contrasts wisdom and foolishness, arguing that true wisdom is not merely a product of maturity or experience, but flows from a heart surrendered to God. The pastor emphasizes that the fear of the Lord is the foundation of all wisdom, and that self-reliance, pride, and an unwillingness to receive counsel are hallmarks of foolishness. The sermon moves toward a practical application of wisdom through the lens of forgiveness, using Jesus' parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18 to illustrate that wise people forgive others because they understand the magnitude of grace they themselves have received. The message closes with a gospel invitation, connecting the theme of wisdom to the ultimate act of God's grace in sending Jesus Christ to cancel the debt of sin that no human being could repay.

### Key Points:

- The fear of the Lord is the foundation of all wisdom, as established in Proverbs 1:7, and without a posture of humility before God, the heart is not prepared to receive His guidance
- A fool relies on his own understanding and views himself as the final authority, while a wise person seeks counsel and submits to the wisdom of God and those He has placed in our lives
- Pride is a dangerous entry point for disgrace, and self-deception is a natural byproduct of foolishness, as the fool always believes his own way is right
- The fruit of the Holy Spirit, including self-control, love, patience, and kindness, is not self-manufactured but is the outworking of the Holy Spirit in the life of a surrendered believer
- Wisdom is not just about personal decision-making but about building a legacy and a path for those under your influence, including children and future generations
- Forgiveness is an act of wisdom rooted in the recognition of how much God has forgiven us, not in whether the offending party deserves it
- True wisdom means building your life on the foundation of hearing and obeying God's Word, which enables a person to withstand the storms and trials of life
- Grace does not merely give us time to fix our debt of sin; it cancels a debt we could never repay, and receiving that grace should reshape how we extend grace to others

### Key Scripture:

- Proverbs 11:2 — pride leading to disgrace, humility leading to wisdom
- Proverbs 12:15 — the fool who is right in his own eyes versus the wise person who listens to counsel
- Proverbs 14:16 — the wise person turning from evil while the fool is reckless
- Proverbs 15:5 — a fool despising instruction, the prudent heeding reproof
- Proverbs 29 — the fool giving full vent to his spirit, the wise holding back
- Psalm 14 — the fool saying in his heart there is no God
- Matthew 7:24 — the parable of the wise and foolish builders
- Matthew 18:21-35 — Peter's question about forgiveness and the parable of the unmerciful servant
- James 1 — being quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger



EIGHTEEN DAY DEVOTIONAL

# PROVERBS

XVIII

## Discussion and Reflection

1. Proverbs 12:15 describes the fool as someone who believes his own way is right, while the wise man seeks counsel -- how do you discern which voices in your life are trustworthy sources of godly wisdom?
2. Ps. Jesse describes how foolishness can produce self-deception, leading us to believe our motives are pure when God sees something different. What practices help you examine the true intentions behind your decisions?
3. Proverbs 11 teaches that safety is found in an abundance of counselors, yet we often seek out people who will confirm what we already want to do. How can you cultivate relationships that offer honest, God-centered accountability?
4. James's instruction to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger is a form of wisdom. Can you identify a recent situation where applying this principle might have changed the outcome?
5. The parable of the two builders in Matthew 7 suggests that a life can look solid on the outside while its foundation is unstable. What does it look like to honestly evaluate whether your life is built on obedience to God's word or on something else?
6. The servant in Matthew 18 experienced extraordinary forgiveness but immediately refused to extend that same mercy to another. In what relationships do you find it hardest to let the grace you have received reshape the grace you give?
7. Ps. Jesse noted that we cannot genuinely give what we have not first received, whether love, compassion, or forgiveness. How does a deeper understanding of God's forgiveness toward you personally change your capacity to forgive others?
8. Proverbs 13:14 describes the teaching of the wise as a fountain of life. How does the pursuit of wisdom in your own life create a ripple effect on those within your sphere of influence, including family, friends, and community?

## Practical Challenge:

*Here are a few ways to help activate key next steps this week:*

- **Pursue godly counsel.** Identify one decision you are currently navigating. Rather than going only to someone who will affirm what you already want to do, intentionally seek out a trusted, biblically grounded person in your life and ask for their honest perspective.
- **Practice the James 1 principle.** For the next week, before responding in a conversation that triggers a strong emotional reaction, pause and ask yourself: Am I listening to understand, or am I preparing to respond? Journal what you notice about your own patterns.
- **Examine an area of self-reliance.** Identify one area of your life where you have been operating largely on your own strength and wisdom without bringing it before God in prayer. Begin bringing that area to God daily this week and ask him to direct your steps.
- **Take a step toward forgiveness.** If there is a person in your life you have been withholding forgiveness from, spend time this week reflecting on the grace God has extended to you. Ask the Holy Spirit to soften your heart toward that person. This does not necessarily mean an immediate conversation, but it begins with a willingness of heart.