

A watercolor illustration of a forest scene with several evergreen trees and a body of water in the foreground. The colors are muted, featuring shades of grey, teal, and light brown.

WISDOM LITERATURE

reflection guide

Week 5

What is Wisdom Literature?

Wisdom literature is an Old Testament genre that contains a collection of wise proverbs, moral teachings, poems, life observations, and testimonies that are meant to guide the reader along the path of “wisdom” that leads to a life of *shalom* in Christ. Traditionally, the Old Testament books Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon are considered wisdom literature.

What Is Shalom?

The word *Shalom* is a Hebrew word meaning “peace” and “wholeness.” In **Proverbs 3.17**, wisdom is depicted as a woman whose “paths all lead to *shalom*”. The promise of Scripture is that those who follow the Lord’s path of wisdom will inherit a life of *shalom* - a life of peace and wholeness in Christ.

How Do I Use This Guide?

This 7-week guide is designed to help you be with Jesus as you interact with wisdom literature, reflect personally, and pray with intention. For each week, there are four different movements: *Centering Prayer, Scripture Reading, Personal Reflection, and Realigning Prayer.*

Each movement should be done at your own pace and at your own time. You can do all the movements in one sitting or (as we recommend) space them out in the week.

Keep in mind that this is not meant to be something you work to accomplish, but instead a practice to enjoy, as you be with, become like, and love like Jesus.

WISDOM IN WORDS

WEEK FIVE
May 10 – May 16

Instructions

Interact with the following four movements at your own pace throughout the week.

Key Verse

*Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits
- Proverbs 18.21*

Movement #1 | Centering Prayer

Spend a dedicated amount of time (however long is good for you personally) where you are intentionally focusing your full attention on the Lord in **silence, solitude, and stillness**.

Find a comfortable spot where you can safely be in solitude for the duration of the time you've set aside. Do your best to sit still and avoid speaking. Take deep breaths and try to quiet your mind as best you can. The purpose of this is to simply be present with the Lord during this time.

When you are ready, spend a few minutes repeating aloud or writing this verse down: "***The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.***" - ***Proverbs 1:7***

Movement #2 | Scripture Reading

As you read the following, write down or highlight anything that stands out to you: **Proverbs 12.17–26, Proverbs 15.1–5, Proverbs 16.24, Proverbs 18.20–21.**

In your own words, how would you define what wisdom literature says about the words we choose to use.

Movement #3 | Personal Reflection Questions

Spend a few minutes reflecting on these questions. This would be a great time to journal if that helps you process.

What is Resonance?

Feeling a deep alignment with God and His path of wisdom.

What is Resistance?

Feeling a tension in your alignment with God and His path of wisdom.

Reflection Questions

Where do you feel "resonance" with God in how you speak?

Where do you feel "resistance" with God in how you speak?

What do you need to do to realign with God's Wisdom?

Movement #4 | Realigning Prayer

For this fourth movement, take a walk or find a comfortable place to relax. Bring to mind your reflection responses, praying through them and asking the Lord for His wisdom and guidance over your next steps and the decisions ahead of you. Ask him to lead you in a life of righteous living.

When you're ready, read or listen to **Proverbs 3.5-8**. If you'd like, use this Scripture as a guide in praying to your Father.

Wisdom Quote

*"Your mouth is a thermometer that reveals
the temperature of your heart"*
- **Kris Vallotton**

Recommended Resources For A Deeper Dive

- › **Podcast:** *The Bible Project: Proverbs: The Art Of Living*
- › **Book:** *The War Of Words* by Paul David Tripp

Family Activity

STICKY WORDS!

For this week's activity, gather in the living room and supply everyone with a pen and a stack of sticky notes. When you say go, everyone takes one of their sticky notes and writes one or two words to describe someone in the room. After each person has written the word, they'll go stick the note on that person! Repeat this process until everyone runs out of sticky notes! If you want to make it a game, you can add a timer and whoever writes the most words wins! After you do this activity, take the time to discuss how powerful encouraging words can be. *If your kids aren't able to read or write feel free to change it to doodles instead of words!

Movement #3 | Personal Reflection Thought

Please read the following and respond to the reflection questions provided.

How many words in a day do you speak? Or maybe a better question is, what words do you speak? It's estimated that the average person says about 16,000 words per day. It can be easy to admire a believable statistic like this, but inevitably brush it off as "Okay, cool, but it's not that important. I mean, at the end of the day, words are just words. Right?" Everyone knows that words are not just words. Words can either feel like a gift or a dagger.

According to the wisdom of Proverbs 18:20-21, words are more than just words; they hold the power of life and death. Our words can shape our lives and our relationships - either bringing about life or bringing about death. Your words can either resemble the watering of a single flower in a garden bed, or they can resemble a single spark igniting a blazing forest fire. How would you describe what your words resemble?

To use wisdom in our words, we must understand that our tongue acts like a rudder - it's a small device that holds the power of direction. So, which direction are you going? Which direction are you wanting to go, and is your "rudder" guiding you along that direction?