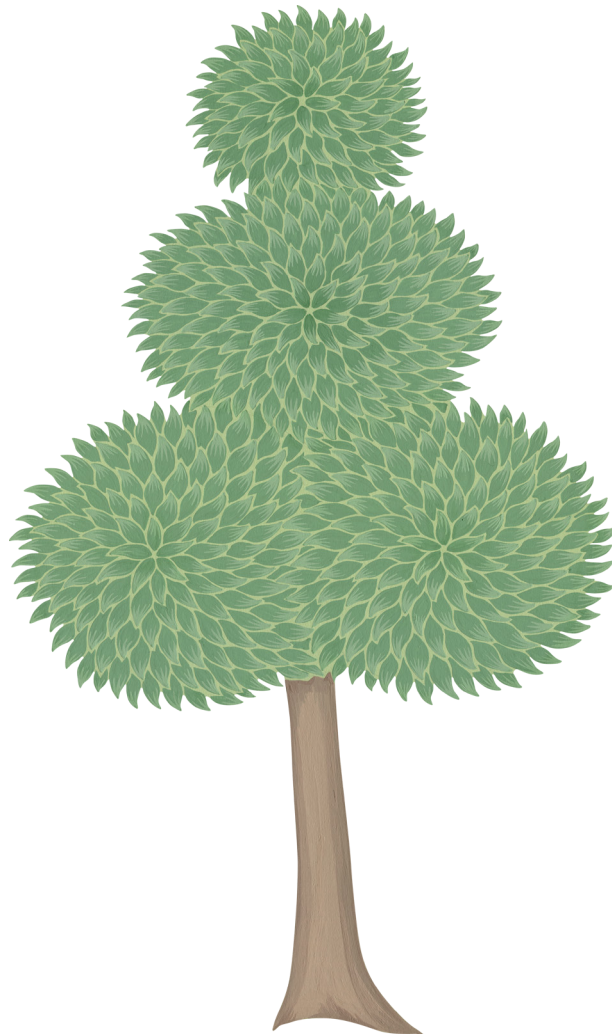
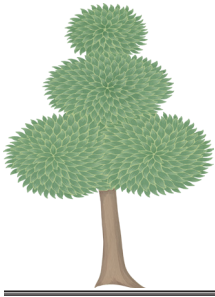


Proverbs

THE PROTECTIVE POWER OF WISDOM





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If you could go back and tell your younger self some words of wisdom, what would they be? I am sure we have all thought this at some point, regardless of our age. If I only knew then what I know now, I would have _____ (fill in your blank). In the four decades God has blessed me with in this life, I know that I can reflect on many situations where if I had some words of wisdom or, in some cases, applied the wisdom that was given to me, I may not have made some of the mistakes I did. Suppose I had not said that one thing, the relationship would not have been strained. I should have made the right choice in that situation. If only I would not have allowed those emotions to take over. Baking powder is not a replacement for baking soda! (I can't be the only one!)

Many of us learn lessons from experience, but there is something to be said about learning from example and the wisdom of others. Solomon asked God to bless him with wisdom, and as a result, God blessed him in many areas of his life. 1 Kings 3:11-14 states:

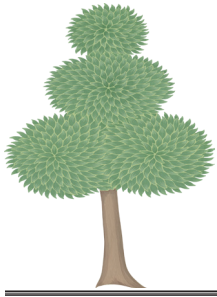
Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

When we seek God's wisdom first, obey his commandments, and apply it, we can sense a protective power of wisdom over our lives. The book of Proverbs is one of those instruction books that I wish I would have read as a teenager, although I am quite sure that those feathered bangs would have still existed thanks to my mom's 80's fashion sense. As we journey through this week's lesson, we will be studying Proverbs 2, 3, and 4. The New King James translation is used for these questions. As we move through the study, we will focus on a single chapter and interpret several verses in hopes that we can move forward in the protective power of wisdom.

David Guzik's Bible commentary regarding the book of Proverbs states, "If true wisdom can be gained by human effort, energy, and ingenuity (like the rare and precious metals of the earth), then the fear of the Lord is not essential to obtaining wisdom. But if it comes from God's revelation, then the right relationship with Him is the key to wisdom."

The fear of the Lord is the foundation of wisdom. We must possess this while we are pursuing wisdom. True wisdom is found in the One who created it. When we are in God's Word, He reveals knowledge and understanding for sound wisdom.

Speaking about the the fear of the Lord can put people off at times. When the Bible references this type of fear, it is saying to be in awe of the Lord, to have such reverence for His holiness that we cannot help but embrace His Word and wisdom. Several other scriptures refer to this statement.



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Write out the following scriptures:

Job 28:28

Psalm 111:10

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Embracing the fear of God gives us an open mind to receive His wisdom. *Father, we pray that our hearts and minds are in awe of Your wisdom, and may we be guided this week by what you want to reveal to us. Amen!*

Proverbs 2

Our theme verse for this season's Bible study comes from Proverbs 2. Now I did not know this when we were given an opportunity to pray about what lesson we wanted to teach, and I would be lying if I said I didn't feel a little pressure when I realized the verse was in my lesson. But...God! Let us jump right into it!

Write out our theme verse, Proverbs 2:7.

"He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly."

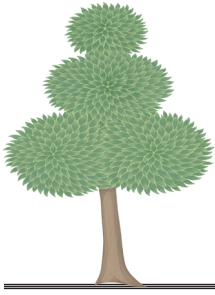
God not only gives us wisdom with His Word, but He is actively working to guard and defend those who walk in His ways.

1. What is the definition and purpose of a **shield**?
2. What is the definition of **uprightly**?

Write out the following scriptures:

Genesis 15:1

2 Samuel 22:3



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Psalm 18:2

Psalm 18:30

Psalm 115:9-11

Psalm 119:114

Psalm 144:2

Ephesians 6:16

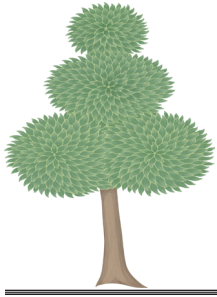
As we can see all throughout scripture, our Mighty Father is a shield for us, and that shield begins with His wisdom. Let us continue with a few other verses in Proverbs 2.

Write out Proverbs 2:10-11.

“When wisdom enters your heart and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; understanding will keep you...”

3. What happens when we gain wisdom?
4. What is the definition of **discretion**?
5. How does discretion preserve you personally?

We must seek wisdom and imprint it on our hearts and minds. We must search for it to find it, and that may look different for everyone. When we lift our voices to God while searching for that wisdom, we must receive it and treasure it in our hearts. The next step is more of a challenge, which is the application of the wisdom. We can have a whole toolbox of knowledge, but if we do not open the box and utilize the tool, wisdom will not develop.



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Write out Proverbs 2:20-21.

“So you may walk in the way of goodness, and keep to the paths of righteousness. For the upright will dwell in the land, and the blameless will remain in it...”

This Proverb references Deuteronomy 11:8-9 – *“Therefore you shall keep every commandment which I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and possess the land which you cross over to possess, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD swore to give your fathers, to them and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. For the upright will dwell in the land...”*

6. What is our reward for walking in goodness and keeping the paths of righteousness?

7. What helps you to keep the path of righteousness?

We only went over a few of the verses in this chapter. Please share with your group any others that struck a chord.

When we recall verses that are imprinted on our hearts and in our memory, Proverbs 3:5-6 tends to come to most people’s minds, but Proverbs 3 is rich in wisdom.

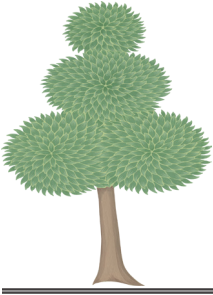
Write out Proverbs 3:1.

“My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands...”

8. What law is Solomon referring to?

9. How do we keep God’s Word and commands in our hearts?

10. Are there areas where you struggle with being obedient to keeping God’s commands?



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Write out Proverbs 3:5-6.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your understanding; in all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

Guzik’s commentary states, “The word translated ‘trust’ in Proverbs 3:5 means ‘to lie helpless, facedown.’ It pictures a servant waiting for the master’s command in readiness to obey, or a defeated soldier yielding himself to the conquering general.” (Wiersbe)

11. What are other definitions of **trust**?

12. What is the definition of **understanding**?

13. What areas do you need to fully acknowledge God and put your trust in Him for?

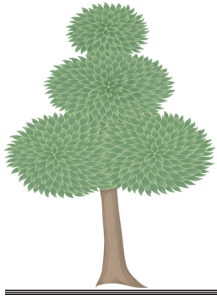
14. How has God directed your paths in the past?

God does not expect us to be perfect in our ability to trust Him. He knows our human nature, and He petitions us to come to Him with an unwavering child-like faith, which will provide us with love and wisdom. When we fully surrender to trusting God in everything, our paths will be directed, and a peace that surpasses all understanding will be upon us!

Write out Proverbs 3:11-12.

“My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor detest His correction; for whom the Lord loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.”

15. What is the definition of **chastening**?



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16. In what ways has the Lord shown correction to you?

17. How can you encourage others that the correction from the Lord is necessary for obtaining wisdom?

When our Father corrects us, we will have a feeling of discomfort. Our flesh rises when sin is exposed, but that feeling is necessary for us to get back on the path God has planned for us. When our Gracious Father sees our obedience to His correction, He delights in you, Dear Daughter!

Write out Proverbs 3:31.

“Do not envy the oppressor, and choose none of his ways...”

18. What is the definition of an **oppressor**?

19. What does Matthew 10:25-28 say about oppressing others?

20. What are some of the ways of the wicked that we should avoid?

There might be times in our lives that we see others succeeding in ways that are offensive to the Lord, but keep heart, ladies, for we know that God is the vindicator. He instructs us in Galatians 6:9, “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”

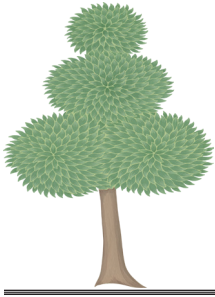
What other verses spoke to you in this chapter? Share with your group.

As we come to our last chapter in this week’s study, Proverbs 4 focuses on the wisdom Solomon has received from his father David and how to distinguish wisdom from knowledge. I once heard that wisdom is the application of knowledge. As we discussed earlier, we can have the tools, but they are useless unless we use them.

Write out Proverbs 4:6.

“Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you.”

21. What will be the result if we embrace and love wisdom?



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22. What are some synonyms for **preserve**?

23. How has God's wisdom protected you?

This verse reminds us of our theme verse. God's wisdom is a shield of protection and keeps us safe.

Write out Proverbs 4:13-14.

"Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life. Do not enter the path of the wicked and do not walk in the way of evil."

24. Why must we take a firm hold of wisdom?

25. Are there paths you have walked in that have led to temptation to sin? How did you get back on the right path?

We need to cling to instruction and not walk in the ways of the wicked. One part of wisdom is knowing our weaknesses. The easiest way to avoid temptation is to not put ourselves in circumstances where we are tempted. If we do not take a step in that direction, we will not follow the path.

For our last verse, write out Proverbs 4:23.

"Put away from you a deceitful mouth and put perverse lips far from you."

James 3:8 says, *"But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."*

26. List other verses that speak on having control over our speech. This will vary for each of us.

27. *"Out of the mouth, the heart speaks,"* Matthew 12:34. Are there any areas in your heart that need correction for the mouth to speak encouragement?

We have just begun our journey of Proverbs, and undoubtedly, we will dissect the infinite wisdom that our Great Lord is bestowing upon us.

Lord, may we heed Your correction and wisdom, for we know it is Your love for us that is the motivation. Thank You for Your wisdom, God, and may we embed Your words on our hearts and minds. Amen!

