

Selected Proverbs



“God’s Sweet Wisdom For Busy Lives”



Bible Studies
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Selected Proverbs

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Proverbs Chapter 1

"Help!
How Do I Know the Right Thing to
Do?"

Proverbs 1

Questions to Help You Think Through the Chapter

"Help! - How do I know the right thing to do?"

1. Verses 1-6 give us eight reasons King Solomon wrote the Proverbs...What are they?

- :2 _____
- :2 _____
- :3 _____
- :4 _____
- :4 _____
- :5 _____
- :5 _____
- :6 _____

2. King Solomon was the primary author of this book - but he also gathered together proverbs written by other people. Who were some of the other authors of the book's sections?

- ☐ Proverbs 30:1 _____
- ☐ Proverbs 31:1 _____
- ☐ Proverbs 22:17 and 24:23 _____

3. And...there were other people involved in actually putting the book together, too:

- ☐ Proverbs 25:1

4. Verse 7 tells us that we need the "fear of the Lord" before our questions can be answered...

- ☐ what does that mean?
- ☐ Do you have it?
- ☐ What is a fool?



□ And how can you tell if someone is a fool?

5. (verses 8 & 9) If you are fortunate, at what age does instruction in wisdom begin?

6. (verses 10-19) What kind of people are our children (or us) supposed to avoid?

7. What kinds of things do these "sinners" do?

:11

:13

:16

:17

:19

8. (verses 220&21) How hard is it to be wise?

9. (verses 22 & 23) What do you have to be willing to accept before wisdom can be poured out into you?

10. (verses 24-32) What happens when you see the wise thing to do, but reject it? (see also Romans 1:18-32)

11. (verse 33) They say women desire security above almost anything else. What is the smartest thing any of us can do to ensure our own security?



Questions you need to have answered:

Just jot down a few of the questions you have - the ones you would ask God if you had a few minutes in His presence. (Assuming that you could even squeek out a question if you were standing before Him.)

Proverbs 1

"Help! How Do I Know the Right Thing to Do?"

Answer Key

This collection of Proverbs, assembled mostly by King Solomon, is equivalent to today's "counselors". They are practical advice for the difficult situations we all find ourselves in from time to time. You know....if your Mother-in-law is coming for dinner for the first time, and you really are stressing out about it, it might be nice to have an older, more experienced woman share her words of wisdom about how she survived a similar ordeal. That's the Proverbs. Little nuggets of practical advice....from God Himself.

The advice in Proverbs is sometimes hard to follow - it might "go against the grain" occasionally. But one thing is guaranteed. When followed, God's wisdom is always "sweet". In other words, you can't go wrong taking this advice. It always brings peace inside and gives you hope for the future. When something is going wrong in your life, it is so sweet to know what God would have you do, and then to be able to look forward to the future.

"My son, eat honey because it is good, and the honeycomb which is sweet to your taste; so shall the knowledge of wisdom be to your soul; if you have found it, there is a prospect, and your hope will not be cut off." Proverbs 24:13-14

1. Verses 1-6 give us eight reasons King Solomon wrote the Proverbs...What are they?

:2 **To know wisdom & instruction** (example: how many of us would like to know what to eat and have the discipline to do it?)

:2 **Perceive the words of understanding** (we will need to understand the words we are reading...a heart understanding, not just the head)

:3 **Receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment and equity** (so that we are not continually getting into trouble, or "going off the deep end") (am I being fair in my dealings with



other people?) (The word "receive" also can be translated "acquire", which has the idea of plucking grapes and eating them. In other words....receiving wisdom is not a spectator sport. You participate. You are intentional)

:4 **giving prudence to the simple** (Good judgment, or good sense, for those who are not necessarily "smart" or "experienced"...maybe even gullible. Proverbs are easy-to-understand guidelines for those who may be limited in their abilities, but still able to obey God.)

:4 **To the young man knowledge and discretion** (Discretion is the idea of having the ability to plan ahead and plot a course of action.....so that if you are young, your youth will not be despised - so that you do not have to wait until you are grown to serve God - sowing your wild oats doesn't have to happen)

:5 **let the wise hear and increase learning** (if you have walked with God a long time, and teach and serve, you can still add more to your "repertoire")

:5 **let the wise attain wise counsel** (no matter how many times I have read a passage, I always get something new out of it....this is not head knowledge, it is heart knowledge - and my heart can always grow. The word "counsel" has the idea of "steering". ...I can be "steered" by others who walk with God and desire to follow His ways."

:6 **for understanding proverbs, enigmas (parables), sayings and riddles** (God doesn't give us anything in His Word which is too hard to understand) (ex: Riddles in Revelation..., parables in the Gospels.... He explains them)

2. King Solomon was the primary author of this book - but he also gathered together proverbs written by other people. Who were some of the other authors of the book's sections?

- ☐ Proverbs 30:1 Someone named Agur
- ☐ Proverbs 31:1 King Lemuel
- ☐ Proverbs 22:17 and 24:23 Other wise people from whom King Solomon gathered wise sayings.



3. And...there were other people involved in actually putting the book together, too:

- Proverbs 25:1 The Men of Hezekiah (who would have lived about 250 years after Solomon) put together a whole collection of King Solomon's sayings which he had not included in his own attempt to collect proverbs. (chapters 25-29 are what they gathered together) These men might also have tacked on the sayings of Agur (Chapter 30) and King Lemuel (Chapter 31).

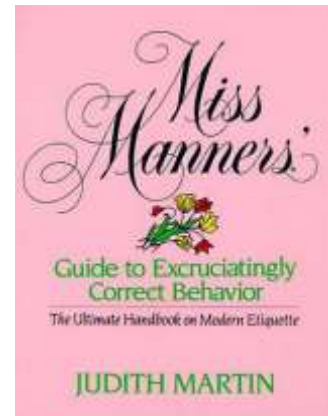
4. Verse 7 tells us that we need the "fear of the Lord" before our questions can be answered...

- What does that mean? (Beginning a relationship with God is the first step forward)
- Do you have it?
- What is a fool? (someone who actively hates and avoids wisdom)
- And how can you tell if someone is a fool?

5. (verses 8 & 9) If you are fortunate, at what age does instruction in wisdom begin? (Childhood - if you didn't have that privilege as a child - give it to your children. If it's too late to do that, give it to your grandchildren - or to someone else's children)

The Father's instruction and the mother's teaching are irreplaceable. Worth so much more than that college education you thought you had to give them.

- "The Joy of the Lecture". - Miss Manners - Judith Martin - wrote a book quite a few years ago..."Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior" If you can still find it today, you will enjoy it. In it she talks about the Joy of the Lecture - a pleasure of parenting sometimes neglected. To be able to sit your children down and just tell them what to do and why to do it and how to do it is



actually very pleasurable.

- A diamond necklace - this is what you are giving your children when you take the time to teach them God's wisdom. Don't be put off by those who would tell you your children won't want to hear such things. Of course they won't want to hear it....but that doesn't stop you from teaching them to brush their teeth, does it?

6. (verses 10-19) What kind of people are our children (or us) supposed to avoid? Sinners

7. What kinds of things do these "sinners" do?

:11 Those who would hurt someone else

:13 Those who would take what belongs to someone else

:16 Those who can hardly wait to be violent

:17 Those who just do senseless and stupid things (spreading a net in full view of the birds is just a stupid thing to do...this person is destined to fail, yet they still do it - like suicide bombers.)

:19 Those who are greedy

In Revelation 6:3&4, we see that one of the signs of the beginning of the Last 7 Years (the Tribulation Time) is that men begin to be more and more violent. Stay away from anything which dulls your senses about this. And teach your children to do the same.

8. (verses 220&21) How hard is it to be wise? ? (not hard at all - wisdom yells at you! - and look also at ch. 2, verses 1-11 - if you seek it, you will get it)

9. (verses 22 & 23) What do you have to be willing to accept before wisdom can be poured out into you? Rebuke. You have to open yourself up to criticism.

10. (verses 24-32) What happens when you see the wise thing to do, but reject it? (see also Romans 1:18-32) If you reject wisdom, you will eventually become blind to how messed up you are. You will have to live out

the results of your decisions and actions. Can't you be forgiven, though? Sure...but you don't get to choose when you will be willing to accept forgiveness. You may go years and years and years before the Lord finally taps you on the shoulder once again and offers you a chance to repent.)

11. (verse 33) They say women desire security above almost anything else. What is the smartest thing any of us can do to ensure our own security? (ask for wisdom - seek it - James 1:5-8 - but....don't ask for it if you just want to examine it - God doesn't give wisdom to channel surfers. He promises wisdom to those who are willing to do whatever He tells them to do.)

Now...how about the questions you need to have answered?

The following are a few which have come up in group discussions of this chapter:

How can I be an awesome grandmother?

Do I really need to lose weight? If so...how? If not...how can I stop feeling guilty about it?

How hard should I work...how much should I rest?

Should I have a "mentor" in my life? If so, who?

I don't have time to do everything I am supposed to do...much less to do the things I enjoy doing. Something is always being done half-way. What other choice do I have?

What are the guidelines for good parenting? Is there a list so I can see how I'm doing? How I've done? Can I undo or re-do things I should have done better?

I'm single....I don't want to be....how in the world do you find a decent man out there? What if I will always be single? How can I learn to live with that?

I want my life to count as I grow older - how do I do that? How do I do it with less energy, slower responses, and failing health?

You know where to find the answers, don't you?

Next Week we'll be Looking at the Contrast Proverbs in Chapter 11 if you want to read ahead.



Proverbs Chapter 11

"Contrasts"



Proverbs 11

A Chart to Help You Think Through the Chapter

"Contrasts"

Proverbs 10-15 are called the "Contrast Proverbs". Each verse first states a truth, and then just the opposite of that truth....or, the other way around...first it states a falsehood, and then the opposite of that falsehood. It's a great learning tool.

In class, we're going to read through and talk through each verse, or group of verses, in Chapter 11, just to give us a taste for the Contrast Proverbs.

If you are working through this chapter on your own, just fill out the following chart for each verse, and you'll see what there is to learn from this interesting chapter.

Here are some of the topics you will discover as you chew a little on these verses:

- ❖ Honesty
- ❖ Wealth
- ❖ Neighborhood
- ❖ Graciousness
- ❖ The Marketplace
- ❖ Fruit of living well



Proverbs Chapter 11

Contrasts

What is the most pressing, most frequently thought-about challenge you face at this time in your life? _____

Keep thinking about that as you read this chapter. Do you find anything which will help you look at that challenge differently?

	God says is Good	God says is Bad	Our Culture says:	What I do
:1				
:2				
:3				
:4				
:5&6				
:7&8				



	God says is Good	God says is Bad	Our Culture says:	What I do
:9				
:10&11				
:12				
:13				
:14				
:15				
:16				
:17				
:18				



	God says is Good	God says is Bad	Our Culture says:	What I do
:19				
:20-21				
:22				
:23				
:24&25				
:26				
:27				
:28				
:29				



	God says is Good	God says is Bad	Our Culture says:	What I do
:30&31				

What conclusions can you come to after studying this chapter of contrasts?

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐



The “Thirty Sayings”

...practical advice from a King To his Son who would someday be King.... Proverbs 22:17 – 24:22

If I were to ask you what things I should do to raise my children to be Godly people who could be leaders in our confused and mixed-up world, what would you say? And I’m not talking about just “nice” people, but true men and women of God who would be able to step out and lead...what would you say?

This collection of advice in Proverbs 22:17-24:22 for a soon-to-be leader begins with a few verses of introduction by the King to his Son. I’m going to put each verse in my own words:



“Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge” 22:17

In other words, don't just hear me, son, but really listen. Work at listening. Work at remembering what I say. Don't just let it roll over you. Grab it, wrestle it to the ground. Think about what it means and what actions you should take because of what I am about to tell you.

“For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; let them all be fixed upon your lips,” 22:18

You will experience pleasant things if you listen, keep, and speak the things I am going to tell you. Listen. Remember what I say. Repeat it.

“So that your trust may be in the LORD; I have instructed you today, even you.” 22:19

There is only one purpose for this advice. It is not so that you will be successful (though if you follow it you will). It is not so that you will be happy (though if you follow it you will). There is only one purpose for this advice. It is so that your trust may be in the LORD. Of all the things I have learned as King, this is the most important: There is only one thing in life that matters – trust in the LORD.

“Have I not written to you excellent things of counsels and knowledge, that I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth, that you may answer words of truth to those who send to you?” 22:20&21

When people come to you for leadership and help, only one answer will matter: the Truth. Words that you know for sure are the Truth. Your opinion will not matter for long. Your personality will not stay with them when they are out on their own. Your popularity will be worth nothing when they try to do the right thing and get knocked around for it.

They need the Truth more than they need water. Give them the truth....and here it is



#	Passage	Put it in Your Own Words
1	22:22-23	
2	22:24-25	
3	22:26-27	
4	22:28	



5	22:29	
6	23:1-3	
7	23:4-5	
8	23:6-8	



<i>9</i>	23:9	
<i>10</i>	23:10-11	
<i>11</i>	23:12	
<i>12</i>	23:13-14	



<i>13</i>	23:15-16	
<i>14</i>	23:17-18	
<i>15</i>	23:19-21	
<i>16</i>	23:22-25	



<i>17</i>	23:26-28	
<i>18</i>	23:29-35	
<i>19</i>	24:1-2	
<i>20</i>	24:3-4	



21	24:5-6	
22	24:7	
23	24:8-9	
24	24:10	



25	24:11-12	
26	24:13-14	
27	24:15-16	
28	24:17-18	



29	24:29-20	
30	24:21-22	

Answer Key Follows

*The Thirty Sayings
Answer Key*

#	Passage	Put it in Your Own Words
1	22:22-23	Don't Take Advantage of the Disadvantaged. Isaiah 1:17, James 1:27, Psalms 12:5, Leviticus 25:17, Job 5:16, Job 31:13-23, Prov. 17:5, Isaiah 11:44, Isaiah 41:17,18, Isaiah 61:1
2	22:24-25	Stay Away From Angry People Really? Even Glen Beck? Rush Limbaugh?
3	22:26-27	Don't borrow...Don't sign for someone who does If you don't have it, you can't give it
4	22:28	Don't Move the Boundaries Deuteronomy 19:14, Deuteronomy 27:17, Prov. 15:25 Boundary stones marked a person's property. Moving Stones was, in effect, stealing. Honesty. Record-keeping. Orderly. Teach people how to do their taxes.
5	22:29	Develop a Skill and Succeed My Mom used to tell me - you need something to fall back on. What should I major in? Should I go on to further education?



6	23:1-3	<p>Don't Focus on the Food.</p> <p>Good manners. Keep your eyes on what is really happening. Don't be naive</p>
7	23:4-5	<p>Don't Make Gaining Wealth Your Goal</p> <p>What should be the goal? Matthew 6:24</p>
8	23:6-8	<p>Don't Seek Selfish People as Friends</p> <p>You might be attracted to others' success or material things. Don't be. If their eyes aren't on God, don't join them in friendship.</p>
9	23:9	<p>Save Your Wisdom for Those Who Want to Hear it</p> <p>Matthew 7:6</p>
10	23:10-11	<p>Again...Don't Move the Boundary Stones</p> <p>Why does he say this twice?</p>



11	23:12	<p>What to Do Instead....</p> <p>If you are tempted to cheat in order to succeed, get educated and disciplined instead.</p>
12	23:13-14	<p>Discipline Your Children</p> <p>Yes, spank them. What happens when you are not brave enough to discipline? What happens when you are?</p>
13	23:15-16	<p>Be Sure Your Children Do Well and Speak Correctly.</p> <p>That is, if you want to have joy.</p>
14	23:17-18	<p>Don't Envy People Who Live in Sin</p> <p>People who live in sin are so messed up.</p>
15	23:19-21	<p>Don't Join Those Who Pig Out and Get Drunk</p> <p>Good advice for college-bound. Why participate in activities that lead you to poverty and no success...while you are going to school to be successful?</p>



16	23:22-25	<p>Listen to Your Mother and Father...and Not Just When You're Young.</p> <p>Bring them joy even into their old age by valuing wisdom as you walk through life.</p>
17	23:26-28	<p>Feast Your Eyes on God, Not On Sex</p> <p>Commit your eyes to God. They belong to Him. Look only at the things He would look at. Pornography will make you unfaithful in all of your doings.</p>
18	23:29-35	<p>Don't Love Alcohol. Don't Be Drunk.</p> <p>It will control you.</p>
19	24:1-2	<p>You Can Tell Who to Avoid By What They Plan and Devise</p> <p>If they are planning evil, stay away.</p>
20	24:3-4	<p>Wisdom is the Most Valuable Possession in Your Home</p> <p>Set your Bible out on the dining room table...or wherever you gather the most. Honor your Bibles.</p>



21	24:5-6	<p>Seek Wisdom More Than You Work Out at the Gym</p> <p>Priorities.</p>
22	24:7	<p>If you are a fool, You Will Never Have A Place Amongst Great Leaders.</p> <p>The leaders gathered at the gate. Fools don't know what to say.</p> <p>What is a fool? The one who despises God's ways.</p>
23	24:8-9	<p>Don't Plan Foolishness</p> <p>Don't make plans to do things any other way but God's way.</p>
24	24:10	<p>Move!</p> <p>When things get hard, keep going. Move! Don't just sit there and wait for someone else to take the lead.</p>
25	24:11-12	<p>Reach Out To Help The Needy.</p> <p>Ignorance is no excuse. Isaiah 58:6&7</p>
26	24:13-14	<p>Reach for the Snickers Bar</p> <p>What is your favorite candy? If you could eat it any time you wanted to, with no bad results, wouldn't you?</p>



27	24:15-16	<p>Don't Fight Against the Good Guys.</p> <p>You'll be on the losing side.</p> <p>Judas.</p>
28	24:17-18	<p>Even if He Deserves it, Don't Be Happy When Something Bad Happens to Your Enemy</p> <p>You wouldn't want the Lord to go easy on him, would you?</p>
29	24:19-20	<p>The Bad Guys Always Lose</p> <p>Don't make the mistake of thinking they may do OK in the end. They won't. Period.</p>
30	24:21-22	<p>Don't Be Rebellious</p> <p>And don't run with the rebellious. Rebellion is like witchcraft. It's trusting in your own knowledge instead of in His. It's worshipping a demon, not God. It's bad. Really bad.</p> <p>I Samuel 15:23, Jude 11</p>

Proverbs about Friendship

Ever wondered what in the world everyone sees
in Facebook?

When I created my Facebook page a few years ago I wanted to see what it was all about. What was the big “to-do” about this internet site? I put in my information and then added a few friends. Then added more...some people I really didn’t know all that well...and some I did know very well.

But I just didn’t get it. Why would all those people have any desire to know what I’m doing or thinking at 2:01 Friday afternoon? And why would I want them to know?

Eventually, the lightbulb went on. I was browsing through my Facebook page and again wondering why all these people would spend time with this endeavor, and suddenly I understood. Facebook is a place where people keep friendships alive.

What makes Facebook work is the thousands of people who have friends and want to let them know what they are doing at 2:01 Friday afternoon. Their friends care about that!

So if God wired us up to want and need friendships so much that we will find new and creative ways to simply communicate with our friends, then He must have told us something in His word about them – given us some guidelines or something, right?



Solomon was a King. A mighty ruler of a powerful country. And apparently he, too, had friends – and learned enough from his friendships that he could give us some pretty wonderful tidbits to guide us in our search for friends, our healing from friendships gone bad, and our privilege of giving friendship to others.

That's all this lesson is going to be – just a simple look at what God had taught Solomon about friendships.

Let's answer three questions:

- 1. What does it Mean to Be a Friend?**
- 2. How Do I Keep Friendships Alive?**
- 3. Should I Be Friends With Everyone?**

As we get started, first make a list of your good (really good) friends right now in your life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Then, expand that list with good friends you have had through your life, even though you may not be close right now:

- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.

Now – in class we are going to share some stories of friendships. If you are studying this lesson on your own, not part of a group, just think through some of the stories of friendships in your life. Like, for instance:

- A time when a friend helped you get back on the right path
- A time when a friend lifted you out of the dumps
- A time when a friend helped you make a decision
- Do you have a friend you know you could call at any time, no matter how long it's been since you saw them?
- How is a family member friendship different than any other friendship?
- Is your spouse your best friend?
- Did your children become your friends after they grew up?
- What kinds of things do you do for your friends?



- How often do you communicate with your close friends?
- How do you communicate? Facebook? E-mail? Letters? Phone calls? Texts? Visits? Meals together? Shopping together?
- What is your favorite thing to do with a friend?

If you take the time to think through some of your own stories of friendships, it will help you get more out of what we see in Proverbs. You'll be thinking of practical things to do to make your friendships richer with the Word.

1. What does it Mean to Be a Friend?

“A man who has friends must himself be friendly. But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24

- What do you think Solomon is trying to say in this verse? Look up Proverbs 17:17 and see if that adds anything to your understanding.

- Some Guidelines for what it means to be friendly:

26:20, 11:13, 17:9

19:11

20:3

22:11

25:17 (“seldom” means “rare”)

25:20

27:9

2. How Do I Keep Friendships Alive?

“The poor man is hated even by his own neighbor, but the rich has many friends.”

Proverbs 14:20

- Is Solomon saying a person has to get rich in order to have or keep friends?
- What are the things we can do to have and maintain friendships?

3:27&28

17:14

17:22

17:27&28

27:17

3. Should I Be Friends With Everyone?

“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray”

Proverbs 12:26

- The word “choose” in this verse has the idea of “cautious”. Is the Lord telling us to be cautious in the choosing of friends? If so, what things should we do to be cautious?
- Here’s how to be cautious: some people the Lord tells us to avoid:
 - 20:19
 - 26:18&19 (firebrands can easily ignite sheaves of grain)
 - 13:10



- 16:28
- 25:18
- 25:19

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever been friendless? Look at how Jesus responded to that same problem: Mark 14:50-72, John 21:15-19
2. Learning about friendships begins in childhood. What do you think parents or grandparents should do to help their children with friendships?
3. Is it realistic to expect our friends to be perfect? What should you do when friends fall short?
4. What does it take to be a friend of God? Like Moses, Abraham and the Apostles.
5. Have you ever been betrayed by a friend? See Job 19:13-29, Psalm 41:9-13, Matthew 26:47-56, II Timothy 4:14-17
6. Do you lack friends? What can you change?
7. Do you have friends you really should be avoiding? How can you do that without feeling guilty?
8. What is hard for you about being or making friends?
9. Your best friend is Jesus. How would you rate your communication with your best friend?
10. Do you know of anyone who needs a friend right now?



You Are The Counselor

50 Questions from Ordinary Life What is the answer from Proverbs?

1. How Much Can I say before it's Gossip? 6:16-19
2. I am looking for love in all the wrong places -
where is the right place? 5:18&19
3. How do I heal a broken friendship? 17:9 & 17
4. How do I take care of my parents as they age?
16:31, 20:29



5. What do I do about past sins which are bothering me? 28:13, 4:18
6. What is my responsibility to my neighbors? 14: 21
7. Sometimes my children drive me crazy - what should I do? 17:6, 22:6
8. How can I overcome depression? 3:5-8
9. What can I do to make sure I am financially secure? 1:33, 28:27

10. How important is it to be pure in my sex life? 6:23-33
11. I'm afraid that if I do things God's way I will be unhappy... 2:10
12. I'm afraid to share my faith. 28:1
13. Should I run for public office? 28:2, 28:5, 29:2
14. It seems like the bad guys always win. 28:4&5
15. If I'm poor, does that mean God is not blessing me? 28:6 & 11



16. I know I'm doing the wrong thing, but God still loves me, so I'm going to keep on doing it.
28:9 & 14
17. I have been put in a position of responsibility - are there any temptations for me which I should watch out for? 28:16
18. Should I tell my friend she is heading down the wrong path? Isn't that judging?
28:23
19. My Mother has alzheimer's and is in a nursing home. I take care of her money. Would it be such a crime for me to use some of her money for my pressing needs right now? She would never even know. 28:24

20. My heart tells me to leave my husband and go with a man who is much nicer to me. 28:26
21. If I give to the poor, I will not have enough for me and for my future. 28:27
22. I've had many people tell me I'm doing the wrong thing, but I'm happy, and I don't want to change. 29:1
23. In order to get things done in some countries, a person just has to offer bribes. Is this wrong? 29:4
24. People really like me because I am always telling them how great they are...even if they're not. I would say I speak positively. 29:5



25. I know a Christian who is living a horrible, sinful lifestyle. He won't listen to any of the other Christians who have talked to him about it. Should I try? 29:9&11
26. Should I spank my child? Should I just let him learn his own lessons? 29:15&17
27. How important are churches? 29:18
28. I am a person who is quick to anger. Is this wrong? 14:17, 29:20 &22

29. I have an opportunity to enter into a business transaction that will make a lot of money. It's an honest business deal, but I know the people I will be partnering with have been known to cheat sometimes. What should I do? 29:24
30. I have a teacher I just don't like. She doesn't like me either. I have to get a good grade in this teacher's class. What should I do? 25:6&7, 25:11
31. Quite often I say things I wish later I hadn't said. It just seems to pop out before I think. What should I do? 25:4
32. I have a problem with pride. I know I should consider others better than myself (like it says in Philippians 2:3), but honestly, I know I'm better than just about anyone I can think of. What should I do? 27:2, 19 & 21

33. I have an eating problem. Does the Bible say anything about eating? 25:16
34. I'm moving to a new job, a new city, a new place. Does the Bible have any help for me as I try to find new friends? 27:7
35. There is a very popular girl in my church. Everyone wants to be friends with her, and I admit, I do too. But she is mean, and does all the things I know I shouldn't do. Is it wrong for me to want to be her friend? 26:1-12
36. I think everyone is expecting me to work too hard. I don't want to work hard. Am I wrong? 26:13-16



37. When is it gossip....and when is it just talking with friends? 26:20, 26:22
38. How do I deal with someone who lies to me all the time? 26:24&25 25:12
39. How can I be a good friend to someone very dear to me who has had a great heartache? 25:13
40. Does the Bible have any advice for us to be better wives? 25:24, 25:15, 27:17
41. I have messed up my life, and have a bad reputation. What should I do so that I will have a good reputation? 25:4, 25:25, 25:27

42. If I do the right thing in this situation I'm in, I know I will lose money...or worse...I may lose my job. What should I do? 20:7
43. I don't really expect my children to make good decisions until they are older. Let kids be kids. 20:11
44. I just love to sleep in in the morning. I can't seem to get to work on time. My kids sometimes don't get breakfast before they get on the bus. I can't seem to change. 20:13
45. As I look forward to college and beyond, is there a career the Lord would want for me? Do I go for the highest-paying job? Do I seek a college education? Do I go to a Bible College? What is most important to learn to get ready for my life? 20:15

46. I stole something from a store in the mall. Now I feel guilty and afraid all the time. 20:17
47. The Bible says "Honor your Father & Mother". Does that mean for my whole life? 20:20
48. I have been wronged. My first reaction is to make this person suffer. Am I wrong to want to do that? 20:22
49. My friend has hurt me badly by telling me something about myself that is true. I am angry that my friend would be willing to hurt me. 20:30
50. Our government is very ungodly. I am afraid of what will happen in our world if it keeps going the way it is. Isn't God in charge? Why doesn't He bring about a change? 21:1



Proverbs Chapter 31

"An Uncommon Woman"

Proverbs 31 An Uncommon Woman

I'd like to ask you to consider being "An Uncommon Woman". A woman so unique that some day people will look at you with shock in their eyes and ask: "What is so different about her?"

There are two ways to do this...I am recommending the 2nd.

The first way would be to look around you and decide that you don't want to be like what you see. To see apathy and decide to be intense. Or to see pettiness and decide to be live on a larger plane. Or to see immorality and decide to be pure. Or to see self-centeredness and decide to focus on others. I don't think this is a powerful-enough way to approach this challenge. If you do this, you are always trying to not be somebody ...but never knowing who you are trying to be.

The 2nd way is to look directly into the face of God, and then ask Him to change you into the woman you see reflected in His eyes. Because He already sees the uncommon woman you could be.

The only way I know to look directly into His eyes is to look into His Word, so I have chosen Proverbs 31 as our window into the face of God.

:10 "A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies."

Diamonds are a girls' best friend. Gold is worth dying for. That's what the world says. But God sees diamonds and rubies and knows how common they are. The streets in eternity will be paved with them. We'll be walking on it and not even thinking about it.

So here's how to look at things which sparkle: There will come a day in each of our lives when we could stoop down pick up a cast-off ruby, put it on our finger, or skip it across the pond. **Pleasant...but certainly not valuable.**



:11& 12 "Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life."

Someone around whom I can relax. I'll bet each of us could count on one hand the number of people who fit into that category. Even with most of those people we call friends we exercise a little caution..."I might get hurt if I reveal too much."

Wives hold the self-esteem of their husbands in the palm of their hands. When he finally trusts you enough to reveal who he really is, ask the Lord to help you never, never to turn his weaknesses back on him as a weapon to make yourself understood, or to get what you want.

:13-15: "She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls."

Ahhh....a hard worker, who can find? We live in the middle of a culture which values time off, time alone, vacations, having my own space, hobbies, entertainment, and, of course, retirement. ...If you work too hard you make other people look bad...or if you work too hard you may wear yourself out so that you don't have time to enjoy your time off. The Uncommon Woman gets up early and works hard. **She's not afraid of it.**

:16 "She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard."

And she doesn't necessarily just work in the home! She buys and sells real estate...does a little farming....invests in commodities. **The uncommon woman is not a stereotype. She has talents and has learned skills. And she uses them.**

:17-19 "She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers."



She knows how to do stuff! Don't you just hate the picture of the woman who is afraid of the plumbing?...who doesn't know how to turn the water off under the house when a pipe springs a leak?

:20 *"She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy."*

She understands those who need. She finds a way to help when someone needs help. And in this crazy world we live in she also asks God for the wisdom to know what kind of help is really help. What kind of need is really need. For there are many, many out there who are becoming professional in letting others do for them what they could be doing for themselves.

:21 *"When it snows she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet."*

Her family is cared for. Even though she works hard. Even though she holds down a job. Even though.... The Lord does not expect her to be "Super-Mom" who never says no to anything anyone wants. He knows **she can tell what it important and make sure it gets done.** Warm clothes when it snows. Something green on your plate every once in a while.

:22 *"She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple."*

She's beautiful. And her house and her clothes shout it to the world. It's not about looking like everyone else. It's not about size and weight. It's not about the best house in the elite neighborhood. It's about knowing something...a really well-kept secret. **Every woman is utterly gorgeous.** And then dressing like you know it.

:23 *"Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land."*

Do you know why her husband is respected at the city gates? Because the one person in all the world who knows all his secrets would never utter those secrets to a single soul. Not her mother. Not her best friend. **His secrets are safe with her.** The uncommon woman



might love to talk...but she has drawn a line in the sand...this far, and no farther.

:24 & 25 "She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come."

This is my favorite. The uncommon woman does so much, has such amazing character, works so hard. She is strong and has dignity. And **she can have a good chuckle about the future** – it doesn't scare her – because she has come to see that she didn't get herself to where she is now...she can't pat herself on the back. The One Who has changed her into what she could be today...will be there tomorrow, too. **Security. The desire for it is supposed to be the one thing we women all have in common. The uncommon woman laughs about it.**

:26 & 27 "She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness."

Our world is characterized by lies and laziness, did you know that? How unique is the woman who can be **counted on to know where to find something in scripture...and who is the first one out of her seat to do what needs to be done?**

:28 "Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: many women do noble things, but you surpass them all. Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

Rewards. If you could pick what is behind door #1, door #2, or door #3, what would you hope is back there? It would be praise. Praise you didn't ask for. Praise you didn't even know was coming. **Praise which you could receive with a smile, and then turn around and lovingly offer right back to your Savior...knowing He is the One Who changed you at some point over the years into an Uncommon Woman.**

Proverbs 8

"The Ways of God"

I have my ways. So do you.

I handle a crisis in a certain way. I smile in a certain way. I laugh at odd moments sometimes. I don't cry easily. I don't like to be watched. I melt inside at the touch of a Golden Retriever. I always try to find out what someone is thinking. I don't like to wear jewelry. When I've had enough people contact, I fade away into myself.

Those are just my ways. No reason why you would want to be like me, though. You are uniquely you, and I am uniquely me.

God has His ways, too, but they are more than quirky and interesting. They are desirable. We want to have His ways be our ways, because if they are, we are supremely, insanely happy.

The book of Proverbs is simply our window to see God's ways. As we've talked about it, read verses, and given God's advice to one another over the

last seven weeks, most of us are coming away with a little better idea of God's ways...and most of us have developed a bigger appetite to be like Him. To let His ways be our ways.

The Book of Proverbs calls God's ways "wisdom". And in Proverbs Chapter 8 we see when "wisdom" first came to be:

8:1-3 *Does not wisdom cry out,
And understanding lift up her voice?
² She takes her stand on the top of the high hill,
Beside the way, where the paths meet.
³ She cries out by the gates, at the entry of the city,
At the entrance of the doors:*

1. :1-3 Where are all the places wisdom cries out?

At the top of high hills. Along the side of roads. At the gates of the city. Wherever people enter the city. And wherever people enter a home.

In other words - wisdom finds a way to communicate who she is to people everywhere - in a million different ways.

Very often, I'm the one responsible for communications at the churches my husband Pastors. That means I try to find a way to let people know what's going on, what resources are available, what activities are coming up. I use the Sunday bulletin, and also the bulletin boards at church. I use e-mails and the church's Facebook page. I use our website, and e-mails in conjunction with the website, so that people can get an e-mail telling them about an event, and then click right through to the website where they can register for the event. I use phone calls and snail mail. I communicate with the Small Group Leaders so they can communicate to those in their Small Groups. I get news from ministry leaders, and pass it on to everyone in that ministry.

But of all the things I do in church to communicate, I know that the absolutely, hands-down, most effective way is for me to look another person in the eye and talk. We affectionately call this method of communication



"eyeball-to-eyeball". In our day of so many ways to get the word out, still the best way to pass on news is one person to another, face-to-face, eyeball-to-eyeball.

Why? Because people respond to people. The spark in you kindles the spark in me, and I am much more interested in your news if it comes from you directly.

I saw a great example of that today. In my Wednesday Small Group one of the women had seen an e-mail about the upcoming trip to the Creation Museum. She decided she wanted to go, and asked her friend if she was going, too. Her friend hadn't really thought much about it, but now that she knew her friend was going, all of a sudden it sounded like fun. And then they made plans together to get registered and go on the trip.

That's how it works.

Wisdom is much the same. She cries loudly at every portal where some human being might be listening, but the hands-down most effective way for wisdom to reach a person is through the eyes and words of another person. A hunger for the ways of God usually comes when one person sees another person living in God's ways, or when one person tells another person about the ways of God.

I say all that to say: After just a few short weeks in Proverbs, don't let the Proverbs slide into your used-up calendar pages. Live what you have read. Speak what you have learned. Keep the truth alive by communicating it to someone else.

This last Thursday I was asked to come speak to a Homeschooling group. They were starting a unit on the Great Depression, and the woman who contacted me asked me to quote some memorized scripture for them, so that they would know that even during a Great Depression there were still avenues for Believers in Jesus to have hope.

It was really fun.



I chose 2 passages to quote for them. First, was John Chapter 1. The second was 3 chapters in Revelation: 1, 4 & 5.

I told them, first, who John was - one of Jesus 12 Apostles. And then I filled them in on a couple of details about John's Gospel - like the fact that the other three Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, had already been written and circulated for a few years before John wrote his account. John wrote his Gospel specifically for one reason: So that people would know, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that Jesus was/is God. Not just a great prophet. Not just a great man. Not just a miracle-worker. Not just one able to cast out demons. Not just one of God's sons. But the only, begotten Son of God...God Himself.

I told them that John starts out his Gospel making that point right away, and then he takes a little space to talk about John the Baptist - another John, who was used of God to introduce Jesus - God Himself - to the world. And then, before John Chapter 1 comes to a close, John gives the account of Jesus calling His first 5 disciples.

I asked the students to listen carefully, especially as I came to the last of John 1, so that they could tell me afterwards the names of the first 5 disciples.

Read it yourself, and tell me - who were the first 5 disciples?

John 1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend ^[a] it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. ⁸ He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. ⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. ^[b]

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. ¹¹ He came to His own, ^[c] and His own ^[d] did



not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"

¹⁶ And ^[e] of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, ^[f] who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

¹⁹ Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

²¹ And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

And he answered, "No."

²² Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

²³ He said: "I *am*

' The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

" Make straight the way of the LORD."

as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴ Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. ²⁵ And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

²⁶ John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. ²⁷ It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."

²⁸ These things were done in Bethabara ^[h] beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for



He was before me.' ³¹ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

³² And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³ I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

³⁵ Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. ³⁶ And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?"

They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother **Simon**, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus.

Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. ^[1] You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

⁴³ The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found **Philip** and said to him, "Follow Me." ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found **Nathanael** and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

⁴⁶ And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

⁴⁸ Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?"

Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

⁴⁹ Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

⁵⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." ⁵¹ And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter ^[1] you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

Four of them are easy. Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael. The fifth one is a little more subtle. It's John. The author of the book. He's



the other one of the two disciples who were following John the Baptist, and then turned and began to follow Jesus.

John never uses his own name in the Gospel he wrote. He calls himself "the other disciple", or "the one Jesus loved", but he never says his own name. That's why it is so hard to find that 5th disciple. Why didn't he use his name? My guess is that by the time John wrote the Gospel he was very aware of the fact that he was nothing, and Jesus was everything. By the time he wrote the Gospel of John he had lived for Jesus over 50 years. And he knew all his own failures. He knew that his own name wasn't even worth mentioning. But, oh, how he wanted people to know Who Jesus was, and how much they needed him.

After a lifetime of serving Christ...preaching, persecution (history tells us John at one time was dipped into boiling oil, but lived), caring for the mother of Jesus, and finally Pastoring the church in Ephesus, John, over 90, was arrested by the Roman authorities and exiled to a barren prisoner island called Patmos. He was the last living apostle, and they thought they could stop the spread of Christians by removing their beloved eyewitness to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. While on that lonely island, John saw the Revelation....he saw visions and heard the Words of God and the testimony of Jesus....and he wrote it all down and sent it to 7 churches in Asia.

In these magnificent visions, the aging apostle, on this awful lonely island, saw his beloved friend, Jesus, one more time...but oh...he had never seen Him like this....

Revelation 1

¹ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, ² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. ³ Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.

⁴ John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him who loved us and washed ^[a] us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶ and



has made us kings^[b] and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷ Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End," says the Lord,^[d] "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

⁹ I, John, both^[e] your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,"^[f] and, "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia:^[g] to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me,^[h] "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ *I am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. ¹⁹ Write^[i] the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw^[j] are the seven churches.

Revelation 4

¹ After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

² Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne. ³ And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire *were* burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

⁶ Before the throne *there wa*¹ a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. ⁷ The first living creature *was* like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature *was* like a flying eagle. ⁸ *The* four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

" Holy, holy, holy,



Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!"

⁹ Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

¹¹ " You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created."

Revelation 5

¹ And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" ³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read^[1] the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

⁸ Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying:

" You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth."

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice:

" Worthy is the Lamb who was slain
To receive power and riches and wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"

¹³ And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

" Blessing and honor and glory and power
Be to Him who sits on the throne,

And to the Lamb, forever and ever!"

¹⁴ Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four^[p] elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.^[q]

So why did I just tell you all that? Because I wanted to remind you of my main point in this lesson: I got a chance to speak the Word of God. They asked me to quote some scripture because they had heard I had memorized some books of the Bible. It was just one little chance to speak the Word of God, and it was worth the little bit of preparation for a few days, and the little case of nerves right before hand.

You may not get that same type of chance, but, you, too, will get your chances, if you want them. Ask God for them, and then go for it!. Don't be shy. Wisdom loves shouting from the housetops. ☺

Now let's look at some really exciting things in the rest of Proverbs 8:

⁴ " To you, O men, I call,
And my voice *is* to the sons of men.
⁵ O you simple ones, understand prudence,
And you fools, be of an understanding heart.

2. :4-5 Who are the people wisdom cries out to?

Everyone. All men. Whether smart or simple. Wise or fools. Everyone, everywhere needs to know the Ways of God....hear the Words..the Wisdom of God. Don't be fooled by some who act as if you are boring them when you tell of God's Ways. They're not bored. They're hungry.

⁶ Listen, for I will speak of excellent things,
And from the opening of my lips *will come* right things;
⁷ For my mouth will speak truth;
Wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.
⁸ All the words of my mouth *are* with righteousness;
Nothing crooked or perverse *is* in them.

3. :6-8 What will never come out of wisdom's mouth?



Nothing half-true, or ordinary, or wrong, or false, or wicked, or hurtful will ever come from the Words of God.

⁹ They *are* all plain to him who understands,
And right to those who find knowledge.

4. :9 Is wisdom difficult to understand?

Nope. If your heart is reaching to understand, thirsty for knowledge, God will open up your eyes to understand what He is saying. You can know God's ways if you desire to.

¹⁰ Receive my instruction, and not silver,
And knowledge rather than choice gold;
¹¹ For wisdom *is* better than rubies,
And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.

5. :10-11 What is more valuable than wisdom?

Nothing. Do not ever choose something else above knowing God and His ways. It will be the worst choice of your life.

¹² " I, wisdom, dwell with prudence,
And find out knowledge *and* discretion.

6. :12 What does that mean? - wisdom is "prudent" and "discreet"?

Jesus most of the time doesn't just get in your face and shout at you. He meets you in the quiet places of your heart and smiles. He speaks quietly and gently nudges you. Why? I don't know for sure, but I think if He had shouted in my face I probably would have run the other way. I would have been too afraid to listen. Instead, in my case, He just appeared one day in my life and I from that point on I didn't want to live life without Him.



¹³ The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil;
Pride and arrogance and the evil way
And the perverse mouth I hate.

7. :13 Does wisdom hate anything?

Yes. God's ways hate evil. Look at Psalm 139. Here is this breathtaking Psalm, where the Psalmist is rejoicing that the God of the Universe knows his every way, full of joy and love and soaring praise. And then, suddenly, in verse 19, the Psalmist says: "O, that You would slay the wicked, O God!" Where did that come from? It came from wisdom - when the Lord shows you how breathtaking He is, you do just automatically hate evil.

¹⁴ Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom;
I *am* understanding, I have strength.

¹⁵ By me kings reign,
And rulers decree justice.

¹⁶ By me princes rule, and nobles,
All the judges of the earth. ^[a]

8. :14-16 Who are some of the people who have loved wisdom?

Some of the most powerful men on earth have loved the Lord God with all their heart, and have wanted to do things His way. Take King David of Israel, for example. "A Man after God's own Heart".

¹⁷ I love those who love me,
And those who seek me diligently will find me.

9. :17 Who will be able to find wisdom?

Those who want it.

¹⁸ Riches and honor *are* with me,
Enduring riches and righteousness.

¹⁹ My fruit *is* better than gold, yes, than fine gold,



And my revenue than choice silver.

²⁰ I traverse the way of righteousness,

In the midst of the paths of justice,

²¹ That I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth,

That I may fill their treasuries.

10. :18-21 Will I be poor if I seek wisdom?

On the contrary, you will be rich - in so many more ways than simply money.

²² " The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way,
Before His works of old.

²³ I have been established from everlasting,
From the beginning, before there was ever an earth.

²⁴ When *there were* no depths I was brought forth,
When *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

²⁵ Before the mountains were settled,
Before the hills, I was brought forth;

²⁶ While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields,
Or the primal dust of the world.

²⁷ When He prepared the heavens, I *was* there,
When He drew a circle on the face of the deep,

²⁸ When He established the clouds above,
When He strengthened the fountains of the deep,

²⁹ When He assigned to the sea its limit,
So that the waters would not transgress His command,
When He marked out the foundations of the earth,

11. :22-29 How long has wisdom been around?

This part of Proverbs 8 simply astounds me. Do you see what it is saying? The "I" in this passage is Wisdom. The Ways of God. The Word of God. This is saying that before the world was made, wisdom was put together. I think that means every Word which would ever be in the Bible was thought through and put in order before Jesus stretched forth His hand and began to create our world. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1. But before that, wisdom was born.



Everything I need to live my life was put together before even a drop of water was placed in the ocean.

So we can't just read it and forget it, can we? It started out life. It gave us our chance to have life forever. It keeps us going when life seems to fall out from under us. And it will usher us home.

³⁰ Then I was beside Him *as* a master craftsman;^[b]
 And I was daily *His* delight,
 Rejoicing always before Him,
³¹ Rejoicing in His inhabited world,
 And my delight *was* with the sons of men.

12. :30&31 What part of God's creation does wisdom love the most?

People. What part of God's creation do you love the most? If you love any part of God's creation, that's as it should be. It is a most fantastic creation. But if you find you don't love people as much, say, as you love Golden Retrievers, well then, you have no idea how stupendous people really are. And how different it will all be once we get to our real home - in eternity. Wisdom loves people the most. That's God's way.

³² " Now therefore, listen to me, *my* children,
 For blessed *are those who* keep my ways.
³³ Hear instruction and be wise,
 And do not disdain *it*.
³⁴ Blessed is the man who listens to me,
 Watching daily at my gates,
 Waiting at the posts of my doors.
³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life,
 And obtains favor from the LORD;
³⁶ But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul;
 All those who hate me love death."

13. :32-36 How do I get wisdom?



How do I get wisdom? Want it. Look for it. Sit in a quiet place and open my Bible. Read it.

