

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man Lesson 1: Proverbs on Proverbs

Memory Verse

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
– Proverbs 9:10 (NIV)



WORD

1. The writing of the proverbs is credited to whom (Prov. 1:1)? Describe his prominence and credibility (2 Chron. 1: 7-12, 9:1-2, 22-23).
2. The same account recorded in I Kings 3:5-12 reveals a further definition of wisdom that Solomon asked from God. How is wisdom defined?
3. The purpose of Proverbs is two-fold. What is the first one (Prov. 1:2)? In what situations and experiences in life can we use this kind of wisdom?

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man
Lesson 2: Proverbs on Wisdom and Folly

Memory Verse

“ Trust in the Lord with all of your heart And lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight. -Proverbs 3:5-6



WORD

1. Proverbs 3 lists the benefits of wisdom and the value of keeping them. What are the instructions given to us and the result in verses 1-4?

Instruction

Result

2. What does “bind them around your neck, write them in your heart” mean (Prov. 3:3)?

3. When we are in need of direction in life, where can we turn to and what can we do (Prov. 3:5)? How often do we fail in this area in terms of trying to understand the details of our life?

4. What is the value of acknowledging God in all our ways (Prov. 3:6)?

5. What is the prize of the fear of the Lord (Prov. 3:7-8)?

11. What wise counsel is given to us in dealing with human relationships (Prov. 3:27-35)?

GOD'S FAVOR AND DISPLEASURE (Proverbs 3:31-35)

Righteous Man (Wisdom)	Wicked Person (Foolish)

WRAP UP

The benefit of wisdom that comes from God is indeed overwhelming. Happy and blessed are those who find them and keep them as a lifestyle and as their lifeblood. Confronted by the ever increasing popularity and demand for worldly and material counterfeit wisdom, let us be discerning in our choices and hold steadfast to God's wisdom (Proverbs 3:21).

4. If a good name is of primary importance to you how will it affect your choice of career, business dealings and family relationship? What do you think are the top five “name-destroyers”? Explain your answer. In what way/s did your parent’s good reputation benefit you today?

Wrap up

If you want your life and work to make an impact on the people of your generation and the next, work to establish a good name. If you strive to be rich and powerful but in the process damage your name then your success will be short lived. If on the other hand, you strive to keep a good name, riches and honor will be your reward (cf. Prov. 3:16; 8:18).

We are always confronted with choices in this life. When you are left with a choice between money and honor, choose honor.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man
Lesson 4: Proverbs on Humility

Memory Verse

Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life. –Proverbs 22:4(NIV)



WORD

1. How is pride and humility compared in Proverbs 29:23?

2. What would be the result of pride and humility?

3. What can you do so that God would honor you?

4. How is pride and humility defined in Proverbs 11:2? How does one gain wisdom?

5. Do you find it hard to listen to the advice of others? Why and why not?

6. What is the result of pride and humility according to Proverbs 3:34?

7. Do you want to experience the grace of God in your daily Christian life?

8. What does Proverbs 21:4 reveal about pride? Why does God hate pride?

9. What does pride do to a person according to Proverbs 15:25; 16:5,8? Why will pride lead someone to destruction?

10. What does Proverbs 13:10 warn us about pride? How can pride destroy relationships?

11. What is the result of humility according to Proverbs 15:33 and 22:4? How should a humble person live? Can anyone be considered wise without the fear of the Lord?

12. How is humility described in Proverbs 16:19? Why is it better to be lowly and spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud?

Wrap up

Humility is one character virtue that Christians must possess if we want to experience a victorious Christian life. As we humble ourselves and depend on God, He will give us the grace to excel in our Christian life. Our life will be pleasing to God and giving glory to His name. Let us be reminded that we should humble ourselves before God as a demonstration of our desire to surrender totally to His will and purpose for us.

Additional Passages For Further Studies

1. Isaiah 66:2b
2. Matthew 23:12
3. Luke 18:13- 14
4. James 4:10

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man Lesson 5: Proverbs on Moral Purity

Memory Verse

For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul. Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you. – Proverbs 2:10-11



WORD

The context of Proverbs 2:10-11 is found in Proverbs 2:1-9. The chapter begins with the appeal to the learner to desire wisdom and understanding (vv.1-6), and gives the basis or motivation why it should be desired (vv.7-9). Verses 10 & 11 then sums up all of these positive benefits, before contrasting them with the lifestyles of the wicked.

1. Proverbs 2 tells us that one of the benefits and marks of wisdom is a life of moral purity. By wisdom we are kept from lapses in judgment that compromise our integrity and testimony in the eyes of God and our community. What is the condition and the result found in verses 10 and 11?
2. What is moral purity? How does the Bible speak about it? You may categorize them into positive and negative senses.
3. What is the condition required for our lives to be characterized with moral purity? What does it mean “for wisdom to enter the heart?”

Wrap up

To gain and preserve moral purity, it is not enough to know the how-to's. It takes wisdom born out of a genuine desire to please the Lord and live a life of integrity. Moral purity is not gained by imposition. It is a heart-felt desire. If it is our heart-felt desire, then being instructed by God and being made accountable to others will not be a burden but a joy.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man Lesson 6: Proverbs on Wellness

Memory Verse

A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.
- Proverbs 15:30



WORD

From various passages in the book of proverbs, we get a biblical portrait of joy and the blessing it gives to the believer whom the book of Proverbs refers to as the “wise”: wellness from within and without:

1. Based on Proverbs 15:13, Proverbs 15:30 and Proverbs 17:22, how can joy bring blessings of physical wellness?
2. Can an unbeliever ever have truly lasting joy? Why or why not? Are you rightly related to the Benefactor of joy?
3. What are the implications of these above mentioned truths for someone who suffers from emotionally-aggravated illnesses? From psychosomatic illness? Can these verses be used to counsel a hypochondriac?

4. Christian, are you walking in step with the Spirit? Or are you experiencing the bane of joylessness in your life? "... because the Lord disciplines those He loves" Heb. 12:6

5. Based on Proverbs 15:15, how can a believer's emotional wellness be benefited by joy? Or how can joy benefit or affect a believer's emotional wellness?

6. Can you use this verse in no. 3 to motivate a person who is emotionally afflicted? How?

7. Looking at the flip side: Based on Proverbs 15:13, Proverbs 15:15, Proverbs 17:22 and Proverbs 18:14, what are the harmful effects on our well being - either physical or emotional - of joylessness?

8. Realizing these truths, which of the particular verses we have looked at so far stand out meaningful to you and why? (Leader goes around the group, soliciting comments)

Wrap up

True joy can be found in Christ Jesus and His finished work on the cross. The inward joy that a person possesses affects many facets of his being.

Additional Passages for further Study:

1. The Eternal Benefactor of true joy (Psalms 16:11 NASB)

You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

2. Joy is a Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man
Lesson 7: Proverbs on Generosity

Memory Verse

"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." - Proverbs 11:25



WORD

1. The Source of Wealth.

a.

b.

c.

1) Prov. 8:21

2) Prov. 10:4

3) Prov. 22:4

2. The Pitfalls of Wealth

a.

b.

c.

3. The Wrong Use of Wealth – Greediness

a.

1) Prov. 15:27

2) Prov. 22:9

3) Prov. 28:8

b.

1) Prov. 11:17

2) Prov. 15:27

3) Prov. 28:25

4) Prov. 29:4

4. The Right Use of Wealth- Generosity

a.

b.

1) Prov. 11:25

2) Prov. 19:17; Prov. 22:9

3) Prov. 11:17

APPLICATION

As a result of this study, what are some of the changes that you would implement in your life with regard to how you view wealth and how you use wealth? (Personal applications)

Wrap up

John Wesley wrote: "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the places you can, at all times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can."

Let us make generosity a lifestyle.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man Lesson 8: Proverbs on Work

Memory Verse

“Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations.” - Proverbs 27:23-24



The first thing we hear of God from the Bible, apart from his being eternal, is that God is a god of work. “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen.1:1) Work is something that God affirms and blesses. Proverbs speaks of the wise person as one who is characterized with a good work ethic. How does Proverbs describe a good work ethic?



WORD

1. Why does the author exhort us to diligence in Proverbs 27:23? What role does it play with regard to work?
2. In the context of Solomon's time, the primary occupation and means to riches of people was through the caring of flocks and herds. What would be the modern equivalent of “flocks and herds” for us?
3. What does it mean to know the condition of one's flock, and to pay careful attention to one's herds? What kinds of actions are associated with “knowing” and “giving careful attention?”

4. The author speaks of the ephemeral nature of success in Proverbs 27:24. What does it tell of our work ethic?

5. Proverbs 27:24 speaks of a time element going beyond person's life span. What does this imply about our work?

6. Proverbs 27:23-24 give us parallels of good work ethics from both positive and negative viewpoints. What are these parallels? What are their implications and results?

4) Prov. 19:17; Prov. 22:9

5) Prov. 11:17

APPLICATION

For wealth and riches beyond us also imply the following: working, saving, investing and giving. To what extent are these reflected in your life right now?

Wrap up

Deuteronomy 8:18 tells us that it is the Lord who gives us the ability to work and produce wealth. Proverbs teaches us how to go about it in a manner that glorifies God and edifies people.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man Lesson 9: Proverbs on Anxiety

Memory Verse

"An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up." - Prov 12:25



As we face uncertain times most of us, if not all, have felt anxious. What shall we eat tomorrow? Will I be able to pay my children's tuition fees? What about my presentation before my customers next week? What shall I wear to the party? Will a meteor hit the earth? There are so many things that we worry about that cause stress and anxiety. Many of the scenarios that we paint in our minds actually do not happen. What does the Book of Proverbs say about anxiety? What should we do when we are anxious?



WORD

1. What is anxiety in your own words?

Could you cite some of the things that have caused you to be anxious or stressed out in the past weeks?

2. What are some of these stress or anxiety factors that the Book of Proverbs lists? Which of these is real to you right now?
 - a. Prov. 1:27
 - b. Prov. 1:33b
 - c. Prov. 3:25
 - d. Prov. 22:27
 - e. Prov. 24:19
 - f. Prov. 29:25
 - g. Prov. 30:8b

3. What are some characteristics of anxiety?
 - a. Prov. 1:27
 - b. Prov. 10:1
 - c. Prov. 12:25
 - d. Prov. 13:12

4. What should you do to alleviate disappointment whether you are the one experiencing it or someone you know?
 - a. Prov. 10:1
 - b. Prov. 12:25
 - c. Prov. 13:12
 - d. Prov. 20:28

APPLICATION

For wealth and riches beyond us also imply the following: working, saving, investing and giving. To what extent are these reflected in your life right now?

Wrap up

Martin Luther King Jr. said “We must accept finite disappointment but not lose infinite hope.” Disappointments are but temporary. God has a good purpose for them. If we are the ones disappointed, our hope is in the infinite God who gives abundant grace, help, strength, wisdom and love. If there is someone we know who is disappointed, God wants us to be an encourager by also sharing the love of God to him or to her.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man Lesson 10: Proverbs on Anger

Memory Verse

"An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins."

- Proverbs 29:22



WORD

Read Proverbs 10:18; 14:16-17, 29; 15:1, 18; 17:27; 29:11, 22; 30:33

Anger is seen in the Bible as a universal emotion that is good when expressed against real injustice, harmful when expressed for self-centered motives, and clearly an emotion to be controlled.⁴

1. Why do you think many Christians avoid expressions of anger?

2. What are some effects of anger (See Prov. 29:22; 14:7, 29; 30:33)?

3. What causes or stimulates anger (See Prov. 15:1; 14:16)?

⁴ Gary R. Collins, *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*

Application

Do you know anyone who is presently going through tough times? If so, make an effort to encourage him or her with a kind word. Solomon says this is one of the tongue's best uses.

Wrap-Up

Words have the power to discourage, devastate and destroy. But they also have the power to encourage, enliven, and establish. Words can keep a person going or can make a person give up. Let us therefore be careful with our speech and choose the right words to speak at the right time in an appropriate situation.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man
Lesson 12: Proverbs on Friendship

Memory Verse

"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." - Proverbs 18:24



WORD

1. How are we to choose who will be our close friends? What generally happens if you make poor choices about your friends?(Proverbs 12:26 and Proverbs 13:20)?
2. To be a good friend to somebody, one must be willing and committed to help build up his friend as a person. Oftentimes this needs honestly confronting a friend about an unwise decision or unproductive behavior. How can one help a friend realize and accept these things? (Proverbs 27:5-6, 9; Proverbs 29:5)?

3. Deep friendships involve one's consistent participation in a friend's "life journey". How can one help a friend in addressing challenging situations in life (Proverbs 27:9)?

4. Genuine friends are loyal and dependable. How can we demonstrate loyalty and dependability to our friends (Proverbs 27:10; 18:24; 17:17; 14:20:19:4)?

5. Genuine friends challenge one another to develop and mature. In what ways can we stimulate one another to grow towards spiritual maturity and ministry effectiveness (Ephesians 4:12; Proverbs 27:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)?

Application

Having friends is a part of human experience that people generally value. Yet we often take it for granted. We casually talk about it as if we expect everyone must be somebody's friend. But if we pause and reflect on it, how many friends do each of us really have? And what kind of friends are they? As for ourselves, what kind of a friend are we?

Wrap-Up

As we invest in nurturing close friendships, let us remember to give topmost priority in nurturing our friendship with the Lord Himself. Let us be affirmed in the fact that the Lord regards us as His own friends (John 15:14, 15). As such, we can become faithful and caring friends to others. As we make disciples, let us build godly and lasting friendship with those who we are leading to Christ-likeness (Romans 16:3-5; Philemon 1:1).

Our friends have a significant influence in our lives. They influence the way we look at life, how we feel about ourselves, and even what choices we make in life. We need to turn to the Word of God for guidance in choosing friends, keeping them, and being a good friend to others as well.

4. One of the inevitable truths of married life is the differences between husband and wife. How should we relate to our spouses when we encounter differences of opinion and approaches to life? (Proverbs 15:16, 21:19)

WRAP UP

Godly values, right priorities, and good communication; these are qualities emphasized by proverbs on marriage. Married people often seek domestic bliss based on wrong foundations, and as such, the peace and harmony they seek in their marriage is elusive. Believers possessing the mind of Christ and steeped in God's word will always have the joys and blessings of marriage within their grasp.

APPLICATION

Consider the following questions and ponder in what sense is my marriage following the biblical ideal?

How have I treated my spouse lately, public and private?

How have we dealt with our differences?

Am I fulfilling the biblical roles expected of me as husband/wife?

How can I become a blessing to my spouse, if the Bible affirms that I am a blessing from the Lord to his/her life

c. A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous (Prov 13:22).

4. As parents, is discipline a necessary part of your role and responsibility to your children (Prov 19:18)?

Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death. Prov 19:18

5. Is giving the rod to the child an acceptable means of discipline (Prov 13:24)? Share from your experience other means of discipline that were effective to your child.

He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him. Prov 13:24

6. Take time to observe the following verses, what are the results and consequences of discipline?

A. Discipline displaces _____

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him. Prov 22:15

What is the common foolishness that a child would possess? How about a teenager?

B. Discipline places _____

The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother. Prov 29:15

Share from your own experience wisdom that you learned brought about by the discipline your own parents gave you when you were younger.

C. Discipline displaces _____

Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death. Prov 23:13-14

Note: the word death in this verse is literally "Sheol." This could refer to the difficulty and destruction that awaits those who are foolish and depraved. This could also refer to the unexpected death that comes as a consequence of living wicked life.

D. Discipline places _____ and _____

Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul. Prov 29:17

Share with your group testimonies of disciplined children that brought joy and delight in your heart.

Wrap-Up

The ancient wise teaches the parents today that they have been given the privilege to be stewards of children given to them. A great role and responsibility is entrusted to them to train their children into godliness. Parents are challenged to demonstrate fear of the Lord, blameless and morally upright lives. Children of such parents are blessed.

Parents are commanded to discipline their children. Discipline is an explicit demonstration of love; God disciplines His own out of His love for them. A disciplined child is expected to possess wisdom instead of folly, expected to bring peace and delight, instead of death and difficulty.

Ancient Wisdom for Modern Man
Lesson 15: Proverbs on a Noble Wife

Memory Verse *Prov 31:10-31*



WORD

- 1. Who is the known author of this segment of the Proverbs and what is he writing about?**
- 2. What kind of woman/ person was portrayed in this proverb?**
- 3. What does it mean when the writer says that, “she is worth far more than rubies?”**
- 4. What is the role of women in marriage during those times?**

5. What does it mean when “her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value” and “she brings him good, not harm”?

6. What are the things that the woman of noble character disposes as good in the following verses? How do you relate that to the 21st century woman?

Verses 13-15-

Verses 16-19, 21-22,24,27 –

Verse 20 -

Verses 23, 25, 26-

7. Verse 30 tells us what is central to the life of the virtuous woman—her fear of the LORD. What does the writer mean when he said that “charm is deceptive, beauty is fleeting?”

8. What is the relationship of verse 30 to the whole poem ? What does it truly mean to be a woman/ person of noble character?

9. What are the rewards of the noble woman according to verse 31?