

Wisdom

Key Verse

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..." Proverbs 9:10a

Basic Biblical Understanding

Everyone needs wisdom. Everyone. The more we see the value of wisdom, the more we'll seek it in every area of life.

God's wisdom is found throughout the Bible, but Proverbs is specifically dedicated to wisdom. In Proverbs 1, Solomon tells us the proverbs are written to "teach people wisdom and discipline, to help people understand the insights of the wise...to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair, to give insight to the simple, and knowledge and discernment to the young" (1:2–4, NLT). Essentially, Proverbs has two primary purposes: (1) to give moral skillfulness and (2) to give mental discernment.

The word "wisdom" means "skill." It's the word that describes the "skill" of the craftsmen who worked in the tabernacle (Exodus 31:6) and the effective abilities of an administrator (1 Kings 3:28). In Proverbs, "wisdom" represents skillful living. Wisdom is the ability to make wise choices and live successfully according to the moral standards of the covenant community.

Throughout the book of Proverbs, the travel companion of wisdom is "discipline." Discipline involves correcting foolishness, developing reverence for God, and learning to exhibit personal integrity. Both wisdom and discipline work together to form moral skillfulness.

The second purpose of Proverbs is to acquire mental discernment. Discernment is the ability to distinguish between things, compare concepts, form evaluations, or make analogies. The book of Proverbs trains people to discern lessons about life, and distinguish between permanent values and immediate gratification.

The pivotal question at many points of life is simple: "Is it wise?" Not, is it fun, convenient, profitable, or exciting? If it's not wise, it's foolish. And if it's foolish, the fun is temporary but the damage may be permanent.

Verses (ask God to show you how they apply to your life)

- "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach..." James 1:5a (ESV)
- "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy." James 3:17 (ESV)

Helpful Questions and Application

1. The Bible is filled with God's wisdom. However, three books are dedicated to wisdom: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and James. Are you spending time reading these books regularly?
2. Are you gaining wisdom daily? A good discipline is to read the chapter of Proverbs that corresponds to the day of the month. For example, if it's May 1st, read Proverbs 1. Continue this discipline for the rest of your life.

Additional Resources

Scripture references: Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 12:15; Proverbs 19:20

WordTruth article: ["Personal Communication that Requires Wisdom and Prayer"](#)

["The Most Difficult People In The World—Fools And Scoffers"](#)