



Proverbs

The Fountain of Life

Proverbs: The Fountain of Life

Written by Frank Hamrick with CJ Harris

Copyright 1994, 2009 by Positive Action For Christ, Inc. P.O. Box 700, 502 West Phippen Street, Whitakers, NC 27891-0700. All rights reserved. No part may be reproduced in any manner without permission in writing from the publisher.

Third Edition, 2009

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-1-59557-100-7

Published by Positive Action For Christ

Edited by C.J. Harris and Kristi Houser

Design by Shannon Brown

Chapter Artwork by Del Thompson

Published by

 **PositiveAction**
FOR CHRIST

Contents

Preface	4	Lesson 20 The Works of the Flesh	171
Lesson 1 Wisdom Defined and Categorized	9	Lesson 21 Love	179
Lesson 2 Wisdom: The Fear of the Lord	17	Lesson 22 Joy	187
Lesson 3 The Wisdom of God vs. the Wisdom of Man	27	Lesson 23 Peace	195
Lesson 4 Wisdom: A Person	35	Lesson 24 Longsuffering (Patience)	203
Lesson 5 Wisdom: How It Acts	45	Lesson 25 Gentleness (Kindness)	213
Lesson 6 Wisdom: The Foolish Man	55	Lesson 26 Goodness	219
Lesson 7 Wisdom: The Wise Man vs. the Foolish Man	61	Lesson 27 Faithfulness	227
Lesson 8 Wisdom: How It Is Obtained	67	Lesson 28 Meekness (Gentleness)	235
Lesson 9 The Importance of the Home	75	Lesson 29 Self-Control (Temperance)	243
Lesson 10 Your Place in the Home	81	Lesson 30 Wisdom: Dealing with the Flesh	253
Lesson 11 Understanding Your Parents	89	Lesson 31 Wisdom in Thought Life	263
Lesson 12 Duties of the Parents	97	Lesson 32 Wisdom: In Speech (Part 1)	269
Lesson 13 Wisdom: In Companions	107	Lesson 33 Wisdom: In Speech (Part 2)	277
Lesson 14 Companions to Avoid	115	Lesson 34 Wisdom: In Acknowledging God	289
Lesson 15 Characteristics of Wrong Companions	127	Lesson 35 Wisdom: The Fountain of Life	297
Lesson 16 Wrong Attitudes and Wrong Actions	135	Appendix	301
Lesson 17 Why We Lose Friendships	145	Producing Fruit Project	301
Lesson 18 How to Gain Friends	153	Recommended Reading List	321
Lesson 19 What Is Character?	163		

Preface

Have you ever wondered where true wisdom is found? A proper knowledge of God is the key to understanding all of the other great relationships and issues of life. This study, based on the book of Proverbs, begins with a revelation of Jesus Christ, who is true Wisdom. Once a proper foundation has been laid, your journey in wisdom will continue. Along the way, you will learn not only what wisdom is like, but also how it affects your home life, your friendships, your personal character, and all of life!

If you desire to know the fear of the Lord and find wisdom, apply yourself to this study. God has promised great reward for those who diligently study this book. You won't be disappointed.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Student Lesson

Each chapter begins with a brief introductory reading assignment followed by a Bible study for you to do at home. This student lesson gives an overview of the entire lesson.

Teacher's Lesson

Every chapter also includes an outline that you will complete as your teacher works through the lesson with you. You will be quizzed over the material from both the student and the teacher's lesson, so it is important to listen well and take notes diligently.

Developing the Ideas

At the end of each chapter is a list of topics or activities that are used at your teacher's discretion to help you develop, think about, and apply the principles learned from the student lesson and teacher's lesson.

ASSIGNMENTS

Indexing Proverbs Project

Your teacher may choose to have you complete a major project as you study Proverbs—to index or classify each verse of Proverbs under one or more of several different categories. When you are finished with this project, you will be able to look up any subject and find in one place all of the passages in Proverbs that deal with that subject. This activity will prove to be very rewarding and valuable, giving you an important tool you can use the rest of your life. If your teacher chooses to use this optional assignment, be sure to keep up with the assignment and do not get behind. It will be much easier to keep up than to catch up!

Producing Fruit Project

Lessons 21–29 deal with developing the character of Christ in your life. During these nine lessons, you will study the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit. You will complete a Producing Fruit Form for each lesson and turn it in to your teacher. The forms you will need are at the end of this book.

Quizzes and Tests

Each lesson has a short quiz which your teacher may use to test your knowledge of the material you have covered for a given lesson. Unit tests provide a comprehensive review of everything you have learned over the course of several lessons. The questions for the quizzes and unit tests cover the material in the student lesson and the teacher’s lesson, so you will need to study both. Your teacher will determine various point values and grading scales.

A decorative border with intricate, symmetrical scrollwork and floral patterns in a golden-brown color, framing the central text.

Unit One:

What is Wisdom?



Lesson One

Wisdom Defined and Categorized

“An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

“Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.”

These and other sayings are called proverbs. They are short, pithy, easy-to-remember statements of common truths. A proverb is a short sentence expressing a well-known truth.

Our Bible devotes one entire book to some of the most powerful proverbs ever known to man. The 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs contain a collection of more than 900 proverbs written by three men: King Solomon, who wrote most of them (Prov. 1:1 and 1 Kings 4:32); Agur (Prov. 30:1); and King Lemuel (Prov. 31:1). Most of these proverbs are simply short, unrelated sentences, but some of them develop a more detailed theme in the form of short paragraphs.

The book of Proverbs is especially instructive and beneficial for young people because it gives them principles for dealing with issues in many practical areas of their lives, including the following:

- Their home
- How to choose friends
- How to handle money wisely
- Character development,
- How to use their tongues wisely
- Their associates
- Dating
- How to treat others properly
- Their thought lives
- The folly of vices and sin

Many areas of our lives are regulated by rules. But rules that are not based on principles are like leaves without trees. A leaf finds its origin in a tree and proves its usefulness when it is attached to a tree. When it is separated from the tree, however, the leaf loses its life, flies aimlessly about, and soon decays, becoming a nuisance to those who must rake their yards. So it is with rules.

Unfortunately, many Christians have been passing on their rules to each succeeding generation without passing along the principles on which the rules were originally based. The result is

that the young people of the new generation conform outwardly to the rules, but they have no firm conviction for obeying them. This, in turn, leads to inconsistency and randomness in making and enforcing rules. This inconsistency leads to either rebellion or a reexamination and revision of the rules, whereby the rules are perverted, annulled, or simply not enforced.

The book of Proverbs is primarily a book of principles. It provides the foundation upon which the rules of life are formulated.

The main purpose of a proverb is to teach. Proverbs 1:2-4 gives five general principles for the book of Proverbs. (Read that passage and see if you can list the five objectives. Your teacher will explain each of them in more detail during the class lesson and discussion.)

As beneficial as proverbs can be, however, one must recognize his or her need of instruction before their full benefit can be realized. When you read or hear a proverb, you must listen attentively to it and think carefully and prayerfully about how it applies to you to gain its full benefit. Doing so will lead to personal growth and “helmsmanship.” Rather than being adrift without a rudder, one who heeds and applies the proverbs will steer his life aright and with a God-honoring purpose.

TEACHER’S LESSON

Overview of Proverbs

- Content of the Book
 - ____ chapters
 - More than _____ Proverbs
 - Three authors:
 - King _____ (1:1)
 - _____ (30:1)
 - King _____ (31:1)
- Definition of a Proverb
 - A short _____ expressing in a _____
a _____

- Summary Outline
 - Chapters 1-9: The _____ of wisdom
 - Chapters 10-31: The _____ of wisdom

Main Objectives of Proverbs

- To Know _____
- To Know _____
- To Know _____
- To _____
- To Give _____

Keys to Understanding Proverbs

- Recognize Your _____
- Hear—_____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Benefits of Studying Proverbs

- _____
- _____

DEVELOPING THE IDEAS

1. What is a proverb? Give some examples of commonly known sayings or proverbs and explain the rules that come from them.
2. Why was the use of proverbs more important in early history than it is today? Do our modern, high-tech means of communication make the proverbs in the Bible obsolete or of less importance in our lives than they once were?
3. How can a study of Proverbs help you understand the rest of the Word of God?
4. How can we learn from the four “teachers” in Proverbs: wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity?
5. What is helmsmanship?
6. Explain how Bill Borden’s life (described by your teacher) exhibited a definite, God-focused purpose.
7. Begin your indexing of Proverbs. (See instructions under “How to Index Proverbs.”)

ASSIGNMENTS

During your study of Proverbs this year, you will have various assignments to help you better understand the truths you are learning. Some of these assignments will be short-term assignments specific to each chapter in your textbook. A few of the assignments will be long-term projects.

One such long-term assignment will be memorizing assigned Scripture verses. (Your teacher will explain this assignment more fully.) Another long-term assignment is that of indexing proverbs, organizing the contents of the book into broad subject areas. During each week of the year, you will categorize, or index, one chapter of Proverbs. Your teacher will set periodic dates for this project to be turned in for evaluation. Try to do your indexing faithfully so you don’t get behind. Reminders will be given in some “Developing the Ideas” sections along the way.

HOW TO INDEX PROVERBS

In a word processing program, type out the list of categories included below placing a page break between each. Be sure to keep multiple copies of the project in case you have computer

troubles. If you choose to do the project by hand, copy each of the following categories at the tops of separate sheets of paper. Place these sheets into a loose-leaf notebook or binder.

Then, beginning with Proverbs 1, index one chapter per week by writing out each verse and its reference under the appropriate heading. (For example, you might write out Proverbs 25:14 on the page you've labeled "Humility" because that verse deals with someone who boasts about having a false gift.)

Some of the verses might fit in more than one category, so you should include such verses in every appropriate category. Also, as you progress with your indexing project, you may find that you must add new categories to your list. If you are doing the project by hand, you will need to add a new page for each category you include. You will find that some categories require more pages than others.

YOUR INDEX CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES

- I. WISDOM (This will be a *title page* for Section 1, which includes much of Prov. 1–9.)
 - A. What is Wisdom?
 - B. Importance and Blessing of Wisdom
 - C. Types of Wisdom (30:24–28, 31)
 - D. Examples of Wisdom (31:10–16, 25–30)
 - E. Personification of Wisdom (8:22–31)
 - F. How to Obtain Wisdom
 - G. Characteristics of a Fool
 - H. Characteristics of a Wise Man

- II. THE GOD OF WISDOM (This will be a *title page* for Section 2, which will draw material from the whole book of Proverbs.)
 - A. The Attributes of God (*title page*)
 1. God Is Wise
 2. God Is Loving
 3. God Is Holy
 4. God Is Just and True
 5. God Is Omniscient (All-Knowing)
 6. God Is Omnipotent (All-Powerful)
 7. God Is Sovereign (Rules All Things)

B. The Works of God (*title page*)

1. God Creates
2. God Judges
3. God Defends and Saves
4. God Guides
5. God Provides
6. God Hears Prayer

III. WISDOM IN DAILY LIVING (This will be a *title page* for Section 3, which includes much of Prov. 10-31.)

A. The Family (*title page*)

1. Parent-Teen Relationship
2. Husband-Wife Relationship

B. Companions (*title page*)

1. Friends
2. Dating

C. Treatment of Others (*title page*)

1. Kindness
2. Thoughtfulness
3. Arguing
4. Understanding
5. Respecting Others
6. Other

D. Finances (*title page*)

1. Borrowing
2. Thrift
3. Debts
4. Loaning
5. Seeking Wealth
6. Dishonest Wealth
7. Tithing

E. Thought Life

F. Taking Vows, Making Agreements

- G. Labor vs. Laziness
- H. Inner Qualities (*title page*)
 - 1. Love
 - 2. Honesty
 - 3. Humility
 - 4. Gladness and Joy
 - 5. Patience
 - 6. Persistence
- I. Vices (*title page*)
 - 1. Drinking
 - 2. Adultery
 - 3. Gluttonous Eating
 - 4. Greed
 - 5. Scoffing
 - 6. Murder and Hurt
 - 7. Punishment for Evil
- J. Speech (*title page*)
 - 1. Talking Too Much or Too Hastily
 - 2. The Speech of the Righteous
 - 3. The Righteous Know What to Say
 - 4. Destructive Speech
 - 5. Lying
 - 6. Gossip
- K. Making Decisions, Seeking Advice



Lesson Two

Wisdom: The Fear of the Lord

Most people today don't fear God. In fact, they are fighting against Him! And opposition to God is not just by individuals; people are organized in their opposition to God.

The anti-God movement known as humanism had its origins in ancient Greece, Rome, and China. Today, it is an organized religious movement that threatens to overthrow all that is Christian and, in the United States, all that is American.

Humanism stems from a statement by Protagoras, a Greek philosopher of the fifth century before Christ. He said, "Man is the measure of all things." In other words, man is his own god. "Right" is anything that pleases man and adds to his pleasure; "wrong" is anything that man dislikes. There is no heaven, no hell, and no God. Man's ultimate goal is to "do his own thing." The following summaries show some contrasts between humanism and Christianity.

ACCORDING TO HUMANISM...

- Man is the measure of all things, at the center of everything, and solves his own problems.
- The solution to all of man's problems is education. Man needs no god to help him; he is his own god.
- The key to successful living is getting more so you can "do your own thing." One can measure success by outward, material things.

ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE...

- God is the proper central focus of all aspects of life. Life can have no real meaning apart from Him (Col. 1:16-18).
- The solutions to all of man's problems are found somewhere between Genesis 1:1 and Revelation 22:21 (Psa. 19:7-11).

- The key to successful living is focusing upon God in every area of life and submitting to His Word (Josh. 1:8).

Amazingly, our own U. S. Supreme Court has labeled humanistic philosophy a bona fide religion! Our public schools and state colleges teach humanism as fact, and some of the most powerful figures in American politics are admitted humanists. (One can often identify such people's humanist views by the legislation they promote in government or the causes they espouse in their communities.)

Many leading political and social organizations are humanistic, and their sole purpose is to belittle God and to replace Christianity with their godless religion of humanism. The following organizations are only a few prominent examples of such promoters of the humanist philosophy.

American Ethical Union (AEU). Founded in 1880, the work of this federation of more than thirty ethical societies has resulted in the establishment of several other influential organizations, including the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the Sex Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), and the National Organization of Women (NOW).

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). This group has been perhaps the most effective humanist tool for destroying the laws, morals, and rights of Americans. You are perhaps most familiar with it because it is frequently in the news. It is infamous for its attempts to remove all godly influences (e.g., prayer and Bible reading) from public schools, to restrict the displaying of manger scenes and the singing of Christmas carols on public property, to prohibit the posting of the Ten Commandments in schools and courtrooms, and to promote pornography under the guise of freedom of speech.

Among its founders were William Z. Foster, the former head of the Communist Party, USA; Dr. John C. Bennett, a president of the liberal Union Theological Seminary; John Dewey, a humanist educator and trainer of teachers; Clarence Darrow, the lawyer for the defense of evolution in the famous Scopes ("Monkey") Trial; and Corliss Lamont, a leading spokesman for humanism.

American Humanist Association (AHA). According to Chambers, the AHA was established in Illinois for "educational and *religious* purposes." In 1973, the AHA updated its "bible," known as *The Humanist Manifesto* (1933), producing *Humanist Manifesto II*. This "bible" criticizes true Bible believers and denies the existence of a creator. It asserts, "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."

Think of it. These are the organizations and the people who control the news media, the entertainment industry, most government organizations, and our public school system! This is one reason why Proverbs is such an important study for your generation.

Remember, *true wisdom is never against the Lord*. Regardless of how official and religious today's humanists sound, and regardless of how well-educated (in their own false doctrines) they seem to be, God calls them *fools!*

STUDENT LESSON

So far in your study of Proverbs, you have learned that the book has five main objectives.

- To know God
- To know the Word of God
- To know God's principles
- To smooth the rough edges of life
- To give purpose to life

All of these objectives can be summarized by one word: *wisdom* (Prov. 1:2). But what is wisdom? The word in Hebrew is *hokma* and occurs some 150 times in the Bible, more than half of them in Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. The Bible also tells us about two kinds of wisdom: divine and human. (Read 1 Cor. 2:4-8.) We are concerned in this study with divine wisdom, but to better understand true wisdom we must first understand its importance and know what it is *not*.

WISDOM'S IMPORTANCE

Read the following verses about the importance of wisdom. Then answer the questions beside each reference.

- Proverbs 4:7—What does this verse say about the importance of wisdom?

- Proverbs 1:2—Why did Solomon write Proverbs? _____

- Proverbs 4:5-13—What does Solomon tell us to get? _____

According to Solomon's list in Proverbs 4:5-13, what nine benefits does becoming a wise person offer?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Clearly, Solomon wants us to be wise because such wisdom is important. But what is wisdom? We have to know what it is if we are to know whether or not we have it. Let's define wisdom by first looking at what it is NOT.

WHAT WISDOM IS NOT

Refer to the verses in parentheses after each of the following points to find biblical evidence that true wisdom is NOT man's wisdom.

1. Wisdom is NOT _____ (Prov. 21:30).

What does this mean? _____

List the examples of unwise things that are mentioned in the following verses:

- Psa. 14:1 _____
- Prov. 12:15 _____
- Prov. 14:9 _____
- Prov. 19:3 _____

Atheism or godlessness in any form is not wisdom but foolishness. This fact could apply to secular science and history books in that their authors might deny that God is the Creator or that He is in control of history and current events. In either case, they deny God's sovereignty over man and nature.

2. Wisdom is NOT _____ (Prov. 23:4).

Education is not wisdom. Someone once said, "You cannot put a man in the penitentiary for forgery until you first teach him to write. You can't put a man in jail for fraud until you first teach him to figure."

- Read 1 Corinthians 1:19-27. How do the educated and wise men of this earth compare with God? _____

- Good grades are not wisdom. Read 1 Corinthians 3:19-20. You may be the most intelligent person in your school and make every honor roll, but what does God say about your wisdom and intelligent thoughts? _____

3. Wisdom is NOT always _____ (Job 32:9).

Being a top athlete, public official, famous preacher, or educator does not mean that person has divine wisdom. Just because someone has lived a long time doesn't mean he has learned biblical wisdom.

WHAT WISDOM IS

- The definition of true wisdom is found in Proverbs 1:7 and Job 28:12, 20, 28. Read these verses and finish this statement: "True wisdom is the _____ of the _____."

The fear of God is based on the knowledge of God. Certain attributes of God (characteristics that make Him who He is) will produce a true fear of the Lord. The Teacher's Lesson will continue the study of what wisdom is.

TEACHER'S LESSON

The Source of Wisdom

- The _____ of the Lord (Job 28:28; Prov. 1:7)
- The _____ of God (Prov. 9:10)
 - Knowledge of God's _____ (Psa. 33:8)
 - Knowledge of God's _____ (Rev. 15:4)
 - Knowledge of God's _____ (I Sam. 12:22-24; Ps. 34)

The Fear of the Lord

- What the Fear of the Lord Is
 - It includes _____
 - It includes _____
 - It includes _____
 - Summary: The fear of the Lord is an _____ for God by which the child of God _____ himself _____ and _____ to his Father's _____.
- The Attitude of Fearing God
 - The child of God has only one dread—to _____ the Lord
 - The child of God has only one desire—to _____ the Lord
- The Importance of Fearing God
 - Isaiah 11:23 _____
 - Jeremiah 2:19 _____
 - Ecclesiastes 12:13 _____
 - 2 Samuel 23:3-4 _____

 - Psalm 147:11 _____

- How We Learn the Fear of the Lord
 - Studying God's _____ (Prov. 2:1–5)
 - Beholding God's _____ (Ps. 96:1–9)
 - Seeing God's _____
 - In _____ (Ps. 33:6-9)
 - In _____ (Josh. 4:20–24)
 - In _____ (1 Sam. 12:24)

DEVELOPING THE IDEAS

1. Those who fear the Lord exhibit certain characteristics. Read the following verses and write down the characteristics of a proper fear of the Lord.
 - a. Proverbs 8:13 _____

 - b. Proverbs 16:6 _____
 - c. Psalm 19:9 _____
 - d. 2 Corinthians 7:1 _____
2. What are the benefits and blessings that come to those who fear God?
 - a. Psalm 34:9 _____
 - b. Proverbs 15:33 _____
 - c. Psalm 111:10 _____
 - d. Psalm 25:14 _____

3. Write a short essay explaining why humanist reasoning appeals to so many people and why it never really delivers its promises. Support your points with appropriate Scripture passages.
4. Discuss the following questions as a class or in small groups.
 - a. What is the difference between love, reverence, and submission? How are they interrelated to one's fear of God?

- b. What are some of the outward signs that one
 - 1. loves God?
 - 2. reverences God?
 - 3. submits to God?
- c. What practical examples can you give of people showing a disregard for God and wisdom?
- d. What practical steps can you as a believer take to help other people desire true wisdom?

