

# 1: Becoming Wise

We are beginning a study of the most practical book in the Bible – *Proverbs*. This book is a collection of God-given wisdom about friends, family, work, success, etc. It originates during a dream of King Solomon’s in which God says: “*Ask what I shall give you*” (1 Kgs. 3:5). In response, what does Solomon request in 1 Kings 3:9a?

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This is not a selfish request because Solomon does not ask for money, power, fame, long life, etc. Therefore, God grants his request, and one of the results is the book of *Proverbs*. Solomon became the wisest man to ever live, until the coming of Jesus. What does Jesus say in Matthew 12:42c?

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The book of *Proverbs* consists of 31 chapters, one for each day of the month. Reading one chapter each day for a month would be a fantastic “journey” to becoming wise. The word “wisdom” is found fifty times in the verses of *Proverbs*. Let’s begin by understanding what it means to be a wise person.

## The Meaning of Wisdom

**Wisdom means making good \_\_\_\_\_.**

Wisdom is not the same as knowledge. I have met a number of educated people who have a lot of knowledge but don’t necessarily make wise decisions. Likewise, I have met uneducated people who make very

wise decisions. We should strive to be both educated and wise, but being wise is more valuable than being educated. The Hebrew word translated *wisdom* (HOK-MA') means being skilled at using knowledge or information. How does Proverbs 8:10-11 express the value of wisdom?

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## The Five Benefits of Wisdom

### 1. Wisdom protects me from \_\_\_\_\_.

Every generation has more than its share of con artists who try to take advantage of people. Commercial after commercial and ad after ad try to influence students to buy stuff. However, what does Proverbs 2:12 tell us about wisdom?

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### 2. Wisdom produces a \_\_\_\_\_ life.

Some of the most profitable businesses are health-related. You probably know someone who buys supplements or protein powder and works out to stay fit. Everyone likes to feel healthy and be strong. What does Proverbs 3:16a tell us about wisdom?

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### 3. Wisdom promotes \_\_\_\_\_ success.

One indicator of foolishness today is how people unwisely handle their personal finances. As the saying goes: "Making money is easy; keeping it is the hard part." How does Solomon express this idea nearly 3,000 years ago in Proverbs 17:16?

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**4. Wisdom paves the way to \_\_\_\_\_.**

Foolish people are always stressed-out because they often make bad decisions. But what does Proverbs 3:17b tell us about wisdom and peace?

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Foolish people continually stir up dissension, which exhausts them and the people around them.

**5. Wisdom provides \_\_\_\_\_.**

This really sums up what wisdom is all about. No matter what you have or what you accomplish, if you don't have wisdom, nothing makes you happy. To enjoy all the good things we have in life, we must remember what truth found in Proverbs 3:13a?

## Small Group Break-out Discussion:

What is the difference between “wisdom” and “knowledge”?

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Wise people know they cannot figure out life’s problems on their own. They look for reliable people and resources to get good advice for making decisions.

A reliable resource has been tested by many people over a long period of time. The book of Proverbs was written 3,000 years ago. Millions and millions of people have used the principles of truth in *Proverbs* to guide their lives. This makes it more reliable than any modern book you can find in the bookstore or online.

Who and what sources of information do you use to make decisions about: dating, money, family matters, friends, etc.?

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Rate each of these from 0 to 10 on their reliability—

0 meaning “worthless” and 10 meaning “perfectly reliable.”

What makes the Bible the most reliable source of wisdom?

### Suggested Memory Verse:

*The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. (Isaiah 40:8)*