

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Proverbs

The Book of Proverbs provides short pithy sayings that give wise instruction for living a skillful or useful life. Proverbs deals with general truths that apply differently depending on the particular situation. These pithy sayings are not law. They taught the nation of Israel and teach the Church today how to apply the law to daily life. The overall purpose of these sayings is to inspire faith in the Lord (22:19).

Study the Text . . .

Purposes of Proverbs: To Develop Moral Skill and Mental Acumen (Discernment) (1:2-6)

The word "wisdom" basically means "skill." In the Book of Proverbs it refers to skillful living, "the ability to make wise choices and live successfully according to the moral standards of the covenant community." Wisdom is the skill of applying knowledge rightly, or skill in the art of godly living. This introduction provides insight into the different ways that wisdom affects daily living and begins to reveal the importance of wisdom.

- Define the different words that are used to describe the purpose of the book (i.e. wisdom, instruction, insight, righteousness, justice, equity, prudence, etc...).
- Each of these purpose statements builds on the statement before to clarify how important the Book of Proverbs is for daily living. How do the minor differences in these descriptive words help the reader understand what skillful living (wisdom) is?

Group Discussion . . .

Begin by asking group members to share how the Book of Proverbs has impacted the way they live their life. Does anyone in the group read a proverb a day? Encourage the group to consider, throughout the study today, and as they read the Book of Proverbs this week, what sort of influence these short pithy sayings would have on their daily life if they read one saying a day or one chapter each day.

- What is the purpose of the Book of Proverbs?
- Is it important that Christians live their lives skillfully?
- Define wisdom or skillful living (rely on verses 2-6).
- What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom?
- Will reading the Book of Proverbs make us wise?
- How do we attain wisdom?

Study the Text . . .

Motto: The Fear of the Lord (1:7)

“The fear of the Lord” expresses submission to the Lord’s will and reveals the most important characteristic for gaining knowledge and the beginning of wisdom. It describes a true worshipper of God.

- Find all the occurrences of “fear of the LORD” in the Book of Proverbs.
- What is opposed to the fear of the LORD (example: to hate knowledge, evil)?
- What attributes are found in a person who fears the LORD?
- What is the reward for a person who fears the LORD?

Group Discussion . . .

- Discuss what it means to “fear the LORD.”
- Describe a person who does not fear the Lord compared to one who does.
- How do we attain fear of God?

Study the Text . . .

1 Corinthians 1:10-2:16

Wisdom is imparted to believers through the Holy Spirit.

When discussing the importance of the Book of Proverbs, attaining wisdom and fear of the Lord, it is necessary to look to the source of wisdom. In 1 Corinthians 1-2, Paul explains to the Corinthian church the difference between wisdom of the world (foolishness) and wisdom from God (source of life).

- Find all the verses from 1:10-2:16 that refer to wisdom.
- What is the difference between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom from above?
- How is wisdom from above received?

Group Discussion . . .

- Discuss Paul’s distinction between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom from God.
- How do we distinguish worldly wisdom from God’s wisdom?
- Through whom is wisdom from above imparted?
- Combining what we have learned in Proverbs and 1 Corinthians, how do we pursue skillful living? What is the role of the Holy Spirit?
- Is it helpful to read a proverb a day or a chapter from Proverbs a day? If so, why? How will it help you to live skillfully in service and worship to God?
- What does the Bible mean when it refers to Jesus Christ as our “wisdom” (1 Cor. 1:24)?

Small Group Guide – Week 22

Words for the Wise

The Church at Brook Hills

May 31 - June 6, 2010

Proverbs

- What does the Bible mean when it refers to Jesus Christ as the one who became our wisdom (1 Cor. 30)?
- What is so significant about the fact that all wisdom is found in Jesus Christ (Col. 2:1-4)?