

Theme: True wisdom begins and grows from the fear of the Lord and leads to a life growing in godly character, enabling us to survive and thrive in our fallen world.

I. The Information Age and Wisdom

- A. A rapid growth in the availability of information recently
- B. Great promises were made as this happened!
- C. But knowledge without character usually leads to a curse, not a blessing! A thief with knowledge is just a better thief!
- D. We are awash, not in wisdom, but in factoids and infobits, little pieces of knowledge that are not connected in a fabric of wisdom and do not have the power to change us.
- E. What is needed is not more information but wisdom!
- F. Proverbs – Everlasting Wisdom for Everyday Life!

II. Understanding Wisdom

A. Proverbs – the book of wisdom

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: ² To know **wisdom** and instruction... ⁷ ... fools despise **wisdom** and instruction. Proverbs 1:1-2, 7

- 1. Proverbs is a book of wisdom – inclusio in v2, 7
- 2. A lot of wisdom literature in Scripture
 - a. Ecclesiastes, Job, Song of Songs
 - b. Many Psalms, James, sections in prophets and teachings of Jesus
 - c. But Proverbs is the preeminent book of wisdom
- 3. Proverbs is written so we might become wise

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: ² To know **wisdom** and instruction, to understand words of insight, ³ to receive instruction in **wise dealing**, in righteousness, justice, and equity; ⁴ to give **prudence** to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth— Proverbs 1:1-4

- a. This introduction to the book gives its purpose
 - b. To know wisdom... receive instruction in wise dealing... to give prudence – purpose of the book
 - c. If you want wisdom rather than factoids or infobits – Proverbs is a great book!
- B. A few characteristics of wisdom
- 1. Wisdom is comprehensive in scope
To know **wisdom** and **instruction**, to **understand** words of **insight**, ³ to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; ⁴ to give **prudence** to the simple, **knowledge** and **discretion** to the youth— ⁵ Let the wise hear and increase in **learning**, and the one who understands obtain **guidance** Proverbs 1:2-5
 - a. 9 different terms to describe wisdom
 - b. These terms all give different aspects of wisdom
 - c. They also show that wisdom deals with every area of life, not just “spiritual” life
 - 2. Wisdom is ethical (shows how to live a godly life) to receive instruction in wise dealing, in **righteousness, justice, and equity**; Proverbs 1:3
 - a. As we will see, wisdom comes from God, and thus it is related to His eternal, unchanging character - righteousness, justice, and equity.

- b. True wisdom is not just information but shapes our character to be like God, for we were made in His image.
 - c. True wisdom is not mere knowledge of facts, but it trains us in how to treat and relate to others in a godly way.
 - d. As I said in the introduction, knowledge without character usually leads to a curse, not blessing! A thief with knowledge is just a better thief!
3. Wisdom is available to everyone, except willful fools
To give prudence to the **simple**, knowledge and discretion to the **youth**— Proverbs 1:4
- a. Wisdom is available to the simple and the young
 - b. Wisdom is not determined by IQ – a person with a high IQ can be a fool!
 - c. Wisdom is not determined by age – a young person can become wise while an old person can remain a fool!
 - d. The only person who cannot grow in wisdom is what Proverbs calls a fool – a person who willfully rejects God and true wisdom to pursue their own sinful desires and ends.
4. Wisdom is a lifelong quest
Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, Proverbs 1:5
- a. Even the wise can become wiser!
 - b. Growing in wisdom is a lifelong journey and quest – we will never attain full wisdom in this life.
 - c. The joy will be in the journey of growing more wise.
5. Wisdom teaches us how to read and listen correctly

to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. Proverbs 1:6

- a. A wise person can learn to read and listen properly, having insight to discern what is being communicated.
 - b. This is critical to be able to sort out truth from error.
 - c. Much of the “information” in our age is emotionally manipulative error that a wise person will learn to think through properly to arrive at the truth.
 - d. Many also engage in doublespeak jargon that is meant to conceal rather than reveal truth. Wisdom will cut through this to arrive at truth.
6. Wisdom requires patience and meditation
to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their **riddles**. Proverbs 1:6
- a. Proverbs are often given in riddles – they require thought to understand and apply.
 - b. An AI chatbot cannot acquire or give true wisdom, for it requires careful, slow thought and meditation.
 - c. MORE ON THIS IN After Hours – ways to read, study, meditate on Proverbs fruitfully
7. Wisdom is theological (grows in the fear of the Lord)
The **fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge**; fools despise **wisdom** and instruction. Proverbs 1:7
- The **fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom**, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. Proverbs 9:10
- a. Both texts tie wisdom to the fear of the Lord
 - b. This is a consistent theme in Scripture

The **fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom**, and humility comes before honor. Proverbs 15:33

And he said to man, ‘Behold, **the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom**, and to turn away from evil is understanding.’” Job 28:28

The **fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom**; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever! Psalm 111:10

- c. The fear of the Lord is the foundation of true wisdom, the soil from which wisdom grows.
- d. The fear of the Lord is not necessary for “advanced” wisdom – it is the BEGINNING of wisdom!

III. Understanding The Fear of the Lord

- A. The fear of the Lord is NOT a shrinking fear of Him
By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ **There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.** 1 John 4:17-18

- 1. In Christ, God is our Father, so we do not shrink away in terror from Him.
- 2. If we love God and know He loves us, this kind of fear is driven away.

B. The Fear of the Lord

- 1. The fear of the Lord is a proper recognition of the holy glory, power, and sovereignty of God
Do you not fear me? declares the LORD. Do you not tremble before me? I placed the sand as the boundary for the sea, a perpetual barrier that it cannot pass; though the waves toss, they cannot

prevail; though they roar, they cannot pass over it. Jeremiah 5:22

- a. We should have awe at this God we love!
- b. God’s awesome power should prompt deep fear of the Lord from all humans.

Therefore let us be **grateful** for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God **acceptable worship, with reverence and awe**, ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:28-29

- c. As God’s people, we should be grateful – and yet worship Him with reverence and awe!
- d. I love campfires – but I understand the awesome power of fire and never forget it!

- 2. The fear of the Lord is to love and obey God, and to shun and hate evil

And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to **fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul**, ¹³**and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD**, which I am commanding you today for your good? Deuteronomy 10:12-13

- a. The fear of the Lord is to love and obey God – these are one and the same thing!
- b. The fear of the Lord is knowing this is for my good!
The **fear of the LORD is hatred of evil**. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate. Proverbs 8:13
- c. To fear the Lord is to hate evil and sin, seeing that they are ugly and destructive to all creation.
- d. This is why wisdom is inherently ethical!

IV. Applying the Word

A. Am I growing in the fear of the Lord and wisdom?

1. Our great need is not information – it is wisdom!
2. We are trained to expect instant answers and immediate change – but the way of wisdom is a lifelong journey!
3. We are trained that “freedom” is no restraints, even God’s Word – but that is folly and slavery! Wisdom is knowing He is God and we are not!
4. We are tempted to fear man and disobey God, but wisdom and blessing come from fearing God, even when that means going against the crowd! Wisdom is knowing He is God and others are not!
5. Am I growing in the fear of the Lord and wisdom?
6. Will I let the Spirit work on the areas of character we will look at in the coming weeks so that I might become more like Christ?

B. Do I see that the fear of the Lord/wisdom is the way of blessing?

Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who greatly delights in his commandments! Psalm 112:1

Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways! Psalm 128:1

1. The way of wisdom/fearing the Lord is the way of blessing!
2. This way is to delight in God’s commandments and walk in His ways!
3. God cannot give blessing apart from Himself!

4. God invites all of us to walk with Him, to receive wisdom, to live in the way of blessing!

C. The Table

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”¹ 1 Corinthians 1:30-31

1. Christ is God’s Wisdom Incarnate – and He is our righteousness, holiness, and redemption
2. We come knowing we have no boast but Him and His work
3. Come, forsaking your own wisdom and righteousness to receive true wisdom and righteousness from Him!

The Way of Wisdom – The Fear of the Lord

Proverbs 1:1-7; 9:10

September 27, 2026

Communion

Numbers 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: Wisdom and Knowledge; character; godliness

The LORD bless you and keep you;²⁵ the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26