

WISDOM OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Proverbs 1; 3-4



King Solomon wrote many proverbs. Proverbs are short sayings that give wisdom and help people live in ways that are right and good. By following these proverbs, people can gain knowledge and wisdom and receive guidance for life.

The book of Proverbs is filled with many of King Solomon's wise sayings. King Solomon taught people to fear the Lord and trust in Him. He said fearing God was the beginning of knowledge. He also wrote that it is foolish to hate wisdom and discipline.

Solomon said it is wise to keep God's commandments, for they will bring a long, full life. He taught about the importance of being loyal and faithful, and how this will give you a good reputation with God and people.

Another proverb Solomon wrote was, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not depend on your own understanding." Solomon said you should look to God in everything you do, and He will guide you. "Don't think of yourself as wise," Solomon wrote. "Instead fear the Lord and turn away from evil."

Solomon also said, "Honor the Lord with everything you own and with the first produce of your entire harvest; then you will experience great blessing."

Some of Solomon's proverbs were warnings, such as "Do not hate the Lord's instruction, and do not hate His discipline. The Lord disciplines the one He loves, just as a father disciplines the son he loves."

Solomon's proverbs show there are two ways to live: with God's wisdom or without God's wisdom. He wrote, "I am teaching you the way of wisdom; hold on to God's commands and don't let go for they are your life. Don't walk in the path of the wicked. Turn away from it for the wicked love violence, and their path is dark. But stay on the path of the righteous where light always shines brighter and brighter."

Christ Connection: Solomon's proverbs encourage God's people to trust in the Lord. Jesus trusted in God His Father throughout His life on earth, all the way to His death on the cross for our sins. He rose again and continues to lead us to love and trust God the Father.



1 WELCOME TIME

Greet each preteen as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

- **Do you know a wise adult? What makes him or her wise?**

2 SESSION STARTER

☐ OPTION 1: SOLOMON SAYS



Lead kids to play a game similar to “Simon Says” using commands found in Proverbs. Write down each of the following commands on a dry erase board or poster paper: “Guard your heart” (place your hand on your heart); “Listen closely to my sayings” (place hand behind ear); “Don’t abandon my teaching” (make an X with your arms); “Turn away from evil” (spin around). Practice the motions several times. Remind kids to only follow the command if they hear the phrase “Solomon says.” Play until only one kid remains.

SAY “As we hear our Bible story, we’ll hear about many proverbs or wise sayings Solomon wrote. Throughout the book of Proverbs, we learn **WE GAIN WISDOM WHEN WE FEAR GOD AND TRUST IN HIM.**”

☐ OPTION 2: TRUST IN THE LORD WIND CHIME

Provide each kid with enough air dry clay to form three hearts. Consider providing small heart-shaped cookie cutters for kids to shape the clay with. Then provide small clay letter stamps to spell out Trust in the Lord on their hearts. Kids may choose to put all the words on one heart or space out the words on all three hearts. Then use a pencil to poke a hole at the top of each heart. Tie string through each hole of the hearts. Then tie the strings to a small wooden dowel. Create a handle for the wind chime by tying a ribbon to each end of the wooden dowel.

Instruct kids to take their wind chimes home and let them air dry for 24 hours. Then tell kids they can paint their wind chimes once they are dry, if they’d like.

SAY “As we hear some of the proverbs Solomon wrote, we’ll see how Solomon’s proverbs encourage God’s people to trust in the Lord. We’ll learn how Jesus trusted in God during His time on earth and how we can follow His example.”



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Have the Students follow along on their guides and then answer the questions afterward in their guides individually.

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY

The Bible tells us what is true about God and about ourselves. All of the stories in the Bible fit together to tell us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Today, we are going to hear about the wisdom of God's people. Through our Bible story, we will learn that **WE GAIN WISDOM WHEN WE FEAR GOD AND TRUST IN HIM**. Whether this is your first time or your tenth time hearing this story, there is always something new to learn in God's Word.

Read from Proverbs 1:1-7; 3:1-12; 4:10-19.

•What does this story teach us about God?

Solomon said the proverbs were meant to teach wisdom and discipline, to gain understanding, to receive instruction in righteousness, and to teach the young good judgment. Solomon said that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. We can't have wisdom until we rightly understand who God is and exalt Him to His rightful place. **God desires that we fear Him and trust in Him.**

•Solomon said there are only two paths in life. What are they?

We can walk on the path of the wicked or the path of the righteous. Those who love God and fear Him walk on the path of the righteous by faith in Jesus. Only Jesus makes us right with God. This path leads us to life with God forever.

2 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

Recognizing that our own understanding is sinful helps us see our need for Jesus. God calls us to trust in Jesus with all of our hearts. Jesus died on the cross to save us from walking on the path of the wicked, which leads to death. When we trust in Jesus, we have forgiveness of sins and life with Him forever.

PRAY

Dear God, You desire for each of us to turn away from evil and to turn to Jesus to receive the gift of salvation. Help us believe in Your Son and trust in You as the source of wisdom. Amen.



THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

Have the Students follow along on their guides and then answer the questions together as a group.

1 THINK ABOUT THE STORY

- **Why does God tell us to fear Him?**
- **How does fearing God help us see our need for Jesus?**

2 GROUP DISCUSSION

Distribute Bibles. Guide preteens to open their Bibles to Proverbs 3. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Proverbs 3:1-2. Remind preteens that while obeying God's commands does not save us, believers have hearts that delight in following God's commands. Christians don't forget God's Word but make it a treasure they seek after daily. Loving fathers want their children to live full, happy lives. God is the ultimate loving Father, and He has made the way for us to have a full, happy life forever. When we trust in Jesus, we receive the gift of eternal life. The heart of a Christian loves God, obeys Him, and wants to please Him.

Then lead the group to discuss the following questions.

1. **Why is it important to not depend on our own understanding?**

Tell kids that our hearts are sinful and deceitful. We don't always know what is best or right because we follow sinful desires. Discuss how God is always good and right. He has all wisdom, and we can depend on Him in everything. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Prov. 3:5-6.)

2. **Does it matter who we follow or the friends we choose? Why?**

Discuss how who we follow or who we surround ourselves with impacts the choices we make. We become like what we continuously look to. If we look to those who don't love God and follow Him, we will be led away from God. If we surround ourselves with godly influences, we will be encouraged to seek after God. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Prov. 4:10-19.)

3. **What are some practical ways Christians can grow in wisdom?**

Remind kids that our key passage teaches us that wisdom comes from fearing the Lord and turning away from evil. Some other ways that Christ followers can grow in wisdom are by reading God's Word, spending time in prayer, going to church, spending time with other followers of Jesus, and obeying God's commands. The more we seek Wisdom (Jesus), the wiser we become. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Prov. 9:10-11.)

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What does God know?

God knows everything about the past, present, and future.



THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

IF THERE IS TIME: Choose one or more of the following activities.

1 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

Before the session, write each word of the key passage on individual sheets of cardstock. Tape the papers into a path on the floor. Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Proverbs 3:7. Lead them in reading the key passage aloud together.

Lead kids to form a line behind the path. On your start, invite kids to walk on the path, saying aloud each word of the key passage when they step on it. Repeat, speeding up the walk. Then remove a few of the papers, challenging kids to say the entire key passage without the papers present.

2 PRAY

Invite volunteers to share prayer requests. Then pray, thanking God for sending Jesus to make us righteous and guide us on the path to life.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

A MONTH OF PROVERBS

Print copies of the “A Month of Proverbs” printable for each kid. (This printable can be found on the Older Kids files disc or the Older Kids activity printables.) Distribute Bibles and pens to each kid. Share how the book of Proverbs has 31 chapters. Invite kids to label their calendar with the name of the upcoming month and number the days on the calendar. Then direct kids to go to Proverbs chapter 1 and choose a proverb from that chapter to write on day 1. Repeat, until kids have chosen a proverb from each chapter for each day of the month. Challenge kids to read a proverb a day during the next month.

Remind kids that Solomon’s proverbs encourage God’s people to trust in the Lord. We gain wisdom when we fear God and trust in Him. One way we can fear God and trust in Him is through reading the Bible. As we seek God through His Word and trust in Him with our hearts, we grow in wisdom.