



The Week of August 8, 2021 A Relationship with Wisdom Conversation Guide

This Week's Take-Aways

- **Faithfulness:** (Proverbs 20:6) I will be the person those around me can depend upon.
- **Self-Control:** (Ephesians 4:22-24) My thoughts, emotions and actions are brought under control through the power of the Spirit as I pursue a holy, God-honoring life.
- **I am engaged in the church:** (Acts 2:46-47) I consistently connect with my church body for fellowship and community while using my spiritual gifts for ministry and encouragement.

Intro Questions

- Give an example of some of the best advice that you've received or given.
- What's the wisest decision you've made this week?
- What's the most foolish decision you've made this week?

The Beginning of Wisdom

Read Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and discipline.

- What does it mean to truly fear the Lord?
- What is something that you have a healthy respect for? Electricity, chainsaws, etc?
- How does fear of the Lord set you on the right path?

Read Genesis 1:26–28

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."

*So God created man
in his own image;
he created him in the image of God;
he created them male and female.*

God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."

- What did God require of man? Was it for their benefit or punishment?
- Is God a loving creator, an impersonal designer, a judgmental tyrant? Is He our Father or our foe?
- Is God's way truly the best way? Does He deserve our obedience and worship?

Read Genesis 3:1-7

Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You can't eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit from the trees in the garden. But about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God said, 'You must not eat it or touch it, or you will die.'"

"No! You will certainly not die," the serpent said to the woman. "In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Read Proverbs 3:7

Don't be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

- How do Adam and Eve exemplify the truth of Proverbs 3:7?
- What was the result of them breaking God's commands? How did it affect their relationship with God and each other?

Seeking Wisdom

Read Proverbs 4 (this is a long one and we're going to spend a lot of time here this week!)

*Listen, sons, to a father's discipline,
and pay attention so that you may gain understanding,
for I am giving you good instruction.
Don't abandon my teaching.
When I was a son with my father,
tender and precious to my mother,
he taught me and said,
"Your heart must hold on to my words.
Keep my commands and live.
Get wisdom, get understanding;
don't forget or turn away from the words from my mouth.
Don't abandon wisdom, and she will watch over you;
love her, and she will guard you.
Wisdom is supreme – so get wisdom.
And whatever else you get, get understanding.
Cherish her, and she will exalt you;
if you embrace her, she will honor you.
She will place a garland of favor on your head;
she will give you a crown of beauty."*

*Listen, my son. Accept my words,
and you will live many years.
I am teaching you the way of wisdom;
I am guiding you on straight paths.
When you walk, your steps will not be hindered;
when you run, you will not stumble.
Hold on to instruction; don't let go.
Guard it, for it is your life.
Keep off the path of the wicked;
don't proceed on the way of evil ones.
Avoid it; don't travel on it.
Turn away from it, and pass it by.
For they can't sleep
unless they have done what is evil;
they are robbed of sleep
unless they make someone stumble.
They eat the bread of wickedness
and drink the wine of violence.
The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn,
shining brighter and brighter until midday.*

*But the way of the wicked is like the darkest gloom;
they don't know what makes them stumble.*

*My son, pay attention to my words;
listen closely to my sayings.
Don't lose sight of them;
keep them within your heart.
For they are life to those who find them,
and health to one's whole body.
Guard your heart above all else,
for it is the source of life.
Don't let your mouth speak dishonestly,
and don't let your lips talk deviously.
Let your eyes look forward;
fix your gaze straight ahead.
Carefully consider the path for your feet,
and all your ways will be established.
Don't turn to the right or to the left;
keep your feet away from evil.*

- What are we told to do in these passages? Take your time! There are about 30 specific instructions in this passage. How many can you find? Make a list on a whiteboard, paper, or in your Notes app.
- What does wisdom do for us if we follow these instructions? Make a list on a chalkboard, paper, or in your Notes app.
- Why is it colossally foolish to follow your heart (v.23)? What are we supposed to do with it?
- Why is the personification of wisdom a powerful literary tool? How does it help us understand the importance of this relationship?
- What should our relationship with wisdom be? Good friends? Besties? Something more?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

'For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but it is the power of God to us who are being saved. For it is written,

*I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and I will set aside the intelligence of the intelligent.*

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the debater of this age? Hasn't God made the world's wisdom foolish? For since, in God's wisdom, the world did not know God through wisdom, God was pleased to save those who believe through the foolishness of what is preached. For the Jews ask for signs and the Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles. Yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, because God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

- What does this passage tell us about God?
- What does it tell us about Jesus?
- What does it tell us about the wisdom of man?
- How does this relate to what we've learned about wisdom in Proverbs?

Application

Read James 1:5

Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God – who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly – and it will be given to him.

- Incorporate asking for wisdom into your daily prayers.
- There are two paths that are revealed in Proverbs, the wise path and the foolish path. Are there foolish areas you need to redirect? What steps need to be taken to make this course correction?
- What outside factors push us off the wise path or pull us toward the foolish path? How can we avoid these lures?

Read Ephesians 5:15-18

Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk – not as unwise people but as wise – making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Spirit:

- What/Who gives us the power to make changes in our life and fully pursue wisdom?
- What do we do when what we see as wisdom is different from what a brother or sister in Christ thinks differently? Read Romans 14 and break down how we are to handle these differences.

Enjoying Conversation Guides? Want to be a part?

Come join the Writer's Team, Wednesday Nights at 7:45pm in Room 4.

Email Pastor Doug Bedgood if you'd like more info, dbedgood@icelebration.org.